Petition Respectfully Submitted to the
Los Angeles Unified School District
November 21st, 2013
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PART B: THE METHOD THE SCHOOL WILL USE TO VERIFY LOTTERY PROCEDURES ARE FAIRLY EXECUTED.

PART C: THE TIMELINES UNDER WHICH THE OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD AND LOTTERY WILL OCCUR.

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ELEMENT 16: CLOSING PROCEDURES

SECTION 1: DISTRICT REQUIRED LANGUAGE REGARDING REVOCATION, RENEWAL, AND CLOSURE PROCEDURES TO BE PROVIDED TO THE PETITIONER BY THE DISTRICT.
Valor Academy Charter School currently serves 480 students in grades five through eight in the East San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles. The school opened in 2009 with 120 5th grade students and added one grade level and 120 additional students each subsequent year, culminating in our first graduating class of eighth graders in June of 2013. Our population of students is predominantly Latino (90%) and approximately eighty-five percent of our students are classified as low-income in relation to the free and reduced lunch regulations. Our school community has been incredibly successful by both external and internal measures, showing academic performance that far exceeds that of students’ home schools. Over our four years of programming, Valor Academy Charter School has had plenty of opportunity to thoughtfully reflect upon and refine its program to meet the needs of the students, families, and communities that we serve.

Valor Academy Charter School utilizes multiple measures by which to hold us accountable to our scholars and the greater community served. Each year administration guides teachers through a thoughtful analysis of our API, CST, AYP, and internal benchmark data. Before the school year this data is used to augment the instructional program and create challenging academic goals, at the school wide, classroom, and student instruction levels.

Table 1.1 API AND AYP

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>API Growth – Valor Academy</th>
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<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>840</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>880</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>900</td>
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The graph above outlines our success and also shows our responsiveness to the needs of our population. It is important to note that each year of the school's existence, the program added a new grade level and 120 additional students. Our starting API score in the 2009-2010 school year was an impressive 835. Since then, our API has continued to rise, with a high of 888 in 2011-2012. Though we saw a slight dip to 880 in 2012-2013, our API scores continue to demonstrate high levels of excellence in instruction across the board at all grade levels and subgroups. As is evident by the growth in API over the last three years, the staff and administration have taken deliberate action to roll out new curriculum, structures, and programs to increase student achievement. Our goal is to continue to increase overall student proficiencies and exceed our highest score from the 2011-2012 school year.

As a staff, we take great pride in the performance of our students on the CST English and Math performance of our students. This first graph highlights burgeoning proficiencies in our English Language Arts department. Due to our emphasis on literacy, the school has consistently outperformed demographically similar schools. Each student in the 5th and 6th grades receives 150 minutes of literacy through a 60-minute reading class, 60-minute writing class, and 30-minute Drop Everything and Read (D.E.A.R.) program. In the 7th and 8th grades, students take a more developmentally appropriate 60-minute combined reading and writing course and receive remediation through our intervention programs. As our data reflects, our program is devised to ensure that student’s proficiency rates increase during their tenure at our school. The consistent
rise of advanced and proficient rates from year to year is testament to the programs efficacy in working with our demographic of students in ensuring success.

In our continuing efforts to ensure all students are college and career ready we execute multiple literacy intervention programs. Using CST data from the previous school year as well as benchmark data, students with basic, below basic, and far below basic ELA scores are scheduled for an array of services. These include targeted intervention during the academic day through our teacher assistant (T.A.) program, mandatory tutoring intervention for low performing students at the end of the school day, and use of innovative technology programs like Study Island, Accelerated Reader, and IStation to address literacy and comprehension. It is this kind of discriminating attention to literacy and reading comprehension that has yielded incredibly positive results for our school. We have seen growth every year with our advanced and proficient rates in ELA, with a high of 67% advanced and proficient in 2013.

Table 1.3 SCHOOLWIDE MATH PERFORMANCE GROWTH 2010-2013

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Valor</th>
<th>Demographically Similar</th>
<th>District</th>
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<td>2010</td>
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Valor students have produced incredible math results over the past four years, far outperforming demographically similar schools. Similar to our ELA program, students spend more time on task receiving two blocks of math (problem solving and math skills) learning in the 5th and 6th grade amounting to 120 minutes of math instruction per day. In the 7th and 8th grades they receive a more developmentally appropriate single block of math for 60 minutes a day and additional remediation through our intervention programs.
Our data analysis of our robust science program over the course of our school’s existence demonstrates the profound impact our targeted curriculum has had on student performance. Year by year, with the improvement and refinement of our curriculum, our school wide (5th and 8th grade) science scores have dramatically improved with 86% of our 5th and 8th grade students scoring proficient or advanced on the 2013 Science portion of the CST’s.

### 1.5 COHORT ANALYSIS: 8th GRADE CLASS of 2013

**Table 1.4 SCHOOLWIDE SCIENCE PERFORMANCE GROWTH 2010-2013**

**CST Schoolwide Comparison: Science**

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- **Advanced**
- **Proficient**
- **Basic**
- **Below Basic**

**VACMS Class of 2013 - ELA**

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**VACMS Class of 2013 - Math**

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Our longitudinal data for our founding scholars is the strongest evidence that our program is successful. As is evident by the above charts, the longer a student remains in our program the more likely they are to obtain academic success. Due to the complex nature of our program it often takes students multiple years to acclimate and fully realize the support resources available to them as well as the drive necessary to succeed. This is particularly evident in our math program, where we see some variation in performance during the 6th and 7th grade years, and a return to high levels of proficiency in the 8th grade. These fluctuations are due largely to the major variation in Math Content as administered through the California State standards. Regardless, both content strands show high levels of proficiency in all grade levels and in all years.

Our 5th grade culture begins to mold students to a culture of high expectations for learning and behavior. As students move into the 6th grade the academic rigor increases and we begin to utilize developmentally scaffolded supports. Upper middle school students have internalized the culture and understand that academic success is directly correlated to hard work. Teachers provide a number of projects for students to extend their learning throughout our program; student choice drives these opportunities heavily in the 7th and 8th grade.

**ASSESSMENTS FOR LEARNING**

To ensure the quality education of a college ready student, Valor Academy utilizes an adaptive curriculum map informed by both formative and summative data. Aligned to the school’s pupil outcomes and expectations for student learning, all assignments are rooted in the California state standards. As a result of these measures the school is able to meet the following objectives:

1) Assist teachers’ in revision of curriculum and instruction according to student needs.
2) Provide parents and students meaningful, useful feedback on student progress.
3) Compare the school’s progress to that of schools with similar student demographics.
4) Monitor the school’s fidelity to the mission, and revising programs as necessary.

It is our belief that all children regardless of their entering academic level, can perform at high levels and be held to rigorous standards of achievement. Thus it stands to reason that the school must develop accurate measures for analyzing students’ mastery of core skills and essential content. To do this, we establish a baseline measure of student achievement, continuously assess growth from that point, and culminate the year with cumulative exams. Additionally pupils take a number of objective assessments created by outside companies through Study Island, NWEA, and Accelerated Reader.

**BASELINE ASSESSMENT**

Diagnostic academic information is obtained using data from external assessments such as the previous school’s progress reports, STAR, CELDT, and other state exams. With this evidence an academic profile is created for each student and assists the administration in scheduling students into the appropriate classes. Furthermore, each 5th grade student begins and ends the year by completing the end-of-the-year exams developed by NWEA. In all subsequent grade levels, students continue to take the NWEA exam in the spring. Students’ performance will eventually be compared to their year-end results, thereby providing longitudinal measures from year to year. In this way, the school has an external interpretation regarding the effectiveness of instruction during that year as compared to national metrics. Within our school it is also common
that teachers create subject based diagnostics to better understand the skill sets with which they enter the classroom. All of these results are used to augment instructional plans for the upcoming school year.

**IN-HOUSE BENCHMARK ASSESSMENTS**

There are two major types of assessments at Valor Academy: (1) Teacher created exams which measure the extent to which students understand and master standards based lessons presented by the teacher; and (2) External tests that measure proficiency of the California state standards.

**TEACHER CREATED FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS**

**Homework**

The most common student performance measure utilized on campus is the nightly homework. Homework is given daily in each of our five core classes to ensure students have ample practice at key skills. Generally, each class gives approximately 20-30 minutes of homework amounting to 1-2 hours of nightly practice. Homework is regularly recorded in teachers’ grade books and serves as an invaluable tool, enabling teachers to make immediate remediation decisions. For example, when an entire class performs poorly on assignment the teacher realizes his/her lesson was flawed in some way; he/she will need to re teach the content. If a majority of the students successfully complete the homework, the teacher may choose to select only a small group for review. In this way, daily assessments drive instruction.

**Unit Tests and Quizzes**

In addition to homework, teachers create course assessments. These unit tests and quizzes occur more frequently than benchmarks and may take place on a weekly or monthly basis depending on the length of the unit. Unlike homework, unit tests provide a breadth of information on a range of standards and skills. Teachers generally develop these assessments to correlate with specific subject objectives. While teachers are not mandated to follow a school wide pacing plan, teachers meet at the beginning of the year to co create a common curriculum map. They decide when standards are introduced and how concepts are spiraled throughout the school year. In departments teachers evaluate the data after each benchmark cycle. During this analysis students are grouped by proficiency level which in turn enables teachers to set rigorous, individualized goals and tailor instructional strategies to a group’s specific needs.

**STANDARDIZED SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS**

Throughout the year Valor Academy emulates the state exam experience multiple times. Valor Academy believes that objective testing assesses whether students are ready to advance on to content at the next grade level. To this end, Valor Academy utilizes 6 week internally designed standardized benchmark assessments, and ancillary tools such as Study Island and Data Director to track performance.
BENCHMARK EXAMS

Every six weeks common benchmarks are administered for each grade level and subject. The midterms and finals regulate the quality of instruction across multiple sections of the same subject. Additionally, these exams are used to help predict academic achievement as measured by the STAR assessment. Our process begins with each teacher creating an annual standards map defining the sequence in which standards are taught. Then, time is allotted during professional development for teachers to create midterms and finals before the school year even begins. Exams are intended to be objective and thus are built by using teacher-devised questions and questions from an item bank available through Data Director.

The benchmark is scaffolded so that the spring final mirrors the CST blueprint, and in our new charter term the benchmark will mirror Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Generally students take Data Director exams a few week before the STAR tests. Teachers analyze the data, review the assessments with the students, and re-teach content that has not been adequately covered. It has been our experience that the benchmark exam results are accurate estimates of how students perform on state tests. The results of these assessments can also provide a longitudinal analysis of ongoing performance.

STUDY ISLAND

Students are tested on a weekly basis on their standards mastery through an online program called Study Island (www.studyisland.com) both during the standard day and in after school intervention. Each state standard is broken down into lessons and practice questions. Students have two accounts for this program: a practice account and a test account. Because each Study Island lesson is aligned to a standard, teachers are easily able to incorporate these assignments into their standards map. Teachers can instruct on a particular concept and then can require students to practice the skill via the online lesson and assessment. Immediately Study Island provides feedback to the student about their understanding of the given standard. If they master it (by answering 8 of 10 questions correctly) they earn a “blue ribbon”. When students fail to meet their benchmarks, they are provided with additional tutoring help and support until the goal is met.

In addition to the practice account described above, each student has a test account. The test account assesses the same skills as the practice account, but students complete the session within the classroom under the supervision of their teacher. During the administration of the test account the goal is not to earn a blue ribbon, but rather to capture the student’s most current understanding. As such, each child takes ten questions and their session score is recorded as a percentage. This efficiently provides a pulse on the class’s standard mastery.
ATTENDANCE

ENSURING ALL STUDENTS CAN AND WILL LEARN

1.6 SPED Students Performance Results on 2013 CST

Students With Disabilities

Valor Academy serves a large percentage of SPED students (~13%). In order to meet the needs of students receiving special education services, Valor Academy has three full time Resource Specialists and contracts out services such as speech and language. Throughout the year we hold student success team meetings to support struggling students and/or discuss if a student should be assessed for special education services. Our Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) meet compliance guidelines always ensuring the student receives an appropriate education. All students with IEPs and 504 plans receive support within their academic classes and are offered pull out support for homework and classwork. Furthermore, our Special Education Director provides a variety of workshops for teachers throughout the year. These events are an avenue by which teachers collaboratively problem solve the more challenging academic and behavior related scenarios. Moreover we provide an array of resources and implement strategies in the classroom to help our students with disabilities mainstream back into the general education system with appropriate accommodations. As demonstrated by the graph above nearly 50% of our SPED population performed advanced or proficient on the Math CST, and nearly 30% performed advanced or proficient in ELA. One of our primary focuses in coming years is to continue to serve Special Education Students and to ensure that we raise literacy rates and performance on standardized assessments.
1.7 Economically Disadvantaged Students Performance Results on 2013 CST

Economically Disadvantaged 2013

Socially Disadvantaged Students
The vast majority of Valor Academy students come from a socio-economically disadvantaged background. The school continues to meet their needs in numerous ways, including the following: providing a rigorous academic day aimed towards college readiness, hosting numerous community building events locally, offering longer school hours, offering a free after school program, and serving a high quality food program. As virtually all (85+) of Valor students are Title 1 and qualify for the free hot lunch program, our school essentially serves an entirely socio-economically disadvantaged population. School wide performance results serve to show how Valor is meeting the needs of students in this sub group.

1.8 African American Students Performance Results on 2013 CST

African American 2013
**African American Students**

African American students at Valor Academy Charter School (<5%), perform incredibly well. As demonstrated by graph 1.6 over 90% of our African American subgroup of students performed advanced or proficient in Math and over 75% performed advanced or proficient in ELA.

**1.9 Hispanic/Latino Students Performance Results on 2013 CST**

![Graph of Hispanic or Latino 2013](image)

**Hispanic/Latino Students**

Valor Academy’s Latino students are performing very well in comparison to Latino students attending resident, demographically similar, and District schools. As the majority of our students are Latino (~90%) (also consistent with LAUSD demographics) these results speak to how well our programs are bridging the academic gap in Los Angeles. The strong ELA and Math growth is attributed to a number of factors, most notably our more time on task approach, rigorous curriculum, and intervention supports.

**1.10 English Learner Performance Results on 2013 CST**

![Graph of English Learners 2013](image)
**English Learners**

Early on in the year each student that has been designated an ELL takes the CELDT. The results are later disseminated to the teachers who are able to tailor their instruction to the wide range of needs. The above graph reflects the ongoing work to provide meaningful instruction to our English as-a-second-language learners.

We recognize that as a subgroup our EL learners have proficiency rates that are lower than any other subgroup in the school and that reclassification of students continues to be a challenge. As such, we have continued to develop our program to meet EL students’ needs. Our school program provides up to two hours of ELA learning each day, and has guided and independent reading time built into the schedules of each grade level. In addition to our after school supports, technology based programs (accelerated reader, study island, etc) we also employ an instructional aide in each grade level that helps with small group instruction and one on one instruction where needed. For the upcoming school year we plan to hire an EL support coordinator that will work with both our middle and high schools students and staff to ensure that we are best supporting our school through our school programs.

Though we challenge ourselves to continually improve our program for all subgroups, we are proud of our EL students’ performance who are continually developing their skills and outperform their peers in other demographically similar schools.

**SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES**

Our middle school strives to prepare students for college and life beyond. This is accomplished by setting rigorous goals and holding both ourselves and students accountable to these expectations. We endeavor to develop conscientious, compassionate, and creative citizens who will be leaders in whichever profession they choose. Our small learning community affords students and staff many opportunities not as easily attained in larger district schools. At other times, however, our size has limited our access to resources to enhance the educational program.

**Academics**

As is evident from the quantitative ELA and Math data provided, Valor students enter high school with proficient and often advanced skills. From inception we have known that weaving reading into each subject would be critical to student achievement. To this end we have fostered the love of classic literature through engaging classroom instruction and a novel based curriculum as well as promoting reading and writing in our math, history and science courses. Language art teachers have most successfully collaborated to build a scope and sequence across grade levels. Classroom novels were carefully chosen and when creating writing rubrics, leaders sought advice from nearly all instructors. We continuously remind students that success in college is in large part correlated to their reading ability. Concurrently, we have spent an immense amount of time carefully crafting math curriculum that teaches state standards year to year, but also continuously spirals content in a way that students build upon the fundamentals of
math to grasp higher concepts. Our math proficiency results across all grade levels and all subgroups are indicative of this high level of deliberate planning. College is the motivational carrot employed to push students to their capacity and the reason our teachers stay long beyond their contracted hours to ensure are students are prepared with the skills and character to succeed.

Although not a new concept to Valor, data driven instruction has grown more structured with every growth year of the school. At the beginning of each school year teachers analyze the STAR data for their incoming students. Administrators first guide teachers to arrange the data so that each student is categorized into an overall proficiency band for each test taken. Collaborating as department teams general trends and group strengths and weaknesses are assessed. As an example, let us suppose that our 6th grade math students did exceedingly well with the measurement and geometry cluster but had less success in the statistics and probability cluster. Teachers would adapt their standards map to include more depth for the measurement and geometry topics and adjust the pacing for the statistics and probability unit to account for more remediation. Additionally, teachers set goals for each performance band to be accountable to continually using the data to inform classroom practice. Throughout the year teachers will continue to evaluate the data informally each week, but formally after every benchmark exam. The results of these tests are aligned with the incremental goals set at the beginning of each year and plans are adjusted accordingly.

A Culture of Respect and Tangible Pursuit of College

Since our inception Valor Academy has had incredibly well defined culture that supports students in their learning and life development. From the very beginning it was a goal not only to empower children to go to college, but to also teach them to be highly effective citizens of society. Our highly detailed PREP (Prepared, Respectful, Engaged, and Professional) system accounts for both individual and group based value tracking, and gives students a tangible way to see their improvement in character and work ethic week to week. The incentives and disincentives derived from this system mimic real life, and prepare students to be individuals with strong character. Our robust exposure program is also a critical factor in shaping this safe and stimulating environment of Valor Academy. Our mid-year and end of year field trips, coupled with our strong arts and physical education program, as well as the numerous after school clubs, sports and activities produce well rounded and cultured scholars. Teachers and students develop unparalleled rapport during our beginning of the year orientation activities and our exposure activities throughout the year that is then transferred into the classroom. The common experience is used not only as a source of prior knowledge for academic lessons; it also encourages staff to teach to a whole person and not just the student. Our objectives in providing exposure opportunities far exceed our desire to simply expose our students to new places and new things. Our students engage in challenging team building experiences, reflect upon their identities, and form diverse perspectives about the world. On campus our teacher leaders seek to extend these principles by holding all students to high levels of accountability. Utilizing the PREP system students analyze their behavior through very tangible PREP reports that are communicated and supported in the home environment as well. Couple with our council in schools program derived from LAUSD resources, this common language enables teachers and students to have difficult conversations in an emotionally safe space. As new teachers have come into the organization, training and coaching in this area has been incredibly consistent and
has provided all staff the ability to minimize classroom distractions and focus their efforts on classroom instruction.

Valor has concurrently offered students a very tangible and effective way to experience and see the value of attending a four-year college or university. Each homeroom at Valor Academy, in each grade level, is named after one of four partner universities: UCLA, LMU, Pepperdine, and USC. When students enter Valor they are tagged with one of these four university names, and subsequently they go through and graduating from Valor in four years as a “USC, UCLA, LMU, or Pepperdine student.” During the four years at Valor (their freshman through senior years), Valor students visit each university, interact with alumni, and learn about the financial and life implications of attending a four-year college or university.

**Teachers and Staff**

Valor Academy teachers and staff have been incredibly content with the working and professional growth environment at Valor Academy. The high level of teacher support and in turn our student success has kept most teachers at the school, minimizing our turnover rate. Negative attrition at Valor Academy is literally non-existent and we have had very little turn over year to year. In 2012, 100% of our teaching staff returned to teach at our school. This type of consistency year to year has helped us build incredibly strong bonds amidst the staff, the students, and the families, that have led to incredible student results.

**EL Learners**

As indicated above, we recognize that as a subgroup our EL learners have proficiency rates that are lower than any other subgroup in the school and that reclassification of students continues to be a challenge. As such, we have continued to develop our program to meet EL students’ needs. Our school program provides up to two hours of ELA learning each day, and has guided and independent reading time built into the schedules of each grade level. In addition to our after school supports, technology based programs (accelerated reader, study island, etc.) we also employ an instructional aide in each grade level that helps with small group instruction and one on one instruction where needed. For the upcoming school year we plan to hire an EL support coordinator that will work with both our middle and high schools students and staff to ensure that we are best supporting our school through our school programs.

**Facility**

An ongoing challenge for Valor has been the facilities that effectively meet the needs of the program and the families served. During the 2010-2011 school year, the pre-existing Panorama Baptist Church campus became too small to house all students in fifth through eighth grade. Due to the need to expand our program, the school underwent a costly expansion of the campus by bulldozing a section of the campus and adding modular trailers. Though this expansion was absolutely necessary for the growth of our school program, it was an unduly burden on the school and forced us to put a large amount of funds towards our facility project that would have
been better utilized in relation to the academic program. Our current facilities safely house our student and our program and we are grateful for our tenancy at our leased site. That being said, we are actively searching for a site to build a permanent facility for our students to match the aesthetic of our school site with the beauty of the instructional program within.

FIDELITY TO THE MISSION

Mission

The mission of Valor Academy Charter School is to prepare our middle school students to excel in demanding high schools and colleges. Within a rigorous, accountable, and supportive school community, students become high achieving, self-advocating, responsible scholars engaged in their community.

Our academic results tangibly show that we have lived our mission to its fullest potential and continue to provide high levels of service to our students and families daily. Our involvement in our local community spans from the required community service hours that each of our students have to contribute in their 7th and 8th grade years to our tri-annual community breakfasts where we involve our local community in our yearly successes and celebrations, to our presentations and presence at every community based event.

9 of our graduating students received full scholarships to high performing private high schools in Los Angeles, while the remainder of our students were placed at high performing traditional district, parochial or charter schools. A great majority of our students transitioned on to our newly opened 9th grade class at Valor Academy Charter School. With these types of results we have no doubt that we have adequately prepared our students to pursue college and successful professional careers.

Innovative Programming

Independent Reading Program

As was the original intent of the mission, literacy is an integral part of the school culture. A thoughtful and balanced approach is implemented across grade levels to increase appreciation of literature and reading competency. Each student is assessed at the beginning of the school year so that advisors are able to guide students towards appropriate novel choices throughout the year. Additionally, this screening identifies children who need interventions to improve their decoding and/or their comprehension ability. Our robust after school tutoring program as well as the implementation of tools like accelerated reader has helped further address specific student comprehension needs and provide remediation.

Study Island

Study Island, described earlier in this reflection, is an objective metric teachers use to supplement their curriculum. Study Island enables teachers to deliver mini lessons and direct students to further their knowledge using the software as a vehicle. Valor Academy is not a blended learning school; we do however take advantage of the technology that is readily accessible. An essential 21st century skill, computer literacy becomes a component of our everyday program via Study Island. Each student is provided a practice account to encourage
ownership of their education. Teachers use the software to assign standards aligned quizzes as homework, create benchmark assessments, post writing prompts, and use the sharing platform to see how other California educators teach the same content. Our firm belief is that there is no substitute for quality teacher led instruction, however, we do value accountability and Study Island enables us to measure the academic progress of our students.

**PREP System + Culture Systems**

As described above, our PREP system provides a tangible way for students to live and breathe the school’s values in a tangible and accessible format. Students and parents are notified week to week of character performance based on the schools four values. Classroom cohorts are also objectively measured on the four values after each class to assess group performance and teamwork.

The PREP system is coupled with culture systems like community circle, where each grade level comes together and celebrates successes, address school issues, and creates a joy culture. Another culture system of note is our “Council in Schools Program” an LAUSD resource based on a native American cultural tradition that allows students to self council one another.

**Teacher’s Aide Program**

Each grade level has a designated teacher’s aide that works with each core content on separate days of the week, and lead small pull out sessions based on student needs. This type of small group intervention has led to growth for many of our struggling students. Often times these T.A’s are teachers in training at Valor, and most are enrolled in a teaching certification program.

**After School Programming**

For a middle school Valor Academy provides a wide array of supports and exposure opportunity for students. Starting with our academic program, every day (Monday through Thursday) students who have been identified as struggling in core content are provided with an additional hour of tutoring to help their needs. Concurrently, through our ASES grant we provide after school homework help and enrichment activities spanning arts, sports, and music. Finally, we offer a wide array of sports programs for our students including flag football, basketball, and volleyball.

**Field Trips and End of Year Field Trips**

At every grade level we provide students unique exposure activities throughout the year including trips to museums, colleges, and historic sites. As a culmination to these activities we provide students with the opportunity to experience an extended multiple day trip. Our fifth graders attend an incredibly engaging science camp named Astro Camp, our sixth graders explore Catalina Island, our seventh graders go on a weeklong camping, national park and college tour through Utah, and our eighth graders experience a week long Northern California College Tour. These exposure opportunities are fundamental in our building culturally fluent and academically prepared scholars.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Meeting the Needs of Teachers

Just as every student has unique learning needs and growth areas, so too does every teacher. To best improve student outcomes, teachers in different stages of their career cycle receive different types of support. Teachers new to Valor have an additional week of orientation to devise the scope and sequence of their respective curricula, to learn the philosophy and structures of the school culture and to become familiarized with school policies and procedures. Following new teacher orientation, all teachers have at least two additional weeks of professional development sessions to plan for the upcoming year.

During the school year, our Senior Data Manager helps train and support all staff on meaningful use of data. There are six days a year that are pupil-free days where the teachers and administrators gather and assess student data on achievement, discipline and exam scores. With this information, teachers amend their instruction accordingly; student intervention placements are made along with more follow-up meetings with families. Additionally, each Friday is an early release day for students and teacher engage in two hours of professional development led by administrators and teaching staff.

Many growth opportunities exist for more veteran teachers looking to expand their craft. One such growth opportunity is the content or grade level leader position. Leaders play a critical role in providing support for teachers in their specific content area or grade level; they deliver meaningful feedback on teacher lesson plans and standards maps, observe and provide feedback to teachers throughout the school year, and lead professional development sessions with the teachers. Furthermore, leaders support teachers during Valor’s content or grade level meetings and help facilitate conversations surrounding best practices within their content areas.

Valor believes that one of the most critical factors of student success is the classroom teacher, thus a large area of teacher support comes from instructional feedback and coaching. Administrators, teacher leaders and teachers have all been trained on Valor’s evaluation processes. All teachers receive informal feedback at least once per month and formal feedback once per trimester. The data gathered from the observations is used to provide individualized professional development plans for all teachers. Through the data collection process, both high performing teachers and struggling teachers are identified. High performing teachers help coach their peers and provide instructional strategies for their colleagues, while struggling teachers are given additional support, and, if necessary, are placed on to an improvement plan.

Meeting the Needs of Parents

Parents play a critical role in the ultimate success of our students; systems are in place to ensure that parent voice is actively incorporated into school decision making. Yearly parent surveys serve as a tool for parents to address their concerns and comment on school practices. The data gleaned from the surveys allows administration to modify school policies and practices. Monthly parent meetings serve as a forum for parents to come together as a community to build structure and review upcoming school events. Furthermore, the school hosts at least three student led parent conferences per year for parents to meet with their students’ teachers to discuss promotion
goals and student achievement. Parents can also meet with teachers and elect to audit classrooms. Lastly, Valor offers four academic themed nights and other parent workshops that focus on a range of topics where parents are provided with resources to guide and support students.

GOVERNING BOARD

The Board of Directors has played an integral role in ensuring the success of Valor Academy through oversight of the financial and academic program, participation in the Faculty Academic Committee, and defining the Valor Academy Charter Academy metrics for success. As a result of our merger with Bright Star Schools, the board of trustees has grown in size, expertise, and knowledge. The Board of Directors remains committed to the financial health of the organization and school site; and, as such, the finance committee meets regularly to discuss and review budgets, major expenditures, and cash flow. While the financial landscape for California public schools, especially charter schools, remains challenging, it is the oversight and fiscally conservative decisions of the Valor Board that has allowed Valor to face these challenges in a much stronger position than other similar schools.

OUR BROADER IMPACT ON THE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY

Valor Academy Charter School has positively impacted the Los Angeles Public School system. The achievement of our students has drawn much attention within the local education reform movement and our teachers and administrators share best practices with other local charter schools and district schools through school visitations, speaking on panels, presenting at conferences, and participating in continuing education. We are most proud, however, of our ability to demonstrate that low income, minority students in urban Los Angeles can achieve at very high levels.

As illustrated in the subsequent graphs, the percentage of students scoring Proficient or higher on 2013 Math and ELA CST’s was significantly greater at Valor Middle School as compared to resident district schools. We realize that our charter and the flexibility that the District grants us has been a major factor in our success and we feel a strong responsibility to continually help the hard working schools in our community to improve their results as well.

1.11 Neighboring Schools Comparison Table for ELA 2013

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1.12 Neighboring Schools Comparison Table for Math 2013

[Bar chart showing comparison of neighboring schools for Math 2013]
ELEMENT 1 – THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

“A description of the educational program of the school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an ‘educated person’ in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(A)

I hope I shall possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain what I consider the most enviable of all titles, the character of an honest man. George Washington
GENERAL INFORMATION

★ The contact person for Valor Academy Charter School is _Principal Maurice Regalado or Head of School Hrag Hamalian_________.
★ The contact address for Valor Academy Charter School is 8755 Woodman Ave Panorama City CA 91331_____________.
★ The contact phone number for Valor Academy Charter School is _818 830 1700______.
★ The proposed address or target community of Valor Academy Charter School is __Panorama City__, which is located in Los Angeles Unified School District (“LAUSD” or “District”).
★ Board District _6_ and Educational Service Center _North__.
★ The term of this charter shall be from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2019.
★ The grade configuration of Charter School is _5-8__
★ _The number of students in the first year will be__480_________.
★ The grade level(s) of the students in the first year will be__5-8______.
★ The scheduled opening date of Charter School is_August of 2014___________.
★ The admission requirements include: Please see Element 8 admissions section of charter
★ The enrollment capacity is __600_ (Enrollment capacity is defined as all students who are enrolled in Charter School regardless of student residency).
★ The type of instructional calendar (e.g. traditional/year-round, single track/multi-track, extended day/year) will be: Traditional
★ The bell schedule for Charter School will be: Please see included bell schedules in charter

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

Valor Academy Charter School (also referred to herein as "Valor Academy", "VACS" and "Charter School") shall:

★ Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. EC 47605(d)(1)
★ Not charge tuition. EC 47605(d)(1)
★ Not discriminate against any pupil 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. EC 47605(d)(1)
★ Admit all pupils who wish to attend the school. EC 47605(d)(2)(A)
★ Determine attendance by a public random drawing, if the number of pupils who wish to attend the charter school exceeds the school’s capacity. Preference shall be extended to pupils who currently attend the charter school and pupils who reside in the District. EC 47605(d)(2)(B)
★ If a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduating 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. EC 47605(d)(3)

★ Meet all statewide standards and conduct the pupil assessments required pursuant to
Educ. Code sections 60605 and 60851 and any other statewide standards authorized in
statute or pupil assessments applicable to pupils in non-charter public schools. EC
47605(c)(1)

★ Consult, on a regular basis, with the charter school’s parents, legal guardians, and
teachers regarding the school’s educational programs. EC 47605(c)(2)

★ NOTE: This charter contains specific “District Required Language” (DRL), including
the Assurances and Affirmations above. The DRL should be highlighted in gray within
each element or section. The charter includes a consolidated addendum of the DRL. This
intentional redundancy facilitates efficient charter petition review while ensuring ready
access to the DRL for any given section of the charter. To the extent that any
inconsistency should exist between the DRL provisions contained within the body of the
charter and the DRL contained in the addendum, the addendum shall control.

Valor Academy Charter School agrees to abide by all laws applicable to charter schools and
these laws may supersede any agreement in this charter petition as the charter school laws may
change from time to time.

TERM AND RENEWAL OF THE CHARTER

In accordance with California Education Code §47607(a)(1), this renewal petition will be
effective as of the date of approval and will last for a period of one (1) to five (5) fiscal years
July 1, 2014-June 30, 2019

Valor Academy Charter School understands and accepts the grounds under which a charter may
be revoked.

Valor Academy Charter School may request from the Board of LAUSD that an amendment be
made to the charter at any time prior to expiration.

Valor Academy Charter School will submit its renewal petition to the LAUSD Charter School
Division no earlier than September of the year before the charter is due to expire and no later
than January 31 of the year the charter is scheduled to expire.

LOCAL CONTROL AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that it must comply with all applicable laws and
regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from
time to time, which include the requirement that Charter School submit a Local Control and
Accountability Plan (LCAP) to the Charter Schools Division and the Los Angeles County
Superintendent of Schools on or before July 1, 2014. In accordance with California Education Code §§ 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall annually update its goals and annual actions to achieve those goals identified in the charter pursuant to Education Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), using the Local Control and Accountability Plan template to be adopted by the State Board of Education. Charter School shall submit its annual update to the Charter Schools Division on or before July 1 of each applicable year, beginning in 2015. Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Education Code § 47606.5, including but not limited to the requirement that Charter School “shall consult with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, parents, and pupils in developing the annual update.” § 47606.5(e). Please see elements 2-3 to view how Valor Academy will meet the state’s eight priorities.

Section 1: Identify and describe as clearly as possible the students the school proposes to serve.

Parts A + B: Demographic data of the target population and academic achievement data

In partnership with parents and the community, Valor Academy prepares our students for success in college and life beyond. To achieve this goal, we provide a rigorous academic program, tools for good decision-making and a culture of accountability, creativity and compassion. Students at Valor Academy Charter School (herein referred to as “VACS”) enjoy several educational benefits:

- Team building and character education development;
- Out-of-class Educational Opportunities including Service Learning and experiential field trips throughout the county, state and country;
- Exposure to a culture of higher learning through dual enrollment at a community college.

All “VACS” students are part of a school environment where school administrators personally know each student and all the staff members know each other and the families they serve. Finally, students and parents have the assurance from the school that students are given all the time they need to complete their educational experience prior to being promoted to the next grade, class or level if they have not yet mastered the requisite skills.

**Proposed Location:** Los Angeles Unified School District, Educational Service Center North, Board District 6

**Target Neighborhood:** Panorama City

**Current Middle School Location:** 8755 Woodman Ave Panorama City, CA 91331
On the following page data from the schools surrounding Valor can be seen in Table 1.3. This data clearly displays the low academic performance of the alternative public middle school options in the community, and allows a direct comparison between the high performance of Valor Academy and the surrounding schools. Valor Academy had an 880 on the most recent Academic Performance Index growth scores, while the next highest score by any other neighborhood middle school was 745.

Low levels of academic performance, especially in core subjects during the middle school years, seriously hinder a student’s opportunity of building the foundational skills necessary to become a successful, college bound student in secondary schools. Academic data indicates that Panorama City/Arelta is in need of high quality, stand-alone middle schools that promote outstanding academic achievement through an achievement-oriented school culture and a rigorous college preparatory curriculum.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LAUSD Schools</th>
<th># of Students [YEAR]</th>
<th>% Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch</th>
<th>% of Special Ed. Students</th>
<th>% of English Learners</th>
<th>% [Major Ethnicity #1]</th>
<th>% [Major Ethnicity #2]</th>
<th>% [Major Ethnicity #3]</th>
<th>[YEAR] Growth API</th>
<th>[YEAR] API Statewide Rank</th>
<th>[YEAR] API Similar Schools Rank</th>
<th>Met Schoolwide Growth Target?</th>
<th>Met Subgroup Growth Targets?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Francisco Sepulveda Middle</td>
<td>1629</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino 84</td>
<td>Filipino 6</td>
<td>Black or African American 4</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacoima Middle School</td>
<td>1559</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino 94</td>
<td>White 3</td>
<td>Black or African American 1</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vista MS</td>
<td>1498</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino 93</td>
<td>Filipino 3</td>
<td>Black or African American 2</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Fernando MS</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino 97</td>
<td>White 3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter Schools</td>
<td></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>Valor Academy</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino 85</td>
<td>White 6</td>
<td>Black or African American 4</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bert Corona</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino 97</td>
<td>White 19</td>
<td>Black or African American 1</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.3: Surrounding School Data
Community: Panorama City

The community of Panorama City lies in the San Fernando Valley region of Los Angeles, CA. Panorama City’s location situates it within the boundaries of LAUSD’s Board Member District 6. A mixed neighborhood with pockets of deep poverty, the Panorama City Neighborhood is beset by several challenges. The Panorama City community is a largely immigrant community with a large Latino population. In addition to living in a community with high poverty rates, high crime rates, and gang activity, many of Valor Academy’s students come from families where a language other than English is spoken at home and will be the first in their families to attain a college education. As seen in Table 1.5 below, these challenges result in less than 20% of the population in the community attaining a high school diploma. As middle school sets the foundation for success in high school, we believe that an excellent middle school education and a culture focused on college preparedness is crucial to improve the college going statistics for Panorama City. Valor Academy is committed to ensuring that our students are prepared with the skills and character traits to be successful in high school and college.

As seen in Table 1.4 there are presently 16,346 households in Panorama City with household income less than $40,000 a year, which is low in comparison to the county and city averages. Studies continually indicate that students living in households at or below the poverty line are at

Table 1.4 Household Incomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Income Range</th>
<th>Number of Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 or less</td>
<td>4,788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-40</td>
<td>5,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-60</td>
<td>3,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-125</td>
<td>3,259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125 and up</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 http://empowerla.org/pcnc/
a greater risk of academic failure than their peers who live in households above the poverty line.²

Table 1.5 – Panorama City / Arleta Demographic Data

Please view the below table to further see the demographics of the neighborhood that Valor Academy serves. As can be seen, 43.85% of residents do not have a high school diploma and only 16.65% of residents have an education level with a bachelor’s degree or above. These are clear signs that the community is in dire need of better K-12 education options.

² http://projects.latimes.com/mapping-la/neighborhoods/neighborhood/panorama-city
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURES</th>
<th>91343</th>
<th>91402</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>POPULATION OVERVIEW</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>57,055</td>
<td>66,240</td>
<td>61,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population density (residents per sq. mile)</td>
<td>9,652</td>
<td>17,773</td>
<td>13,713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Per Capita ($)</td>
<td>21,237</td>
<td>14,325</td>
<td>17,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip Code Median Age (Both Genders %)</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married Couples (%)</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>67.33</td>
<td>69.365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Couples (%)</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>32.67</td>
<td>30.635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LANGUAGES SPOKEN</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak English (%)</td>
<td>37.27</td>
<td>21.25</td>
<td>29.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak Spanish (%)</td>
<td>43.05</td>
<td>60.06</td>
<td>51.555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak Other European Languages (%)</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>5.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak Asian Languages (%)</td>
<td>11.67</td>
<td>12.37</td>
<td>12.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak Other Languages (%)</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend College (%)</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>4.565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduates (%)</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enrolled in school (%)</td>
<td>63.95</td>
<td>61.76</td>
<td>62.855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education attainment - less then 9th grade (%)</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>24.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education attainment - 9th to 12 grade (no diploma) (%)</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education attainment - high school grad (%)</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education attainment - some college (%)</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education attainment - associate degree (%)</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education attainment - bachelor's degree (%)</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education attainment - professional degree (%)</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY INCOME</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households with income $30,000 or less (%)</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>44.14</td>
<td>40.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households with income between $30,000 and $50,000 (%)</td>
<td>21.81</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households with income between $50,000 and $100,000 (%)</td>
<td>28.82</td>
<td>23.12</td>
<td>25.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households with income between $100,000 and $200,000 (%)</td>
<td>11.83</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>8.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households with income more then $200,000 (%)</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REAL ESTATE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Home Value ($)</td>
<td>202000</td>
<td>150500</td>
<td>176250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Gross Rent ($)</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>623.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.5 Valor Academy Charter School Results

Valor Academy is specifically designed to address the needs outlined in the above sections. Within a small school setting, Valor Academy provides a free public college preparatory education to students in grades 5-8 residing in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Our program’s unique focus on frequent assessment and monitoring, multiple student supports, and introduction to principles of success through our life work course, in addition to character and personal development, promotes the personal and professional growth of our students. Our current middle school currently holds a rank of 880 API.

Middle school is the critical foundational bridge in skill acquisition, content knowledge, and character development necessary to prepare capable and confident students relentlessly pursuing higher education. Valor Academy is specifically designed to address such needs. Within a small school setting, Valor Academy will provide a free public college preparatory education to students in grades 5-8 residing in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Our program’s unique focus on frequent assessment and monitoring, multiple student supports, and introduction to principles of success through our life work course, in addition to character and personal development, will promote the personal and professional growth of our students.
OTHER APPLICABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TARGET POPULATION

Valor Academy Growth Plan: Full Capacity Projection

Valor Academy Charter School will primarily recruit students from the Panorama City area and bordering neighborhoods in Board District 6 of the Los Angeles Unified School District. The Middle School opened in 2009 with 120 students in grade 5, and has grown one grade per year, as outlined in Table 1.6. Currently our enrollment is 480 students and we will expand over the charter term to enroll 600 students. We select grade five as our first point of entry in order to ensure that we remediate academic deficiencies that remain from the elementary years, and to accelerate all students into a full and rigorous middle school curriculum.

Table 1.6 - Valor Academy Growth Plan: Full Capacity Projection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>480</strong></td>
<td><strong>510</strong></td>
<td><strong>540</strong></td>
<td><strong>570</strong></td>
<td><strong>600</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 2: Describe the school’s mission and vision

MISSION

Valor Academy’s 5-8th grade program prepares middle students to prepare for and excel in demanding high schools and colleges. Within a rigorous, accountable, and supportive school community, students become high achieving, self-advocating, responsible scholars engaged in their community.

VISION

We believe that all students, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, or language, are entitled to a high-quality education that will present them the opportunity to pursue college and a professional career. Valor Academy will employ rigorous academics marked with frequent assessment and evaluation in order to consistently set high standards for achievement and encourage students to transcend all obstacles. With high expectations for academics and behavior, and the supports and accountability measures to uphold those expectations, Valor Academy will provide a school culture that engenders strong character, self-advocacy, and a responsibility to pursue education at every level. Through transparency in all policies and structures, devoted school leaders and faculty will ensure that students’ families and the communities in which they reside are invested in the success of their scholars. Preparedness, respect, engagement, and professionalism will be at the core of all Valor Academy staff, their defined practices, and finally in the students who will emerge with the skills and character necessary to realize their educational and professional aspirations.
EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF VALOR ACADEMY

The primary goal of Valor Academy is to have students gain acceptance to four-year universities, excel at those institutions, and graduate with a degree. It is critical, then, that we hold students to the highest academic and behavioral standards of excellence to assure their access to and success in rigorous college preparatory high schools. Students must be ready with the transcript, test scores, and character traits that will open doors on their way to college.

By holding students to the highest bar of excellence, Valor Academy confers the unwavering belief that college is for each of our students regardless of their incoming academic performance, socio-economic level, or home language. Our educational program develops the skills and knowledge each of our students needs in order to succeed in high school, college, and beyond. Our educational philosophy at Valor Academy is hinged upon our four foundational core values:

1) **Academic Excellence is Expected of Every Student**
   - Excellence through High Expectations
   - Excellence through Rigorous Academics Focused on Literacy and Numeracy
   - Excellence through Exemplary Instruction

2) **Accountability Drives Student Performance in Every Grade and Every Subject**
   - Accountability through Frequent Assessment and Evaluation
   - Accountability through Family Involvement
   - Accountability through Public/Community Involvement

3) **Support is Critical to Students’ Success**
   - Support through School Culture of Respect and Achievement Orientation
   - Support through Individualized and Targeted Interventions
   - Support through More Time on Task and Effective Use of Time Schoolwide

4) **Exposure to Life’s Responsibilities and Possibilities Lead to Well Rounded Students**
   - Exposure to Ethics and Character Development
   - Exposure to Habits for Success
   - Exposure to Outside Learning Opportunities

1) **INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK**

   “You cannot ad-lib excellence; you have to over plan excellence.”
   – Dr. Lorraine Monroe³

³ Dr. Lorraine Monroe, Founder of the Lorraine Monroe Leadership Institute, was the founding Principal of the renowned Frederick Douglass Academy in Central Harlem. Dr. Monroe translated her extensive experience in New York City public schools—as teacher, Dean, Assistant Principal, Principal and Deputy Chancellor for Curriculum and Instruction—into the guiding set of Monroe Leadership Principles that define the work of many urban schools today. The quote is from her book *Nothing’s Impossible.*
In order for schools to produce outstanding academic results they must expect excellence from all members of the school community, while supporting those expectations through consistently applied school wide systems and structures. Research on urban, public, high-performing schools continuously demonstrates that setting a high bar and calling forth the best efforts of students and staff is essential to producing high levels of mastery. Each member of the student population and school faculty must believe that excellence is the norm. Everyone must live by that expectation on a daily basis. At Valor Academy there will be no substitute for excellence, as every student is encouraged to consistently self-examine, self-control, and self-sacrifice to become the highest achieving scholar possible. We believe that it is the examined, disciplined, and altruistic life that constitutes the main object and ideal of education and produces lifelong learners.

High Expectations

At Valor Academy we firmly believe that students will rise to challenges and achieve above and beyond the expectations that are set for them. Research indicates that children who have clear and positive images of their futures are better able to overcome socio-economic obstacles and challenges. Valor Academy students will be relentlessly pushed and supported to accomplish beyond their current achievement levels through a college preparatory curriculum. Beginning in the fifth grade we will implicitly and explicitly expose Valor Academy students to the demanding nature of outstanding high schools and colleges, while scaffolding support as they grow in age and maturity. Valor Academy will make sure that students understand and develop the required skills, content knowledge, and tools necessary to succeed in demanding college preparatory high school environments, presenting this message through classroom lessons, physical space that celebrates teachers’ alma maters, and exposure to mentors, tutors, and tours of higher learning institutions. Valor Academy will replicate the “no excuses standards of excellence” found in the nation’s top performing charter schools because we want our students to strive academically and expand their boundaries. In order to promote self-advocacy, responsibility, and high achievement we will also expose students to enrichment classes and field trips, tied directly to their perseverance and commitment to help them understand that sacrifice and hard work to meet high expectations present choices to experience the world in a different light.

Rigorous Academics Focused on Literacy and Numeracy

We believe that every child deserves a demanding, standards-based education. In a review of urban schools, Samuel Casey Carter concludes that a focus on literacy and math in the early
years is a central commonality among high performing schools. The instructional program at Valor Academy will maximize instruction in the three core areas of reading, writing, and math.

- We provide more time on task through longer school days and school years. 130 minutes of daily (M-Th) literacy instruction in the fifth & sixth grades and 80 minutes of daily literacy instruction in the seventh and eighth grades. Literacy instruction is provided through a 50-minute Reading Class and a 50-minute Writing Class in the fifth and sixth grades, while seventh and eighth graders receive a fifty minute literacy period that is more developmentally appropriate. All grades have an additional 30-minute Drop Everything and Read program that focuses on independent reading. In addition, cross curricular literacy will be encouraged in the professional development of teachers. Science, Math, and Social Studies teachers will continuously reinforce literacy.

- We provide 100 minutes of daily (M-Th) Numeracy instruction through a 50-minute Math Procedures Class and a 50-minute Math Problem Solving Class in the fifth and sixth grades. Seventh and eighth grades receive a more developmentally appropriate 50-minute Math block daily.

- All students begin the day with Brain Breakfast, which is comprised of Math and Literacy puzzles.

- On Fridays all grades receive 120 minutes of literacy instruction and 120 minutes of numeracy instruction. In total, fifth and sixth graders receive 640 minutes of literacy and 520 minutes of numeracy weekly, while seventh and eighth graders receive 440 minutes of literacy and 320 minutes of numeracy weekly. 10

- We employ research proven, scaffolded, and comprehensive math and literacy programs that have a significant focus on consecutively building basic skills in preparation of higher order work.

- We require extensive independent practice which gradually develops into personal habit and high achievement results. Every class period begins with an “I do” component that requires students to apply the skill or content knowledge being taught, and every student who needs more time on this will work under the guidance of a teacher at the end of the school day (tutoring club). Students receive nightly math homework problems that reinforce the skills and content being taught in the classroom. Students independently read grade level books annually through the D.E.A.R. program, have a required reading component of nightly English homework, and are trained to read every spare moment during the school day.

- We build familiarity with and increasing proficiency in writing in all subject areas by teaching and using the steps of the writing processes whenever possible in all classrooms (i.e. write/revise/edit/proofread).

We believe that literacy is the foundational academic skill that underpins all other learning. The majority of future skills and the experience of success in higher institutions of learning are based on a foundation of literacy. Studies show that a strong foundation of literacy is a gauge of future academic success.11 Valor Academy will maintain an unyielding focus on ensuring students’

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9 Ibid.
10 In the seventh and eighth grade, the schedule changes to become more developmentally appropriate. Please see the sample daily schedule for seventh and eighth grade later in Element 1.
literacy skills in all grades by devoting a considerable amount of time to instructing reading and writing through a balanced literacy approach including teaching phonics and comprehension methods, as well as developing fluency and a passion for reading. For literacy and all other subjects we will use the California state education standards along with related curriculum frameworks and assessment tools to instruct students, evaluate subject mastery, and inform leaders, staff, and families of necessary individualized support to better promote strong student achievement. Students will be expected to demonstrate mastery of subjects at a rate of 70% on teacher-created assessments. Extended time in literacy and mathematics will promote proficiency and mastery in foundational skills for all students and regular homework will further strengthen skill development and content mastery. Extensive high school preparatory activities will be implemented throughout all grades and the focus of attending a competitive college will be the motivating factor behind hard work and achievement.

**Exemplary Instruction**

We believe that the single most important factor for student’s success is the quality of their teachers. Research shows that teachers who rank in the top 25% of effectiveness make gains that are four times more than those of teachers who rank in the bottom 25% of effectiveness. Our ambitious goals can only be attained if we recruit, select, and hire a faculty that will work tirelessly and strategically to ensure that students read and write with fluency and comprehension, compute with accuracy, and apply skills to the understanding of the world around them. We believe that developing a team of dedicated individuals relies on the following five factors:

- **Recruiting the Best.** Hiring is critical to our success. We will draw from a pool of educators dedicated to and experienced with the needs of our student demographic. The foremost quality we look for in our staff is a dedication to providing all students with an excellent public education, and a desire to work relentlessly to assure that students attend demanding high schools and colleges. Valor Academy teachers will be veterans of programs such as Teach For America and educators from public, private, and parochial schools and with a particular demonstrated success in urban settings.

- **Common Planning and Teacher Support.** Even the best staff must be trained and supported. All Valor Academy teachers will participate in a four-week summer orientation in which school wide procedures and policies will be learned and practiced in readiness for creation of a respectful, orderly, and achievement-oriented school culture. During this summer training, emphasis will be placed on the development of curriculum, backwards lesson planning, and creation of internal assessments to be used throughout the year. During the school year teachers will have time each day for common planning, discussing individual student needs, and sharing best practices. One day a week the entire staff will devote two and a half hours to school wide professional development programs geared to the particular requirements of our school culture, curriculum, and students’

12 William L. Saunders and June C. Rivers, *Cumulative and residual Effects of Teachers on Future Student Academic Achievement*, University of Tennessee Value-Added research and Assessment Center, 1996, p.6.
needs. As teacher evaluation will be solely based on the success or failure of students, it is imperative that support is directly aimed at informing and improving teacher practice. Professional development will be concentrated on the creation and maintenance of a school culture, classroom environment and academic curriculum that are the foundations for learning, as well as using data to strategically improve instructional methods and target individual student needs.

- **Professional Environment.** To do a professional job, teachers require professional tools. Teachers at Valor Academy will be provided with their own working space, computer, phone line, and administrative support in making key instructional decisions that will drive student achievement in their classrooms. They will have a structure through which to direct all constructive criticism, and will work with leadership in suggesting and applying instructional changes that will be necessary as the school matures. Teachers will have preparation blocks throughout each school day to address their professional needs, and will also be able to express their passions through teaching an enrichment class on select Saturdays. Once a week teachers will also have two and a half hours of professional development in order to refine and improve their craft.

- **Consistent Instructional Practices.** Teacher creativity and efficacy thrive within a structured and orderly environment. In order to avoid teacher frustrations in establishing norms in a classroom and seeing them diminish in the context of the larger school, Valor Academy will have consistent procedural and instructional practices. While teacher instruction will vary in degree due to personality and style, we believe that it is crucial for students to have consistent routines, blackboard configuration, grading practices, and behavioral expectations so that they know exactly what to expect throughout the entirety of the school and so that teachers have the structures in place to facilitate learning. For example, students will always wait to enter classrooms in line and be invited in by the handshake of their teacher. Class will always begin with a warm up activity that will be meticulously crafted to both review past material and introduce new content matter. Following the Warm Up students will refer to the Common Black Board Configuration in each classroom to review the agenda, AIM, and Homework, which is also handed out to them on a weekly basis on each class-specific syllabus to be kept in their binders. All students will then turn to the correct section of their binder as the teacher begins a period of direct instruction as the start of the “I do, we do, you do” lesson, allowing students to observe the teacher present and explain content matter, teacher and students to practice it in group form, and then individual students to practice and master the material with the teacher’s support as needed. Each class will end with a review of the AIM and some form of assessment for the teacher to realize the effectiveness of the lesson.

- **Physical Space Conducive to Learning.** Teachers deserve a school building that reflects a deep commitment to learning. We believe that the aesthetics of the school should represent our mission and vision. Therefore, all hallways and classrooms will be bright and lively places that reinforce the pathway to high school, college, and

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13 The weekly class syllabus is a tool drawn from Roxbury Preparatory Charter School which uses it in order to keep students organized and allow families to be aware of a student’s daily work in school, and their nightly assignments. [www.roxburyprep.org](http://www.roxburyprep.org).
professional careers beyond. Each classroom will have a common set up consisting of the school’s mission and motto, voice meters\textsuperscript{14}, common black board configurations, great work, a board representing the teacher’s alma mater, a board representing classroom duties, motivational quotes, and a board representing the school’s merit system. Each advisory room will be named after a different college and the class will be consistently referred to by their college name in order to reinforce the relentless pursuit of higher education. Common spaces will be kept in immaculate physical conditions by the staff and students, and will consistently evidence a sense of pride and belonging in the Valor Academy community. We believe that by “sweating the small stuff”\textsuperscript{15} and having students take pride in their environment we will imbue a sense of excellence that will have a direct impact on student behavior. As the broken window theory indicates, "If a window is broken and left disregarded, people walking by will conclude that no one cares and no one is in charge."\textsuperscript{16} At Valor Academy, we believe by keeping our physical spaces clean, and dealing with small issues, we will inherently instill a sense of order and safety as well as pride in our environment, leading to the avoidance of larger scale issues.

2) ACCOUNTABILITY DRIVES STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN EVERY GRADE AND EVERY SUBJECT

"It is not only what we do, but also what we do not do, for which we are accountable."

-Moliere

All faculty, staff, and students are accountable to one another at Valor Academy. Each person plays a role that affects every other member in the community. For instance, school leaders are accountable to teachers in providing excellent professional development, teachers are responsible to students in providing instruction driven by assessment, families are accountable to the school and to their students to monitor progress, and students are accountable to one another in maintaining behavioral expectations. Expectations are clearly defined in order to make sure that each Valor Academy community member effectively contributes in making the school a success. We believe that all goals for outcomes are only possible within a culture of mutual accountability.Outlined in Table 1.14 on page 45 are the responsibilities of each member of the school community to ensure the strongest in student achievement.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{14} A voice meter is a visual model that lets students know what their level of noise during discussion should be (i.e. no sound, whisper, library voice, restaurant voice). Voice meters are a standardized classroom tool throughout the classrooms at Excel Academy Charter School in Boston, MA. Excel Academy has been identified as one of the strongest charter schools in the nation by the Center for Education Reform and is consistently one of the highest performing public middle schools in the state. For more detail, please see www.excelacademy.org.

\textsuperscript{15} The phrase “sweating the small stuff” comes from Abigail and Stephan Thernstrom, No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning (2003). Many of the strongest urban charter school leaders have embraced “James Q. Wilson’s ‘broken windows’ theory and [have] applied it to schools. To ignore one piece of trash on the floor . . . , one shirt improperly tucked in, one fight between kids, one bit of foul language, would send a disastrous no-one cares message” (67).


\textsuperscript{17} Please see our Contract for Excellence in Attachment Y.
**Frequent Assessment and Evaluation**

We believe that well developed, standards-driven assessments best drive instruction and student supports, and that testing is essential to ascertain our student’s academic needs. Assessment results, when analyzed at the school level, are shown to improve teacher instruction and to measure a school’s effectiveness in bringing students to mastery in the core content areas. Students will take state criterion-referenced and nationally-normed tests as well as school created, standards-based internal assessments that culminate in year-end comprehensive examinations in all core subjects.

- **Baseline Testing.** Prior to each school year we will assess each of our students with age appropriate standardized tools such as the Stanford 10, giving school leaders and teachers an accurate gauge of students literacy and numeracy levels and providing a baseline of academic performance against which all future academic growth can be measured. At the end of the year these assessments will be administered once again to evaluate longitudinal progress and efficacy as well as to inform instruction and design refinements and changes where needed for the following school year.

- **Weekly Testing.** Weekly tests and quizzes along with daily warm ups and checks for understanding will allow teachers to provide feedback to the school and the students’ families on weekly progress reports and inform ongoing instruction and student supports.

- **Internal Benchmark Testing.** Using released questions and blueprints from national and state tests, in correlation with internal standards as developed from CCSS, school leaders will create six-week benchmark and year-end comprehensive assessments that guarantee a high degree of teacher and student accountability. The internal assessments will be broken down into six week and twelve week evaluation periods that correspond with the three marking periods at Valor Academy, and will allow for student achievement reporting at each of the three trimesters. This method of internal assessment will allow school leaders and teachers to evaluate which instructional methods, lessons, and teachers are providing value added growth to each student cohort, and to share their best practices school wide. To provide teachers with a framework for teaching the standards at appropriate times in the year, school leaders will develop a scope and sequence derived from the analysis of skills and content tested on state and national assessments in correlation to internal standards.

- **Standardized Testing.** As a result of detailed item analysis of state and nationally normed tests to guide the Valor Academy curricula, all students will be prepared to excel on the CST and Stanford 10.

**Public/Community Involvement**

As a charter school we will provide a tuition free, secular, public education. With the autonomy that a charter provides, and the flexibility over budget, programming, and staffing, we expect to

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18 This type of assessment has been observed at high performing charters throughout the nation, specifically at Academy of the Pacific Rim www.pacrim.org, Boston Preparatory Charter School www.bostonprep.org, and Roxbury Preparatory Charter School www.roxprep.org. Please see Element 3 for further detail.
be held to a much higher level of accountability for student achievement than traditional public schools. We embrace this accountability, and believe it is a powerful engine to drive student results. Valor Academy will communicate all academic and organizational results to all stakeholders – the authorizer, community, families, and students. The Board of Directors will represent a strong cross section of the community, and we will continue to build strong relationships with various partners in the community to fully support the school’s mission.

Valor Academy will be fastidious in collecting all school benchmark data, making it an integral part of annual reports, and making all information easily accessible through our website (www.valoracademy.org). We believe that holding ourselves accountable for our students’ success and sharing our students’ achievements, and involving the community in our school community, will only make our foundations stronger. Just as we hold all our students to an expectation of excellence, each year we will set highly ambitious goals targeted specifically on student achievement and organizational success, and dedicate ourselves completely to outperform our own indicators of success.19

Family Involvement

Along with being accountable to our authorizer, we also hold ourselves strictly accountable to our students’ families. We realize that families have given us the honor of educating their students, and the responsibility to educate them for future success is one that we hold in great trust. Thus we are committed to keeping clear lines of communication between school leaders, teachers, advisors, parents, and guardians. We believe that by extending Valor Academy’s mission into students’ home we will be able to increase family involvement and responsibility, contributing to school accountability and student achievement. Prior to the first day of classes all Valor Academy families will attend an orientation where we will detail all parties’ expectations. Families will be sent home with a Valor Academy contract detailing their responsibilities in ensuring that their student is relentlessly pursuing the opportunities to one day attend a premier college or university.20 Our communication with parents will affirm that parents are consistently checking students’ homework, are aware of their students’ achievements, and know where to direct questions if and when any arise. Please see Table 1.14 for the School Communication we will provide as part of our commitment to family involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Who is Responsible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple community information sessions during the application process</td>
<td>Head of School and Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visits for all enrolled students before the beginning of the school year by the head of school and/or the Director of Instruction</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19 For more detail, please see Accountability Measures in Element 2.
Family Agreement with each parent and guardian

Weekly schedule for each class complete with Do Nows, agendas, Homework Assignments, with the expectation that parents/guardians will sign off on assignments daily

Weekly informal progress reports

Three formal trimester progress reports and three formal trimester report cards

At least three teacher/family conferences each year

Quarterly or Monthly newsletters to all families in English and Spanish

Communication between student advisors and families

Teachers, Parents, Students

Teachers with supervision from the Principal, Parents/Guardians signatures.

Teachers, with data collection by office manager

Administrators, Teachers, Office Manager

Parents, Teachers, Administrators

Dean of Students, Office Manager

Teachers

3) Support is Critical to Students’ Success

“Most of us, swimming against the tides of trouble the world knows nothing about, need only a bit of praise or encouragement - and we will make the goal.”

-Jerome Fleishman

Valor Academy believes that with the proper support all students can make exceptional gains. Support begins in the community at Valor Academy that is grounded in explicit rules and procedures and a school culture of respect and achievement. All academics and activities are geared towards continually striving for excellence and all students and faculty are expected to treat one another with the utmost respect. Support is offered academically through targeted interventions based on results from standards-based assessments, which allows for ongoing remediation of skills in order to keep all students performing at the best of their abilities. Combined with a longer school year and day as well as an emphasis on homework, the support structures at Valor Academy assure that each and every student is prepared to enter and succeed in high school and beyond.

Support through a School Culture of Respect and Achievement

Valor Academy will provide a school culture that engenders in students strong character traits and a responsibility to become lifelong learners. The school culture at Valor Academy will be a critical factor in ensuring that students feel safe and respected, and are consistently motivated to
meet and exceed the high expectations set for them. Our staff will uphold our own principles so that students can easily emulate and internalize the character and academic aims expected of them. At Valor Academy we will encourage students to become responsible, self advocating, and high achieving individuals through a culture of achievement formulated around all school activities.

Valor is defined by strength of mind or spirit that enables a person to encounter obstacles or danger with firmness. Valor is a measure of personal bravery.\textsuperscript{22} We at Valor Academy believe that it takes valor to guide your life in a positive direction, and to work consistently to reinforce your goals on a daily basis. We believe it takes valor to internalize high expectations and make them the code by which you live your life. Every day a student attends Valor Academy is an indicator that they are willing to make sacrifices and endure challenges in order to re-evaluate the boundaries of their current world and pursue college and professional careers. Students’ ultimate success will depend on their strength of mind and commitment to their own success, hence our school will provide structures and supports to bolster their academic achievement as well as their character.\textsuperscript{23}

At Valor Academy we understand how difficult it is for a fifth grade student to take ownership and responsibility of their actions and display preparedness and professionalism on a minute by minute basis. We also realize how challenging it is for a seventh grade student to push themselves to academic mastery in order to ensure success in high performing high schools. As a result we spend a great deal of time bolstering students’ confidence in their own unique characters and ability.

In addition to school wide virtues that are gradually developed over a student’s years at Valor Academy, students are held to V-PREP Values that ensure success in the context of the classroom. All students will be expected daily to promote the school culture of high expectations by living up to these academic and behavioral principles on an individual as well as cohort basis. Students and cohorts will be assessed on their performance, and will receive merits and demerits based on their development. These merits and demerits will be embedded within a school wide incentive system (V-PREP blocks) that award achievements both implicitly and explicitly through intrinsic and extrinsic motivators.\textsuperscript{24} The V-PREP blocks are a tool to monitor the following values:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V -</th>
<th>What it looks like in class</th>
<th>What it does not look like in class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Prepared</td>
<td>Having completed all of the Homework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Having all materials for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Forgetting a pencil or other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{22} http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/valor.
\textsuperscript{23} Carol Dweck, \textit{Self Theories: Their Role in Motivation, Personality, and Development}, Psychology Press, 1999.
\textsuperscript{24} V-PREP blocks are adopted from Excel Academy Charter School in Boston, MA. Excel Blocks, which award individual and cohort achievement through a daily analysis of Professionalism, Respect, Enthusiasm, and Preparedness, were researched and reviewed through multiple school visits through the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Monitoring and Communication</th>
<th>Part of School Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valor Prep Values</td>
<td>Allows for explicit assessment and monitoring of student personal development, behavior management, and a collegial community environment</td>
<td>Student Advisors and weekly V-Prep reports</td>
<td>Morning and Focus Advisory, classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valor Virtues</td>
<td>Implicit teaching of life long virtues through different developmentally appropriate measures</td>
<td>Curricula teaches virtues implicitly and allows students to apply virtues to their own lives</td>
<td>Community Circle, Advisory, School Based Events, Cross curricular application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Work</td>
<td>Teaching of 16 habits of mind and habits of success,</td>
<td>Life Work Course Grade</td>
<td>Life Work Course (HS Placement in Upper Grades)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Support through Individualized and Targeted Interventions

- **Community Circle, Advisory and Teacher Student Advisors.** On Mondays and Fridays the entire school meets in community circle where the major themes of the week are introduced and reinforced by the school’s leaders and entire staff. Every other day, Tuesday through Thursday, students at Valor Academy will have two advisory periods, starting off and completing their daily academic experience and work. The advisory period will serve as a homeroom, named after the advisor’s alma mater. The advisor (homeroom teacher) will be personally responsible for each student in their academic cohort. Advisors will receive updated indicators of student performance and behavior during lunch each day and will meet during the advisory period at the end of the day to evaluate performance and suggest methods for change. Advisors are also responsible as one of the many lines of clear communication between administrators, teachers, and families, in regards to student achievement, remediation, and needs.

Advisors will be tasked with developing in their students a great pride for their homeroom advisory, and through their relationship with students, will develop positive, achievement-oriented group dynamics (V-PREP). Group-based merits and demerits will be issued to advisory periods, as each advisory will be competing school wide for intrinsic as well as extrinsic rewards. In order to confer the importance of developmental, ethical, and academic growth, advisory periods will consistently review the virtues that are conveyed during community circles.

**Support through More Time on Task**

At Valor Academy we realize that it takes time, effort, and hard work to meet the challenge of high academic standards. We believe that increased learning time is essential to enabling students who enter school with skills and knowledge deficiencies, those with disabilities, and English language learners to achieve at the highest levels. We have structured our school time efficiently through an extended school day and an extended school year. As part of our extended day, we will provide students with Homework Center – a structured time built into the school day for students to complete unfinished work and get the support and structure they may need to meet this daily responsibility. There will be consistent tutoring, as teachers, informed through our frequent assessment system, will be able to help students individually and in small groups to master content with which they are struggling. Literacy support will also be offered for students who are struggling in ELA classes.

School time is further extended through significant amounts of content appropriate homework that allows students to practice and solidify skills learned in school. Valor Academy students will build a habitual practice of completing approximately two to three hours of homework a night,

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25 Advisors keep track of individual as well as group V-PREP blocks, to motivate students to abide by the school’s character and academic values.
preparing and exposing them to the demands of rigorous college preparatory secondary school programs. Students will be explicitly taught to structure their time at home, and we will work closely with parents who will serve as ambassadors to their learning by consistently helping with and signing off on completed work. Assignments will be clearly detailed each week for each class through a syllabus that outlines daily class work and all nightly assignments. There will be no excuses for not completing homework as there will be a homework hotline on the school’s phone system that identifies all assignments expected for completion that night. All students will be expected to come to school prepared to review learned material and ready to take on new assignments and content. We will establish resiliency to work load by teaching students organizational methods, helping them structure their time, and giving remediation through Homework center when work is not completed.

4) EXPOSURE TO LIFE’S RESPONSIBILITIES AND POSSIBILITIES LEAD TO WELL ROUNDED STUDENTS

“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.”

- Martin Luther King Jr.

We believe that students at Valor Academy should be continuously exposed to life virtues, higher order thinking, the passions of their teachers, and experiences that will expand the concepts they have attained in school, allowing them to apply understanding to their daily lives. In accordance with our beliefs we have time set aside each day for teachers to expand students’ understandings of the world through community circle and advisory in order to analyze virtues that can help students understand the makings of a meaningful life. Furthermore, teachers have the opportunity to expose students to their own passions, by leading sessions in subjects such as martial arts, dance, hiking, theatre, and gardening during enrichment blocks on select Saturdays. Additionally grade level field trips, advisory cohort field trips, and subject appropriate field trips will be fundamental in developing group dynamics throughout the school and exposing students to new opportunities.

Exposure to Ethics and Character Development

Just as our Valor PREP blocks allow us to explicitly monitor and support students through their personal development at our school, our school virtues allow us to more implicitly reflect life long character values that are continuously taught and presented through developmentally appropriate mediums at each grade. The school wide virtues will be implemented in a manner that reflects Kohlberg’s stages of moral development and their significance to human growth. Students will gradually be exposed to, and understand the growth process of operating out of necessity versus operating through knowledge-based decision making. An advisory curriculum bolstered by twice a week community circles will rotate around classic philosophy, literature, and current events, doubly exposing students to higher order thinking as well as ethics that.
parallel Valor Academy’s virtues. Character expectations will be expressed much more explicitly in the earlier grades, but as students mature they will gradually be expected to implicitly apply the importance of what they have learned through their daily lives. In the fifth grade responsibility might mean turning homework in on time and remembering to bring a pencil, whereas in the seventh grade responsibility will connote asking the teacher for extra word problems in order to adequately understand material.

The advisory curriculum will be scaffolded in order to ensure that our approach to character development is suitable to age and grade development, and will serve students appropriately as we prepare them to succeed in secondary schools and professional careers. For example, in the fifth grade students might read a Maya Angelou poem and determine how it relates to perseverance, whereas in the eighth grade students might read Aristotle’s work and relate it to current events with the Valor Virtues in mind. The importance of developing strong character traits and acting as a responsible citizen will be conferred schoolwide through all school activities and weekly community meetings. The six guiding virtues that will be systematically and explicitly taught to students will be focused on integrity, responsibility, advocacy, perseverance, respect, and compassion. Table 1.17 below outlines the definition of each virtue, how a student at Valor demonstrates the virtue, and how each virtue demonstrates a key aspect of the school’s core value, as embodied in the school’s name – Valor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Virtue</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Valor Academy Student</th>
<th>Virtue Demonstrates Valor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>Incorruptibility and honesty</td>
<td>A student at Valor Academy is honest, and always does what is right regardless of how it might be perceived.</td>
<td>It takes valor to take a stand and live by a moral code when it might not necessarily be the popular thing to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Self-accountability</td>
<td>A student at Valor Academy holds himself to a high standard and takes responsibility for his work and behavior.</td>
<td>It takes valor to refuse to make excuses, holding yourself accountable for both positive and negative actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>The act of supporting a cause</td>
<td>A student at Valor Academy advocates himself, their peers, their school, and their community in the relentless drive for academic achievement and</td>
<td>It takes valor to be your own spokesman and to be a positive role model and representative of your school and community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Observed at Boston Preparatory Charter School in Boston, MA.
Perseverance | To persist in spite of opposition or challenge | A student at Valor Academy perseveres against all odds, makes no excuses for himself, and performs at the very best of his abilities. | It takes valor to remain steadfast in pursuing lifelong goals regardless of surmounting obstacles or challenges.

Respect | To hold yourself and others in high esteem | A student at Valor Academy has respect for himself, his peers, teachers, and school. | It takes valor to continuously hold yourself, others, and your school in high esteem.

Compassion | Sympathetic consciousness of other’s distress and the desire to alleviate it | A student at Valor Academy is always aware of the challenges and difficulties of his peers and is always looking to help in any way possible. | It takes valor to have compassion for all individuals, even those who might not readily empathize with you.

Through exposure our graduates will be instilled with the idea that they are the masters of their own fates and are responsible for setting goals and achieving above and beyond their constructed limitations. It is critical for our target population to learn perseverance and resiliency, and to continually combat and conquer the challenges they face academically as well as socially. They will always be aware of their current behavioral and academic standing through weekly reports and advisors, and will continuously be in the process of self-examination. Students will be encouraged to craft action plans to address their goals and realize the areas in which they are struggling. Additionally, Valor Academy’s design will scaffold supports in developmentally appropriate ways to help students to stand on their own and become responsible for their own success through attending tutoring, homework center, and other advancement opportunities.

**Exposure to Habits for Success**

Our Life Work class, taught once a week at all grade levels, will focus on developing students who embody characteristics that will allow them to be successful individuals. Through our program we work to imbue traits that will allow students to reach their personal goals and be valuable community citizens. Since we employ rigorous academics and push students to their capacity, we believe in teaching and reinforcing habits that will allow them to overcome challenges and lead to great success. Valor Academy will employ a Life Work curriculum that continually references characteristics of successful individuals by incorporating the 16 habits of mind that can aid students in everyday life as they are challenged by dilemmas for which the
solutions are not immediately apparent. The 16 Habits of Mind identified by Arthur L. Costa, Ed.D. and Bena Kallick, Ph.D. include:

- Persisting
- Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision
- Managing impulsivity
- Gathering data through all senses
- Listening with understanding and empathy
- Creating, imagining, innovating
- Thinking flexibly
- Responding with wonderment and awe
- Thinking about thinking (metacognition)
- Taking responsible risks
- Striving for accuracy
- Finding humor
- Questioning and posing problems
- Thinking interdependently
- Applying past knowledge to new situations
- Remaining open to continuous learning

We believe that the 16 habits of mind will allow our students to encounter all problems and dilemmas with poise and confidence in themselves, allowing for success in high school, college, and beyond. Our focus in the Life Work course during the fifth and sixth grades will primarily revolve around the analyzing, developing, and application of life habits. As students grow older in the seventh and eighth grades, the Life Work class will evolve into a high school placement course that focuses around application to high performing high schools, and continual development of skill sets that will allow for success.

Another component of our life work course will focus around professionalism and social responsibility.

- **Professionalism.** Professionalism is inextricably a part of what will lead to Valor Academy’s success in preparing students for high school, college, and professional careers. Inherent to professionalism will be proper attire through school uniform, the execution of positive social skills and etiquette, timeliness, and personal responsibility for one’s work and one’s actions. Students will be taught to always greet adults with proper titles, shake hands as a way of introducing themselves, and treat each other with respect and dignity. Organizational skills, time management, tidiness, and attention to work detail will be a focus in the younger years and as students grow in age and grade they will increasingly be informed on skills of social networking, behaving according to social...

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31 Ibid.
32 The 16 Habits of Mind are used as the guideline for KIPP: Academy of Opportunity’s Life Skills Class and have been widely successful in helping students embody professionalism. The lead founder of Valor Academy completed a school leadership internship at KIPP KAO, one of Los Angeles’ premiere charter middle schools. Please see the NFTE letter of support in Attachment C.
norms in public places, and self advocating to promote themselves in their community and society at large.

- **Social responsibility.** Social Responsibility will be practiced through simple requirements from keeping physical spaces clean to promoting individual growth alongside that of a community. As students mature through age and grade level they will be expected to become more and more responsible for the advancement of their own principles and the betterment of their school community. Community Service in the eighth grade will require Valor Academy Students to devote twenty hours to the betterment of the North Hollywood community through various programs coordinated by Dean of Student Affairs. Older Valor Academy students will be the role models for younger students in demonstrably upholding a commitment to improving the community at large.

As a charter school we embody the intersection between education, business, and entrepreneurship, hence we believe that our students should be academically prepared, financially literate, and have an entrepreneurial spirit that emanates from advocacy and self-confidence. We believe that through exposing our students to financial literacy and entrepreneurship they will have greater critical thinking skills, take more responsibility for their behavior, and have higher self esteem. Through programs such as Junior Achievement (JA) and the National Foundation of Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) we will imbue the characteristics inherent in the pillars of entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and work readiness that actively mirror and reinforce Valor Academy’s chief values. In each grade we will appropriately address the following characteristics:

**Characteristics of Entrepreneurship**
- Enthusiastic vision, and driving force of enterprise
- Promotion of vision, enthusiasm, and self-advocacy
- Persistence and determination paired with strategic planning
- Responsibility
- Taking prudent risks
- Positive thinking and clear decision making

**Characteristics of Financial Literacy**
- Assessing state of being
- Setting goals
- Creating a long term plan
- Executing on goals
- Monitoring and Reassessing Goals

**Characteristics of Work Readiness**
- Cooperating with others

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33 Lead founder, Hrag Hamalian, has met with NFTE and JA point persons in order to discuss ways in which their cost free curriculums (based on application) can be intertwined into the Life Work course. Some characteristics of our Life Work courses are modeled after these programs.
- Listening actively
- Observing critically
- Reading with understanding
- Resolving Conflict and negotiating
- Solving Problems and decision making
- Speaking clearly
- Taking responsibility for self-learning
- Using math to solve and communicate

**Exposure through Outside Learning Opportunities**

We believe that students at Valor Academy should be continuously exposed to higher order thinking, the passions of their teachers, and experiences that will expand the concepts they have learned in school, of themselves, and the vast opportunities the world can provide. In accordance with our beliefs we created partnerships with after school organizations to expand student’s understandings of the world through their own passions, by leading sessions in subjects such as martial arts, dance, hiking, theatre, gardening, and cooking. Additionally, grade level field trips, advisory cohort field trips, and subject appropriate field trips will be fundamental in developing group dynamics throughout the school and exposing students to new opportunities.

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“The important outcomes of schooling include not only the acquisition of new conceptual tools, refined sensibilities, a developed imagination, and new routines and techniques, but also new attitudes and dispositions. The disposition to continue to learn throughout life is perhaps one of the most important contributions that schools can make to an individual’s development.”

- Elliot W. Eisner

**21ST CENTURY LEARNERS**

*What it means to be an educated person in the 21st century*

In the coming century an educated person will be one who is a critical thinker, community minded, character focused, and constantly learning. 21st century learners will need to:

- Prepare to enter and succeed in college
- Acquire grounding in core academic disciplines and be able to write with clarity, read with comprehension, and compute with accuracy
- Develop habits that promote organization and effectiveness
- Possess intellectual curiosity and skills for life-long learning
- Possess traits and characteristics of a responsible citizen
- Enrich themselves with exposure to outside opportunities

Preparation for college has become more and more important in the complex 21st century - in order to hone abilities, expand intellectual curiosity, and be prepared to interact in diverse and

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34 Please see Element 1, Section 4, Part I for more information regarding Saturday School.
35 We will assess the possibility and type of field trips based on the amount of money we are able to raise for the school’s development each year. We have budgeted $50 dollars per student for field trips.
altering environments. Valor Academy’s utmost goal is to prepare students for admission to and success in high performing high schools and graduation from a four year college. Middle school is a crucial transitional point in which students learn basic ideas, theories, vocabulary, and facts of the disciplines that comprise the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. The 21st century belongs to those who have a deep and thorough understanding of all academic disciplines and are armed with the skills and capabilities to lead and change the world.36

Students will be a part of the Valor Academy community for four short but critical years in their lifetime of learning. It is imperative that students continually practice and habitualize behaviors and skills that characterize educated people: to think logically, read critically, write and speak clearly, solve problems creatively, organize time, space, and materials effectively, and make choices to improve the course of their lives. Valor Academy will help students develop and internalize these habits in order to allow for a life time of learning and an ability to adapt and exist comfortably in any environment.

**HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS**

**There are a number of ways in which learning best occurs.**

1. **With teachers who have “pedagogical content knowledge.”** Dr. Lee Shulman, president of the Carnegie Foundation, believes that all teachers should have “pedagogical content knowledge” in order for learning to occur. Teachers must have thorough understanding of their content matter, student difficulties, effective instructional strategies for particular concepts, and assessments that will provide valuable feedback.

Valor Academy’s selective hiring process will ensure that the teachers we hire are mission aligned, well versed, and passionate about their subject matter. In addition we will continually develop teachers through our weekly professional developments and consistent observation and feedback.

2. **When students take responsibility for their work.** In order for learning to occur students must effectively take ownership and responsibility for their work.

Valor Academy ensures that students have the structures, supports, guidance, and expectation to work hard every day and master their subjects by continually reinforcing study habits and organizational skills as well imbuing responsibility and character. Through our life work course students will learn the 16 habits of mind and be introduced to fundamentals of entrepreneurship and success. In early grades students will learn organizational and life skills, and in later grades the class will transition into a heavier focus on life in high school and beyond. Our community circles and advisory groups will continually re-focus students on our Valor Virtues by exposing them to relevant current events, literature, and other interesting mediums. Our daily Tutoring Club and Homework Center provide the daily supports many of our students need to succeed and prepare for rigorous college preparatory high school programs.

3. **With teachers who teach for transfer throughout academic curricula.** Research shows that students have difficulty carrying over facts and principles acquired in one academic

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36 www.21learn.org.
domain to another. They fail to apply writing skills in math class or problem solving in Social Studies. Teachers must explicitly teach for transfer and help students make connections to other academic content and real life in order to cultivate mental habits of connection-making (Brown, 1989; Perkins and Salomon, 1988, Salomon and Perkins, 1989).37

Valor Academy’s unique system of weekly professional development will allow teachers to interact at the subject level, grade level, and school wide level. This continual interaction and common planning, paired with our community environment will allow teachers to be aware of all realms of the school, teach for transfer, and help students make connections in all classes.

4. In an atmosphere of trust and respect. Learning best occurs in a school atmosphere that engenders civility, trust, respect, cooperation, and intellectual stimulation. It will be the responsibility of all staff and faculty at Valor Academy to create and sustain such an atmosphere.

Valor Academy’s focus on our PREP values and Valor Virtues, as well as the development of our community environment and interpersonal relationships through advisors, will continually reinforce an atmosphere of civility, trust, and cooperation, allowing for intellectual stimulation.

5. Through on-going assessment and feedback. Frequent Assessment and feedback is the backbone of any organization looking to progressively evolve for the better. Data analysis of performance allows for continual improvement of teacher best practices and student growth.

Valor Academy’s frequent assessment through daily warm ups, weekly quizzes, and interim and benchmark assessments will assure that all Valor Academy students are supported in the development of skills and content knowledge necessary to all future learning.

6. When attention is given to developmental factors. Jean Piaget states that children’s understanding is limited by the general schemata they have evolved and that children who do not attain “formal operations” will find other more advanced items inaccessible (Inheldre and Piaget, 1958).

Valor Academy places a premium on being developmentally appropriate at each grade level. Our school schedule reflects our focus on development, and all grade level policies and structures will continually be addressed as we grow to full capacity. Our Community Circle and advisory curriculum will directly be based off of Kohlberg’s principles of growth and maturation.

7. With exposure to differential learning and outside opportunities. Learning best occurs when students have the opportunity to master academic subjects through a variety of mediums, including both group and individualized instruction, enrichment opportunities, media-assisted learning, projects, field experience, cooperative learning, and community service.

37 http://www.21learn.org/arch/articles/perkins.html.
Valor Academy’s small school environment, our extended school day and year, and our enrichment Saturdays enable students to have learning experiences that are unavailable in most public middle schools.

**Part C: How the goals of the program enable students to become self-motivated, and life long learners:**

**SELF-MOTIVATED, LIFE LONG LEARNERS**

In the coming century, an educated person will be one who is a critical thinker, community minded, character focused, and constantly learning. Valor Academy realizes that our students must embody timeless traits within the modern context of a rapidly evolving environment. We believe that our students face the following challenges in the upcoming century:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>21st Century Challenge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinker</td>
<td>Many more sources and types of information to delineate, retain, and utilize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-minded</td>
<td>Global community, yet isolation within communities is prevalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character Focused</td>
<td>Identities more exposed; ethics less defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantly Learning</td>
<td>Differing environments and mediums of communication are continually raising the bar for access</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The challenges that we foresee our students encountering are directly targeted in Valor’s structural and social design:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Valor Academy’s Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinker</td>
<td>High academic standards, Focus on literacy and numeracy, frequent standard and self-assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-minded</td>
<td>Community circles; focus on engaging students in local and global community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character Focused</td>
<td>Analyzing explicit ethics and virtues in community circle, advisory, and life work courses in addition to high behavioral standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantly Learning</td>
<td>College preparatory focus is a concrete manifestation of life long learning, enrichment based learning modeled through teacher’s passions, independent reading through D.E.A.R, exposure to entrepreneurship in Life Work Course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A DAY IN THE LIFE OF VALOR ACADEMY

At Valor Academy, we value transparency in the policies, structures, and systems that guide the makings of our school culture and academic program. Our belief in the transparency of our school is three fold: 1) We are accountable to the public that we serve; 2) We have a responsibility to share the successes that result as a direct corollary to the best practices that we employ; and 3) We wish to open ourselves to useful feedback, so that we continuously improve the systems that serve our students. At Valor Academy we will always ensure that our doors are open to visitors who can share our pride in the great successes of our scholars and who can provide ongoing feedback on our educational program.

After one visit to Valor Academy a visitor understands that the small school environment, the various systems of school support, and the dedicated faculty and staff ensure that each student's academic and developmental needs are addressed. The curriculum and structure at Valor Academy reflect recognition of students' needs at each age, grade level, and stage of maturity, scaffolding instruction and support to provide our graduates with the most realistic transition for each individual student to high school and beyond. The visitor notes that the culture at Valor Academy, and the considerable time spent developing ethics and character through advisory periods and other dedicated community and class time, are fostering individuals able to stand on their own, advocate for themselves, take pride in their accomplishments, and attain a sense of responsibility for their own success. This culture, intertwined with the organized, safe, and warm physical space where every classroom is named after a different college and led by dedicated teachers who exhibit their alma mater pride while supporting students, embeds the importance of relentlessly pursuing education regardless of any obstacle.

Before the School Day Begins

A visitor to Valor Academy most likely arrives at 7:30 am when the doors of the Academy open to welcome our students. As the visitor watches families drop off their students, the visitor is undoubtedly surprised by a transition that takes place as students leave their parents or guardians and enter the school grounds. He or she watches as students stop on their way to lining up at the entrance to pick up any small pieces of stray litter. The scholars' concern for the well-being of the campus community is illustrated through their dedication to keeping their school clean. Lined up outside the door, with straight shoulders and smiles on their faces, the early arriving scholars of Valor Academy already are gearing up for the start of a new school day. One by one, the Valor Academy students walk up to the entrance of the building where the school leader is awaiting their arrival with a smile, eye contact, a firm handshake, and an affirmation that a great day of learning awaits them.

Upon Entrance

As the students make their way down the entrance, the visitor notices that students recognize every face of the faculty members, who greet them by name as they reach their assigned seat in the community room. Between 7:30 am and 8:00 am, the visitor observes scholars placing last night's homework in specified bins per grade level and per subject, quietly eating their breakfast,
and completing "brain breakfast" (skill development and brain teasers, followed by reading from their independent books as part of the Drop Everything and Read program). As time for the community circle nears, the visitor notices that students begin to form large circles around the community room, standing straight and shoulder to shoulder, with the younger grades in a center circle and the older grades in outer circles. As older students help to arrange younger peers, a scholar gives the visitor a warm greeting, takes them by the hand, and welcomes him or her with a place to stand in the community circle.

Community Circle

On the directive of the school leader, all of the scholars chant a quick Valor Academy cheer, stating their purpose at their school and their relentless goal of attending and succeeding in college. Afterwards, students take a seat and the school leader starts off the week (Monday) by reflecting on the importance of self-advocacy (school virtue) through current news events, a theme that will be expanded upon in advisory classes throughout the rest of the week. If the visitor were here on Friday when the school reconvenes in community circle, the visitor would see students presenting what they have learned through small skits and verbal reflection. After the mini-lesson on self-advocacy, and before presenting the day's agenda, the school leader invites teachers to champion the academic and behavioral successes of individual students and invites students to share the successes of their peers. If the visitor were here for the end-of-month community meeting, he or she would also see the school leader present the Valor Staff - a carved and colorful staff that symbolizes the best of what a Valor Academy student represents - an award reserved for the student who has most demonstrably upheld the core values of the school that month. The applause, chants, smiling faces, and feelings of pride during community circle will follow scholars for the rest of their careers at Valor Academy and we expect throughout the rest of their lives.

Academic Day

After the students leave the community circle - if the visitor were here on a non-community meeting day, he or she would see students leaving their advisory classes - students begin their day of academic classes. Each cohort of students is named after a college, a way of consistently reminding students of their utmost purpose at Valor Academy – to do the hard work necessary to be competitive in the world of college and the professional world beyond.

A visitor notes that students' schedules at Valor Academy do not waste a minute of time, and are always developmentally appropriate. The fifth and sixth grade schedules feature double periods of Math and English, to build foundational knowledge and basic skills, as well as one period of Science revolving around experimentation and scientific method or History-Social Science revolving around historical literature and standards-based questions (Science and History alternate based on semester). The visitor will notice that cross curricular literacy is very important at Valor Academy, so all classes incorporate reading and writing techniques to build a strong literacy core. History – Social Science in the fifth and sixth grades will incorporate fiction and non-fiction literature (i.e. memoirs) that are analyzed in class in addition to standards-based History – Social Science lessons that contextualize the concepts read about in the literature.

The seventh and eighth grade schedules allow for a more expanded academic study, with a schedule that now includes English, Math, Science, Social Science, and a Foreign Language on a
The strong emphasis on literacy follows students during their years at Valor Academy, as students partake in a half-hour Drop Everything and Read (D.E.A.R.) block daily during which they read skill-appropriate independent books, logging time and analysis of reading in D.E.A.R. journals. All grade levels also benefit from a Life Work course that encompasses organizational skills, character development, and entrepreneurship. Each student takes Physical Education twice per week to develop a strong mind and body, and art is offered once per week to allow students to express themselves through different mediums. The school day always comes to a close with a focus advisory where students revisit their school day, analyze the successes and challenges of individuals and the group cohort, and discuss room for improvement. The visitor notices that the Valor schedule is intended to wholly develop knowledge, skills and character traits that lead to success at outstanding secondary schools and college preparatory programs laying the foundation for a successful life beyond the walls of Valor Academy.

Classroom Systems

Walking from class to class, the visitor notices that there is a school culture and school wide systems that uphold and support the high expectations set for students. All classes begin with students standing by their desks and greeting the teacher, and are dismissed with a statement of appreciation on both the teacher's and students' behalves. All classrooms include signs that reinforce the school’s values, a board that states the nightly homework for each subject, and a common blackboard configuration that includes an AIM for the lesson, a Do Now (or starting activity), and an agenda. All teacher instruction follows the "I do, we do, you do" format, incorporating engaging strategies, group work, and the latest techniques learned from professional development to increase and drive student performance. All teachers are trained to expect one hundred percent student participation, and use devices and systems incorporated school-wide such as SLANT (Sit up, Listen, Ask Questions, Nod, and Track) to keep students attentive. Transitions are smooth and without disturbance, maximizing efficiency and minimizing distraction. Students have been inculcated with training in systems as simple as raising hands, handing back papers and moving in lines, to complex systems involving respectfully offering feedback to peers during class.

School Culture

The visitor notes the outstanding student achievement results which are highlighted on the bulletin board opposite the front entry, and is impressed with the school’s ability to create such dramatic improvement in students’ academic skills. Upon talking to a few staff members, the visitor learns that students are tested regularly through six week assessments designed to inform the students themselves, their teachers, and their respective families, of their current performance and achievement levels. Each scholar, teacher, and family understands how critical each of their four years at Valor Academy will be to developing the foundational bridges to high school and college. Thus, when students are required to join afternoon study sessions to review material, they are not defeated - knowing that their reward is much greater than their sacrifice, and knowing that commitment to academics is the rule for all students here. A visitor also notices that hundreds of exceptional children at Valor Academy persevere regardless of circumstance.

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38 Valor Academy believes that a strong foundation in literacy and math is the key to success in high school, hence if students need extended support in math or literacy, the foreign language block might be reserved for further instruction in the seventh and eighth grades.
pushing themselves and their peers to the highest academic and behavioral standards within and beyond the Valor community. Students are constantly reminded that the long school day, long school year, tutoring after school, homework center, and the "not a minute to waste" mentality are the reasons why they will one day earn entry into the nation's premiere colleges.

Family Choice
The visitor soon realizes that parents and guardians choose Valor Academy for its dedication to excellence, rigor, safety, and its strict norms of behavior and academic accountability. Parents and guardians choose this school for their students because of the personal attention they receive from the school as a whole, and the open lines of communication the school provides regarding each student's academic and behavioral performance. Families appreciate that the school is driven by enthusiasm, an environment in which academics and non-curricular work are a manifestation of teacher's passions. The visitor notices that students are given ample opportunity to engage in fun activities and develop interests outside of academics. Structured recess on a daily basis gives students a chance to participate in supervised activities such as flag football, soccer, jump rope, and kickball. Early dismissal on Friday gives students extended weekend time to complete their homework assignments and allows two and a half hours for their teachers to engage in weekly professional development, ensuring the opportunity to refine and modify their craft. Additionally, students are invited to the school bi-monthly on Enrichment Saturdays to benefit even further from their teachers’ passions for over three hours, participating in activities such as gardening, Tae Kwan Doe, Yoga, and Theatre.

This is a vision of one visitor’s experience at Valor Academy. We welcome all visitors to share in our belief that intelligence is a result of hard work, success is a measure of demonstrated achievement toward set goals, and each and every student has the capability to be the master of his or her own fate. We welcome all visitors to share our belief that all students within a rigorous, accountable, and supportive school community can become high-achieving, self-advocating, responsible scholars engaged in their world.

Section 4: Describe the instructional program and curriculum the school plans to use. The description must include:

Part A: Teaching methodologies

TEACHING METHODOLOGIES
The mission of Valor Academy relies on outcome-driven, effective teaching. In order to support teachers to make strong academic gains with Valor Academy students, instruction must be closely monitored and continuously improved upon. As certain practices in teaching have proven to engender student academic success, consistency in instruction will be employed across classrooms to ensure a structured, safe, and high performing environment. Structured lessons will allow for clear expectations from students and teachers, effective evaluation and
improvement of teaching practice, and, most importantly, strong academic outcomes. We model our instructional methodologies and data driven practices after approaches utilized at high performing schools which have consistently and successfully led to strong academic and behavioral outcomes. Valor Academy prescribes to the following strategies in order to drive strong academic outcomes:

- Standards-based Curriculum and Instruction
- Organized and Systematic Approach to Instructional Delivery
- Engagement Intensive Student-Teacher Interaction Techniques

**Standards-based Curriculum and Instruction**

Valor Academy’s curriculum will be based on the Common Core standards. All teachers will analyze Common Core content standards and internal school standards that correspond to their specific grade and content areas. They will then frame their lessons to ensure that they align with the scope and sequence of study and deliver lesson content through daily standards-driven AIMS\(^{39}\) in the manner best suited to achieving strong student outcomes. The frequent use of standards-driven assessment data will assist teachers and administrators in ensuring that content mastery is occurring at the appropriate pace and in accordance with state standards. Teachers will be responsible for following a consistent format of structuring and implementing all lessons.

**Organized and Systematic Approach to Instructional Delivery**

Consistent instructional approaches and strategies are part of our philosophy because effective classroom organization and management along with strategic instructional planning are cornerstones of a well-run educational program. We will establish a system that sets clear teaching expectations every day and that ensures all students learn the same material and receive the same quality of instruction. The following strategies will be used:

- **Instructional consistency.** Instructional consistency will assist school administrators in the daily monitoring of classroom instruction and allow them to identify teacher strengths and areas in need of improvement more efficiently and effectively. It will also provide a common platform for instructional discussions (administrator to teacher and teacher to teacher) as all staff will be speaking from a common set of instructional expectations.

- **“I do,” “We do,” “You do.”** Instructional consistency at Valor Academy will be possible through our adherence to Pearson and Gallagher’s “I do,” “We do,” “You do” instructional model. This strategy of teacher led instruction, guided classroom practice, and individual practice for mastery has proven to be a highly effective instructional technique for ensuring all students learn and learn well. When this approach is used the lesson begins with the teacher demonstrating the lesson concept or skill - “I do.” After sufficient examples have been taught, s/he then provides opportunities for the class to learn and practice the concept together - the “We do.” This may be achieved through the formation of small classroom teams for example, that work on a series of questions together and under the guidance of the teacher. Lastly, students practice the concept

\(^{39}\) An AIM is the objective for the lesson, and will be reviewed with students before the lesson to give them context, and after the lesson to reinforce theme.
independently - the “You do” - to further strengthen their understanding and develop individual mastery of the material being taught. This approach is effective in teaching reading, math, social studies and science. By modeling problems and providing opportunities to practice problem solving in a variety of contexts, students are able to learn standards more effectively. This approach requires students to become and remain active participants throughout the learning process. Specifically, this technique will enhance student learning by:

- systemically increasing opportunities for students to practice skills in core content areas;
- affording teachers an opportunity to see students’ inability to grasp a concept sooner and immediately apply a remedy; and
- allowing teachers to identify an ineffective approach and adjust their instructional practice in real time.

**Figure 1.18 – “I do, We do, You do” Model by Pearson and Gallagher**

- **Strategic, detailed lesson planning.** All teachers will be responsible for submitting detailed, strategic lesson plans on a daily, weekly and trimester basis, all of which will follow the same instructional format and include the same components. Teachers who teach the same content for the same grades will be expected to partner during their planning periods to ensure instructional consistency.

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40 Lesson Plans will be submitted to the Director of Instruction (DI). The DI will be responsible for evaluation of teacher’s Lesson Plans and feedback. The Head of School will occasionally assist the DI in their duties and will be involved in general oversight of the academic program.
• **Common black board configuration.** All teachers will use a common Blackboard Configuration (BBC). Supported by the work of Dr. Lorraine Monroe, the founder of the Frederick Douglas Academy in Harlem, NY, the BBC is an instructional accountability system that systematizes the manner in which expectations surrounding the scope and content of that day’s lesson are shared with students. Valor Academy’s BBC will minimally consist of the AIM or objective, the Do Now or Warm Up, the Agenda or main instructional components of the lesson, and the Homework Assignment. The BBC will set clear academic expectations of what students will learn during that lesson and will also serve as a visual cue for the teacher to manage his/her instructional pacing more effectively. Administrators will also use the BBC as a tool to identify how well the teacher is following the content, pacing and activities set forth in the lesson plan.

• **School-wide systems and structures.** We believe in implementing practices that maximize the amount of time a student is engaged in learning and that minimize the amount of time spent on non-instructional activities. Non-instructional activities include handing in homework, distributing class work, transitioning between classes, finding and retrieving class materials, hanging coats, etc. During the first three weeks of professional development, teachers will be taught and practice the key school wide systems that they will commonly implement with students. Throughout the school year, the systems will be refined and new systems and structures will be implemented as needed to achieve the same objective – maximal time spent on student learning.

**Engagement Intensive Student-Teacher Interaction Techniques**

The Common Core standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. In order for our students to be fully prepared for the future, our school will ensure that it employs methods and methodologies that help students learn best. Research indicates that students learn best in a stimulating environment – one that has a steady and consistently brisk pace, a high degree of teacher and student interaction and one that uses techniques that support a culture of high academic and behavioral expectations. We will implement three components to ensure that teacher and student interaction is high:

• **Rap, Rhythm and Rhyme.** This technique, inspired by legendary educator Harriet Ball, uses chanting and rhyming to create excitement about the learning process and as a skill to help children remember key learning concepts. Most often this approach will be applied to math and English Language Arts during the fifth and sixth grades in order to increase subject matter comprehension.

• **Kinesthetic Learning.** Kinesthetic learning is an approach that uses physical activity to maintain student engagement and makes the learning process fun. Teachers strategically incorporate its use to teach students a new concept (i.e., multiplication facts) using hand signals, finger snapping or other gestures or to reward individual or group academic performance while instruction is actively occurring (i.e., two claps for Jimmy for getting 41 This thinking is inspired by training provided by Doug Lemov, Founder and former President of School Performance, Founding Principal of the Academy of the Pacific Rim, and Founder and Managing Director of Rochester Preparatory Charter School.
the right answer). It serves as a strong mechanism to provide physical movement during extended teaching blocks and extended school hours. Active student involvement also allows teachers to more effectively gauge the degree to which students are grasping the subject matter.

- **Proven Instructional Techniques.** We will also use a variety of academic and behavioral techniques that reinforce student expectations. Valor Academy will strategically select two to three instructional techniques as a focus in professional development sessions throughout the year. Teachers will engage in training and simulated role plays, and will be observed and provided with feedback on their delivery throughout the school year. Each year new techniques will be added as components of professional development. Listed below in the subsequent charts are 50 highly effective practices broken into categories of both academic and behavioral techniques. Academic techniques are apportioned into High Academic Expectation Techniques, Standards Driven Techniques, Student Engagement Techniques, and Student Preparation Techniques. Behavior techniques are apportioned into High Behavioral Expectation Techniques, System and Routine Techniques, Urgency Techniques, Tone Techniques, and Mission Techniques.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Right-is-Right</strong></td>
<td>High Academic Expectation</td>
<td>When responding to answers in class, teachers hold out for the correct answer and do not settle for anything that is less than 100% correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stretch it</strong></td>
<td>High Academic Expectation</td>
<td>Teacher responds to correct answers by asking students to answer a new or harder question.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**EXAMPLES OF ACADEMIC TECHNIQUES**

### Table 1.20 - Standards-Driven Instructional Techniques

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Begin with the End</strong></th>
<th>Standards-Driven</th>
<th>Teachers always use backward planning to be aware of skills and content students need to know to ensure success.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manageable, Measurable, Objective</strong></td>
<td>Standards-Driven</td>
<td>Teachers create objectives that can be covered to mastery in a single lesson.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 1.21 - Student Engagement Instructional Techniques

| **Cold Call** | Student Engagement | The teacher keeps students on their toes by setting a tone in class from the first day where all students are fairly called upon without notice. |

### Table 1.22 - Preparation Based Instructional Techniques

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Know it Cold</strong></th>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>The teacher is so well versed in his/her lesson plan that he/she can implement without any reference to materials.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hook ‘Em</strong></td>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>The teacher truly believes that there is no content about which he/she can not get students thoroughly excited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Call</strong></td>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
<td>Teacher gives a forewarning of a cold call to students who are struggling with content so that they are prepared to answer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### BEHAVIORAL TECHNIQUES

#### Table 1.23 - High Behavioral Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strong Voice</strong></th>
<th>High Behavioral Expectations</th>
<th>The teacher uses economy of language to make speech purposeful and refuses interruptions under any circumstance.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No Warnings</strong></td>
<td>High Behavioral Expectations</td>
<td>The teacher does not tolerate any disobedience and always addresses expectations that are not met with consequence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table 1.24 - Systems and Routines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Props</strong></th>
<th>Systems and Routines</th>
<th>The teacher uses opportunities to systematically deliver public praise through classroom chants and kinesthetic movements.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>On Your Mark</strong></td>
<td>Systems and Routines</td>
<td>The teacher expects students to be ready before all classes and before all activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table 1.25 - Urgency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Every Minute Matters</strong></th>
<th>Urgency</th>
<th>The teacher has a “not a second to waste” mentality in regards to pacing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hands Down</strong></td>
<td>Urgency</td>
<td>The teacher asks students to put hands down, when someone is speaking or when a question has been properly answered.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table 1.26 - Tone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Warm/Strict</strong></th>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>The teacher is warm and caring but never compromises classroom rules or expectations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotional Constancy</strong></td>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>The teacher has control of their emotions and remains constant throughout a class period and in all communication with students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.2 - Mission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right Rewards</th>
<th>Mission</th>
<th>The teacher rewards students with intrinsic and extrinsic rewards that are academically aligned.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preaching</td>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>The teacher constantly tries to shape the way students perceive events and develop character.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part B: The scope and sequence of skills to be taught across the grade levels and the different subjects the school plans to teach

PART I: MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Table 1.28 outlines the scope and sequence of study in grades five through eight.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.28</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
<th>Grade 6</th>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Grade 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>English Language Arts</strong></td>
<td>Grade 5 Reading</td>
<td>Grade 6 Reading</td>
<td>Grade 7 English</td>
<td>Grade 8 English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 5 Writing</td>
<td>Grade 6 Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematics</strong></td>
<td>Grade 5 Math</td>
<td>Grade 6 Math</td>
<td>Pre-Algebra</td>
<td>Algebra I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>History-Social Science</strong></td>
<td>U.S. History and Geography: Making a New Nation</td>
<td>World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations</td>
<td>World History and Geography: Medieval and Early Modern Times</td>
<td>U.S. History and Geography: Growth and Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
<td>Grade 5 Science</td>
<td>Earth Science</td>
<td>Life Science</td>
<td>Physical Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elective</strong></td>
<td>PE/Visual Arts/Life Skills</td>
<td>PE/Visual Arts/Life Skills</td>
<td>PE/Visual Arts/Life Skills</td>
<td>PE/Visual Arts/Life Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advisory</strong></td>
<td>Morning/Afternoon</td>
<td>Morning/Afternoon</td>
<td>Morning/Afternoon</td>
<td>Morning/Afternoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below we provide a detailed outline of the scope and sequence of skills to be taught in all grade levels and all subjects.

The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (“the Standards”) are the culmination of an extended, broad-based effort to fulfill the charge issued by the states to create the next generation of K–12 standards in order to help ensure that all students are college and career ready in literacy no later than the end of high school.
Figure 1.45 – Process of Curriculum Alignment

- CCSS
- Creation of Internal Standards Mapped out Curriculum Alignment Template, Curriculum Maps
- Development of Internal Benchmarks and Final Assessments
- Development of Scope and Sequence – CATs
- Creation of Unit Assessments
- Development of Unit Plans
- Development of Weekly Plans
- Development of Daily Lesson Plans

Led by School Leaders and Completed with Teachers

Created by Teachers and approved by School Leaders
**READING AND WRITING**

Per the Common Core Standards, students must learn to read, write, speak, listen, and use language effectively in a variety of content areas. The Standards also specify the literacy skills and understandings required for college and career readiness in multiple disciplines. Literacy standards for grade 6 and above are predicated on teachers of ELA, history/social studies, science, and technical subjects using their content area expertise to help students meet the particular challenges of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language in their respective fields.

Students who meet the Common Core Standards readily undertake the close, attentive reading that is at the heart of understanding and enjoying complex works of literature. They habitually perform the critical reading necessary to pick carefully through the staggering amount of information available today in print and digitally. They actively seek the wide, deep, and thoughtful engagement with high-quality literary and informational texts that builds knowledge, enlarges experience, and broadens worldviews. They reflexively demonstrate the cogent reasoning and use of evidence that is essential to both private deliberation and responsible citizenship in a democratic republic. In short, students who meet the Standards develop the skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that are the foundation for any creative and purposeful expression in language. In order to meet the guidelines of CCSS Valor Academy will employ:

- **Scaffolding Comprehension Strategies:** The teacher strategically releases instructional support,

- **Making Connections:** Strategic thinking is facilitated by prior knowledge about a topic and the ability to make meaningful connections to improve comprehension. For many of our students, especially those who come in below grade level, making connections to texts based on their own experiences will be vitally important to their comprehension of the material. As students progress and become better, more fluent readers, we will push students to make connections across texts and across academic content areas.

- **Vocabulary:** Teachers explicitly instruct and develop vocabulary as it pertains to their content area. Teachers provide students with word lists at the beginning of each novel, chapter, or selection of text that they must read independently, helping students as they read independently to better comprehend the text. During class time, teachers use a variety of strategies to teach vocabulary. We firmly believe that as students begin to read more fluently and comprehend the material the love of learning and reading will emerge.

- **Engaging Students in Sustained Collaborative Discussion:** Discussion is an important strategy for enhancing understanding, clarifying and refining meaning, making connections, inferring and synthesizing information. It is an important and invaluable social function in the classroom. It affords students the opportunity to voice their opinions, learn to express disagreement and collaborate with their peers. Furthermore, it
provides students with a forum to articulate ideas and inquire about misunderstanding in an academic setting and with academic vocabulary.

- **Learning to Write:** Writing is a complex process and requires students to translate their thoughts onto paper while developing ideas, drafting them, and putting forth a finished product. We will explicitly teach each aspect of the writing process: brainstorming, drafting, revising/editing, and producing the final product. Our fifth and sixth graders will greatly benefit from the structure and security of following this process and it will enable teachers in seventh and eighth grade to dive deeper into texts and require higher levels of analysis from students.

Students will work through the writing process focusing intensely on grammar and structure. Starting in the seventh grade, reading and writing classes will merge to form one two-hour English class focused on critical thinking, research, and extended writing assessments. Seventh and eighth grade students will work on cross-curricular projects with science and social studies, focusing on synthesis and argument rather than narratives. Students will use grade-level recommended books. Writing at the seventh and eighth grade levels will encourage and push students to:

- Compose fictional and autobiographical narratives
- Write literary responses demonstrating careful reading and thorough comprehension
- Organize ideas in a clear and linear fashion to produce written works that engage readers
- Provide evidence to support their stated position
- Address counterarguments
- Provide summaries of reading materials that include main idea and supporting details
- Use quotations and the student’s own words to reflect a deep understanding of the text
- Synthesize information from a variety of texts, genres and content areas
- Produce research reports and demonstrate critical thinking skills

**Reading**

Reading proficiency is essential to the mastery of all other academic subjects. Our graduating eighth graders must be prepared to read and write as strong high school students. Their abilities and skills will reflect intensive middle school Language Arts study and training. Such ability is dependant on a strong English Language Arts curriculum that ensures reading fluency and
comprehension of fiction and non-fiction texts, and strong writing ability in a variety of genres. Valor Academy students will read classical texts from diverse cultures in fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. In the fifth grade, students who are reading below grade level will receive intensive phonics and phonemic awareness instruction.42

Beginning in fifth grade, students will minimally have 100 minutes of instruction in Language Arts every day. Comprehensively, our English Language Arts program will build a strong foundation in the five components of strong reading as outlined by the Federal government: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.43

The reading class, taking into account the CCSS will focus on fluency and comprehension of both fiction and non-fiction texts. Students will practice their fluency through guided group and individual reading of a variety of texts and genres. In fifth grade this will include systematic and explicit phonics instruction. Phonics is not typically focused on in later grades, however, we expect that a majority of our students will have a weak literacy foundation, and will not have had exposure to or mastery of an in-depth phonics program, which we believe is fundamental for future academic success. With this foundation students’ reading progress will be closely monitored to ensure success in this critical and foundational skill. Regular teacher/student conferences will help teachers to assess students’ reading progress.

We are fully committed to ensuring our students are active and purposeful readers. Therefore, teachers and administrators will develop a rigorous four-year plan for introducing increasingly difficult texts and assignments to our students. Research indicates that the more reading materials children are exposed to, the easier it is for them to develop strong writing and comprehension skills. The diversity of our texts will support students’ development of their reading skills through many different contexts.

Writing

Written expression is closely linked with success in college-preparatory and higher education. Students will master the writing of five-paragraph essays in all five genres: expository, narrative, persuasive, literary response, and correspondence. Students will master grammar and mechanics.

Schools leaders will develop Valor Academy standards for writing using the Common Core standards. To generate teaching activities, teachers will use a combination of widely-accepted writing programs such as Step Up to Writing and 6+1 Trait.

Developed by Maureen Auman, Step Up to Writing is a logically sequenced writing program, commonly used in California schools. The direct instruction and modeling used by teachers to improve student skills is consistent with our instructional methods throughout the school. The guided practice and independent practice that follow appropriately match the sequence of activities in other Valor Academy classes. Further, Step Up to Writing includes many

42 Depending on the need, language support and literacy development will be offered during non-core academic subjects as well as after school.
43Armbruster, B., Lehr, F., and Osborn, J. (2001)“Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read.” Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA).
opportunities for teachers to lead students through an authentic writing process, including editing and revisions. The Step Up to Writing program includes instruction and materials for all five genres of writing.

**Reading & Writing Course Descriptions**

### Table 1.30 – Fifth Grade Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fifth Grade Reading</th>
<th>Foundation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Focus</strong></td>
<td>Developing students’ word analysis, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curricular Focus</strong></td>
<td>Develop vocabulary through spelling, decoding, understanding of imagery, Greek and Latin roots and affixes, context clues, and dictionary skills; fluently read aloud narrative and expository texts; identify and analyze the characteristics of poetry, drama, and other types of fiction and nonfiction; identify and analyze plot conflict; contrast character traits; understand and recognize theme; evaluate archetypes used in mythical and traditional literature; summarize main ideas and supporting details of nonfiction texts; use textual evidence to determine author’s point of view; understand how text features make information accessible and usable; analyze chronologically organized texts; draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations supported by textual evidence; distinguish facts, supported inferences, and opinions in texts; compare and contrast across texts and in the same genre; evaluate how a narrator’s point of view influences the text; describe the impact and contribution of multimedia on the meaning of a text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Possible Texts**
  - Fifth grade reading standards will be taught using a variety of texts, including short stories, picture books, nonfiction texts informational articles, poems, and books appropriate for the grade-level. Shared reading novels may include Gary Paulsen’s *Night John*, Pam Munoz Ryan’s *Esperanza Rising*, and fiction texts such as Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Jerry Spinelli’s *Maniac McGee*, and *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Crane (non-fiction)

- **Struggling Students**
  - Struggling students may partake in leveled decoding and fluency groups. Literacy help will also be offered during our extended after school program.

- **Other**
  - All students will use word origins to begin to understand new words, understand antonyms, synonyms, and homographs. Greek and Latin roots and affixes will also be used to broaden understanding and explain the figurative and metaphorical use of words in context.
### Table 1.31 – Fifth Grade Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fifth Grade Writing</th>
<th>Foundation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Focus</strong></td>
<td>Developing students’ competencies with grammar, conventions, and the writing process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curricular Focus</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate control and command of the conventions of the English Language- capitalization, punctuation, grammar; write opinion pieces with controlling topic sentences; provide evidence to support claims; write expository texts; write narratives; engage in the revision process(drafting, revision, submission) to produce clear and coherent writing; write independently over an extended period of time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Texts</th>
<th>6+1, Step up to Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Struggling Students</strong></td>
<td>Literacy help will be offered during our extended after school program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 1.32 – Sixth Grade Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sixth Grade Reading</th>
<th>Foundation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Focus</strong></td>
<td>Sixth graders will partake in word study focused on multiple-meaning words, commonly used foreign words, the use of context to understand new words, and shades of meaning in related words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curricular Focus</strong></td>
<td>Determine unfamiliar word meanings through use of Greek and Latin roots and affixes; determine meaning of figurative language; read aloud with pacing, intonation, and expression; cite and use textual evidence to identify author’s purpose;; utilize print and electronic dictionaries and thesauri; identify textual organizational structures; determine the figurative and literal language meanings; analyze how tone and meaning is conveyed in poetry; identify and analyze characteristics of various types of nonfiction texts; identify characteristics of different forms of prose; identify and use structural features of popular media; analyze compare-and-contrast texts; analyze the way in which sentences add to the overall structure of a text; trace and evaluate author’s argument;; distinguish claims that are supported with reason and evidence from those that are not; compare and contrast different authors’ presentation of similar events.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Possible Texts      | Nonfiction texts and Novels that may be studied as a class or in |
Seventh and eighth grade English will integrate reading and writing skills into a single course. These courses will prepare students for high school English courses by demanding a high-level of rigor, critical thinking, research, and increased independence. As a faculty, the English department will still closely analyze what is grade appropriate in reading and writing, but intertwine and pace it fluidly within the course of one period. The seventh and eighth grade English courses will also incorporate a greater degree of cross curricular application, working closely with science and social studies teachers so that students are prepared for high levels of reading and writing in all content areas.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seventh Grade English Reading Component</th>
<th>Foundation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Focus</strong></td>
<td>Seventh graders will continue to build their vocabularies, non-fiction and non-fiction comprehension skills, and develop a stronger sense of writing for a specific audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curricular Focus</strong></td>
<td>Use knowledge of affixes and roots to determine the meaning of content area words; use textual evidence to support facts and opinions; build upon previously developed skills analyzing various nonfiction texts; employ character analysis; identify, analyze, and provide textual evidence of themes; identify various genres of fiction; analyze character and plot development; write summaries, persuasive essays, autobiographical narratives and poems;; evaluate how a drama or a poem’s structure contributes to meaning; analyze how an author develops different points of views; compare and contrast written versions of dramas, stories, or poetry to multimedia versions; compare and contrast fictional portrayals of history to true historical accounts to evaluate how author’s manipulate history;; trace and evaluate an author’s argument and specific claims;; provide evidence to support claims; apply research steps for completing projects; effectively utilize English language conventions; support all statements and claims with anecdotes, descriptions, facts and statistics and specific examples; use note taking, outlines, and summaries to impose structure on drafts; revise writing to improve organization and word choice; critique works in oral presentations; deliver well-organized formal presentations that demonstrate command of standard American English.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Possible Texts**

Examples of the level of rigor expected in this course may include William Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*, William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Elie Wiesel’s *Night*, and Lois Lowry’s *Number the Stars* and *The Giver*, *Breaking Through*, and nonfiction texts.

**Struggling Students**

Literacy help will be offered during our extended after school program.

**Other**

Seventh graders will use Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and affixes to learn new content-area vocabulary. They will use definition, restatement, example, and contrast to clarify the meanings of new words. Students will identify analogies, idioms, metaphors, and similes.

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Table 1.35 – Seventh Grade Writing
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Seventh Grade English Writing Component</strong></th>
<th><strong>Foundation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Focus</strong></td>
<td>Seventh graders will use the writing process and revising strategies to compose a variety of literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curricular Focus</strong></td>
<td>Use knowledge of affixes and roots to determine the meaning of content area words; use textual evidence to support facts and opinions; build upon previously developed skills analyzing various nonfiction texts; employ character analysis; identify, analyze, and provide textual evidence of themes; identify various genres of fiction; analyze character and plot development; write summaries, persuasive essays, autobiographical narratives and poems; evaluate how a drama or a poem’s structure contributes to meaning; analyze how an author develops different points of views; compare and contrast written versions of dramas, stories, or poetry to multimedia versions; compare and contrast fictional portrayals of history to true historical accounts to evaluate how author’s manipulate history; trace and evaluate an author’s argument and specific claims; provide evidence to support claims; apply research steps for completing projects; effectively utilize English language conventions; support all statements and claims with anecdotes, descriptions, facts and statistics and specific examples; use note taking, outlines, and summaries to impose structure on drafts; revise writing to improve organization and word choice; critique works in oral presentations; deliver well-organized formal presentations that demonstrate command of standard American English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Possible Texts</strong></td>
<td>6+1, Step up to writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Struggling Students</strong></td>
<td>Literacy help will be offered during our extended after school program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>Seventh grade conventions will include the correct use of modifiers, active voice, infinitives, participles, pronouns and antecedents, parts of speech and sentence structures, and hyphens, dashes, brackets, and semi-colons. Students’ mechanics and spelling will reflect standards for grade-level proficiency. Students will also use checklists and rubrics for self-assessment. Self-selection of topics and responding to assigned prompts will be imperative for learning independence and creativity in the writing process. Students will also gain exposure to word processing skills, through programs such as Microsoft Word and PowerPoint.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 1.36 – Eighth Grade Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eighth Grade English Reading Component</th>
<th>Foundation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Focus</strong></td>
<td>Eighth graders will gain a precise understanding of complex words, idioms, analogies, metaphors, and similes. Students also will begin a study of the history of the English language and the influence of common word origins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curricular Focus</strong></td>
<td>Know the meanings of common foreign words used in the English language;; understand shades of meaning in words;; identify speaker’s purpose and point of view; compare and contrast texts covering the same topic; build upon previously developed skills analyzing various nonfiction texts; evaluate structural elements of the plot; analyze how setting relates to problem and resolution; identify significant literary devices that define a writer’s style;; write multi-paragraph essays with thesis statements, logical organization, detail, rhetorical devices, transitions, and varying sentence structure; write short stories or narratives; support conclusions with analogies, paraphrases, quotations, opinions from authorities, comparisons, and similar devices; write stories and scripts with dialogue; analyze electronic journalism; revise writing for word choice, appropriate organization, consistent point of view, and transitions; deliver formal presentations that convey ideas clearly and relate to the background and interests of audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Possible Texts</strong></td>
<td>Most of the assigned texts in Eighth Grade English will have historical significance, and many will tie in with the United States history standards. Texts may include Upton Sinclair’s <em>The Jungle</em>, F. Scott Fitzgerald's <em>The Great Gatsby</em>, Nathaniel Hawthorne’s <em>The Scarlet Letter</em>, Arthur Miller’s <em>The Crucible</em>, George Orwell’s <em>Animal Farm</em>, and John Steinbeck’s <em>Of Mice and Men</em>, and J.R.R Tolkein’s <em>Hobbit, Diary of Anne Frank and other non-fiction texts</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Struggling Students</strong></td>
<td>Literacy help will be offered during our extended after school program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MATHEMATICS AND OUR APPROACH TO NUMERACY

The Common Core Mathematics Standards define what students should understand and be able to do in their study of mathematics. Asking a student to understand something means asking a teacher to assess whether the student has understood it. But what does mathematical understanding look like? One hallmark of mathematical understanding is the ability to justify, in a way appropriate to the student’s mathematical maturity, why a particular mathematical
statement is true or where a mathematical rule comes from. There is a world of difference between a student who can summon a mnemonic device to expand a product such as \((a + b)(x + y)\) and a student who can explain where the mnemonic comes from. The student who can explain the rule understands the mathematics, and may have a better chance to succeed at a less familiar task such as expanding \((a + b + c)(x + y)\). Mathematical understanding and procedural skill are equally important, and both are assessable using mathematical tasks of sufficient richness. At Valor Academy we will ensure that students both understand mathematical concepts and can apply them in accordance with Common Core.

Algebra mastery is considered by some to be the gateway to higher learning, and thus a modern reflection of the civil rights movement. For example, Robert P. Moses states that “[w]ithout these skills [of algebra] children will be tracked into an economic underclass.”\(^{44}\) Valor Academy students will ALL master algebra in the eighth grade. This goal requires intensive fifth and sixth grade courses in general mathematics that ensure a strong foundation in number sense, algebra and function, data analysis and statistics, probability, measurement and geometry, and mathematical reasoning. A seventh grade Pre-Algebra course will continue expanding upon these areas of numeracy with a focus on preparing all students for algebra in the eighth grade.\(^{45}\) We require algebra mastery in the eighth grade to allow students to pursue a college-preparatory high school experience that includes the opportunity to study calculus by twelfth grade.

Students receive a double block of math in the fifth and sixth grades, divided explicitly into procedures and problem solving. As a developmentally appropriate measure to get students prepared for high school, the seventh and eighth grade students receive one block of mathematics which merges procedures and problem solving together. Standards for each year of the mathematics curriculum will be developed using the CCSS standards. To ensure teaching activities are consistent with best practices for math instruction, Valor Academy teachers will use a sequence of mathematics textbooks. Using these textbooks alongside the Curriculum Alignment Templates that ensure that all skills and concepts taught at the school are CCSS driven, will ensure an effective, standards-based approach to mathematics.

Valor Academy’s math program takes into consideration the developmental growth needs and grade level skills identified by CCSS. As seen in the chart below, the content and implementation of content is designed to allow students to master Algebra in the eighth grade allowing them to enter and succeed in high school and beyond.


\(^{45}\) Math support and remediation will be offered through our flexible ability grouping and after school tutoring to ensure all students are on track to completing Algebra in the eighth grade. All SPED IEP’s will be closely followed and monitored. Please see our extended list of student supports in Element 1, Section 5.
Figure 1.39 – Mathematics Development at Valor Academy

Fifth and Sixth Math

Procedures:
Skills & Concepts of numeracy, algebra and geometry

Problem Solving:
Application

Seventh Grade Pre-Algebra

Procedures:
Foundations of algebraic thinking

Problem Solving:
Deeper understanding of fifth & sixth skills

Eighth Grade Algebra

Procedures:
High School Algebra I

Problem Solving:
Data analysis, geometry, and measurement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Possible Texts</th>
<th>CCSS Study and Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Grade Math</td>
<td>Houghton Mifflin’s <em>California Math</em> or Saxon Publisher’s <em>Intermediate</em> and <em>Middle Grades</em> Series</td>
<td>Understand place value to billions and thousandths; compute with very large and very small numbers, positive integers, decimals, and fractions; understand the relationship between decimals, fractions, and percents; perform calculations and solve problems involving addition, subtraction, and simple multiplication and division of fractions and decimals; add and subtract integers; use variables in simple expressions; compute the value of the expression for specific values of the variable; understand and compute the volumes and areas of simple objects; identify, describe, and classify the properties of, and the relationships between, plane and solid geometric figures; display, analyze, compare, and interpret different data sets; problem solve; graph points on a coordinate plane; think critically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Grade Math</td>
<td>Houghton Mifflin’s <em>California Math</em> and Saxon Publisher’s <em>Intermediate</em> and <em>Middle Grades</em> Series</td>
<td>Compare and order positive and negative fractions, decimals, and mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level</td>
<td>Series</td>
<td>Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Grade Pre-Algebra</td>
<td>Houghton Mifflin’s <em>California Math</em> and Saxon Publisher’s <em>Intermediate</em> and <em>Middle Grades Series</em></td>
<td>Read, write, and compare rational numbers in scientific notation; convert fractions to decimals and percents; differentiate between rational and irrational numbers; apply exponents, powers, and roots and use exponents in working with fractions; understand pre-algebra concepts; use algebraic terminology, expressions, equations, inequalities, and graphs; interpret and evaluate expressions involving integer powers and simple roots; graph and interpret linear and some nonlinear functions; apply the Pythagorean theorem; use mathematical reasoning; problem solve; think critically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Grade Algebra</td>
<td>Houghton Mifflin’s</td>
<td>Identify and use the arithmetic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**California Math and Saxon Publisher’s Intermediate and Middle Grades Series**

- properties of subsets of integers and rational, irrational, and real numbers; solve equations and inequalities involving absolute values; solve multistep problems, including word problems, involving linear equations and linear inequalities in one variable; understand the concepts of parallel lines and perpendicular lines and how those slopes are related; add, subtract, multiply, and divide monomials and polynomials; solve a quadratic equation by factoring or completing the square; apply algebraic techniques to solve rate problems, work problems, and percent mixture problems; problem solve; think critically.

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**SCIENCE**

Students will study an intensive curriculum of the scientific method, earth, physical, and life sciences, and will design, execute, write, and present their own independent experiment in each grade during the annual Valor Academy Science Fair. This preparation will allow students to enter high school with a foundational knowledge of science standards and investigation and experimentation standards that will ensure success in High School Biology. Fifth grade science will include a medley of Earth Science, Physical Science, and Life Science content. This exposure to all three scientific subjects will develop a foundation through which each specific science can be more intricately explored in later years. In the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, earth, life, and physical science are taught respectively, with the last trimester of each grade serving as an introduction and exploration of the following years’ science content. This fluidity in curriculum through the years will serve to build an extensive and multifaceted understanding of scientific concepts which will be required to ensure success.
### Table 1.41 – Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Trimester 1</th>
<th>Trimester 2</th>
<th>Trimester 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Physical Science</td>
<td>Earth Science</td>
<td>Life Science</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Trimester 1</th>
<th>Trimester 2</th>
<th>Trimester 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Earth Science</td>
<td>Earth Science</td>
<td>Earth/Life Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Trimester 1</th>
<th>Trimester 2</th>
<th>Trimester 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Life/Earth Science</td>
<td>Life Science</td>
<td>Life/Physical Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Trimester 1</th>
<th>Trimester 2</th>
<th>Trimester 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Physical/Life Science</td>
<td>Physical Science</td>
<td>Physical/Earth Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 1.42 – Possible Texts and Focus for Fifth–Eighth Grade Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Possible Texts</th>
<th>Study and Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Grade Science</td>
<td>Harcourt Science, Foss Kits</td>
<td>Engage in the scientific process; plan and conduct investigations; plan and evaluate labs using dependent, controlled and independent variables; select and use the appropriate tools for labs; record data using graphs and draw conclusions based on data collected; write scientific lab reports based on findings. Study elements and their contributions; analyze and understand chemical reactions; understand the properties of solids, liquids and gaseous substances; define chemical reactions, atoms, matter, solids, liquids, gases; living organisms and most materials are composed of elements; identify instruments used by scientists to discern atoms and molecules.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Sixth Grade Science | Earth Science, Holt Rinehart Winston  
|                     | Foss Kits |
|                     |           |

- Identify and understand plant and animal structures; define and be able to explain the transport of materials, digestion, waste disposal process for plants and animals. Define, evaluate and analyze the water cycle (evaporation, condensation); movement of water on earth; ocean and land formations.

- Understand how topography is reshaped by the weathering of rock and soil and by the transportation and deposition of sediment; explain the meaning of radiation, convection, and conduction; recognize and describe that the currents in the air and ocean distribute heat energy; investigate and describe how pollutants can affect weather and the atmosphere; discuss how plate tectonics explain important features of the Earth’s surface and major geologic events; recognize how organisms in ecosystems exchange energy and nutrients among themselves and with the environment; formulate a testable hypothesis; design and conduct an experiment specifying variables to be changed, controlled, and measured; draw conclusions based on data or evidence presented in tables or graphs; make inferences based on patterns or trends in the data.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seventh Grade Science</th>
<th>Eighth Grade Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Holt Science and Technology Life Science  
  • Foss Kits | Recognize that all living organisms are composed of cells; describe that a typical cell of any organism contains genetic instructions that specify its traits; recognize that biological evolution accounts for the diversity of species developed through gradual processes over many generations; study the structure and function in living systems; understand that evidence from rocks allows us to understand the evolution of life on earth; recognize that organisms in ecosystems exchange energy and nutrients among themselves and with the physical environment; ask meaningful questions and conduct careful investigations to support hypothesis; communicate the steps and results from an investigation in written reports and verbal presentations; discuss types of technology that are developed and in use. |
| Scientific Method: Recognize that elements have distinct macroscopic properties and atomic structures; describe chemical reactions; discuss density and buoyancy; explain the relationship amongst motion, velocity and force; recognize that the structure and composition of the universe can be learned from studying stars and galaxies and their evolution; use and analyze the organization of the Periodic Table; test hypotheses that |
HISTORY - SOCIAL SCIENCE

To ensure that Valor Academy graduates have the content knowledge along with the critical research, thinking, and writing skills necessary for high school history, all students will study a wide range of historical content and research. The sequence of courses will include United States History and Geography in the fifth grade, World History: Ancient Civilizations and Geography in the sixth grade, World History: Early Modern Times and Geography in the seventh grade, and United States History: Growth and Conflict in the eighth grade. This sequence aligns with that of the California Public Schools. The History curriculum will be interjected with cross curricular literacy by incorporating fictional and non-fictional texts that correspond with the subject matter students are covering. The literature will serve in reinforcing literacy, as well as helping students to conceptualize and contextualize foreign concepts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 5</th>
<th>US History and Geography: Making a New Nation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>World History and Geography: Early Modern Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>US History and Geography: Growth and Conflict</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1.43 – Social Science – History**

**Table 1.44 – Possible Texts & Focus for Fifth - Eighth Grade Social Science**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Possible Texts[^47]</th>
<th>Study and Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td><strong>Fiction Texts:</strong> Sign of the Beaver, Witch of Blackbird Pond, Amos Fortune: free man or Brother Sam is Dead</td>
<td><strong>U.S. History and Geography: Making a New Nation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Study of American History up to 1850 beginning with the Native American culture and how residents can to be in North America.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Focus on European</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^46]: In the fifth and sixth grade, science and social studies are each taught for half of the year.
[^47]: These fiction text selections have been used successfully with the History Alive Curriculum at WCCS charter school, one of the successful models of high performing schools toured during the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship.

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Valor Academy Charter School
### Sixth Grade History/SS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiction Texts:</th>
<th>World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>A Place in the Sun, Roman Mysteries, The Iliad (Greece), Tales of Legendary Greek Heroes (Greece)</em></td>
<td>• Study of Western and Non-Western ancient civilizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-fiction Texts:</td>
<td>• Focus on the everyday lives of people and their problems and accomplishments, archaeology, geography, social and political structures, economics, and the spread of ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Alive: The Ancient World</td>
<td>• Examination of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Kush, the Ancient Hebrews and Greeks, India, China, and Rome.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Seventh Grade History/SS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiction Texts:</th>
<th>World History and Geography: Medieval and Early Modern Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Streams to the River, River to the Sea, Lyddie,</em> 47.</td>
<td>• Study the social, cultural, and technological changes that occurred in Europe, Africa, and Asia from 500 A.D. to 1789, fall of the Roman Empire, Islam in the Middle Ages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-fiction Texts:</td>
<td>• Focus on geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of China, Ghana, Mali, Japan, and Europe in the Middle Ages and Meso-American and Andean civilizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Alive: The Medieval World and Beyond</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PHYSICAL EDUCATION

In addition to the core academic courses all students will participate in physical education classes four days a week.

The objectives of the physical education program are to:

- encourage and promote physical development and growth through exercises in agility, strength and hand-eye coordination
• promote individual physical self-confidence through the accomplishment of individual physical goals and through team activities
• strengthen a sense of unity, accountability, and responsibility through physical team building exercise
• expose students to life activities that will help them to develop healthy lifestyles as an adult
• to discuss health and physical issues pertinent to youth in a supportive forum.

TECHNOLOGY
We recognize the importance of exposure to and use of technology and thus have made it a goal of the school to ensure that our students are technologically literate 21st century learners. Each grade level is equipped with a computer cart which will be used by a grade level teacher each day in the implementation of lessons. Thus we ensure that each Valor Academy student has the opportunity to utilize a computer at least one hour each school day. Through the use of technology in classrooms students learn to use a suite of office tools including word processing, Excel, Word Processing, etc. In addition, the school invests in technology based curricula such as Study Island and Accelerated reader which enhance students technology skills as they reinforce core content skills. Finally, each student is equipped with a Valor Academy email address and learns to use cloud computing through our Google education platform.
ALIGNING CURRICULUM AND INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS TO CCSS STANDARDS

All of the curricular standards for Valor Academy are directly aligned with the Common Core Standards.

During the four-week summer orientation, school leaders will guide teachers to critically analyze CCSS standards and identify the skills and content areas needed for mastery at a specific grade level. These standards will drive the creation of year-end and six-week interim assessments and will be used to plan a Curriculum Alignment Template (CAT) for each course – a tool that will allow the school and teachers to align each state standard with all classroom lessons and assessments, and to break down those standards into smaller Valor Academy standards as needed, guaranteeing a high degree of accountability to teaching the standards. The CAT will include CCSS and the lesson topic, essential questions, objectives, vocabulary, and assessment methods. This detailed work will enable teachers to have a solid plan before students arrive and will assist them in creating their lesson plans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Consistency</th>
<th>Excel Academy Charter School, Boston, MA</th>
<th>BBC, common planning, common physical space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Character Development</td>
<td>North Star, Newark, NJ</td>
<td>Morning Community Circles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character Development</td>
<td>Boston Preparatory Charter School, Boston, MA</td>
<td>Ethics Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Work Course</td>
<td>KIPP KAO, Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>16 Habits of Mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>Leadership Preparatory Charter School, Brooklyn, NY</td>
<td>1 hour of Department Based, 1 hour of Grade Level Based, ½ hour of School Wide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Development</td>
<td>Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, Boston, MA</td>
<td>Creation of Internal Curriculum with CAT alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Accountability</td>
<td>Achievement First, Crown Heights, NY</td>
<td>Proven Instructional Practices, Curriculum, and Methods of Assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESEARCH BASE

Our approach is to use state approved texts in our classrooms, utilizing them as a resource to create an internally crafted curricula which (a) is developed through the curriculum alignment process outlined below and (b) is fully aligned with CA state standards. The process of curriculum development adopted by Valor Academy has been used by a number of high performing charter schools nationwide serving a similar demographic. Our process for curriculum development and implementation has been adopted primarily from Roxbury Preparatory Charter School (Roxbury Prep) in Boston, MA.

Please see Table 1.47 for an example of a CAT.
**ROXBURY PREP CURRICULAR MODEL**

The curriculum development process at Roxbury Prep begins with the analysis of multiple state and standardized assessments. During the four week summer orientation summer faculty and staff plan and prepare curriculum for the school year by developing Curriculum Alignment Templates. The process is valuable for developing shared knowledge among the staff and passing it along to new teachers, who can review the CATs for the courses they are teaching and build on those lesson plans and curriculum units. In following this process, Valor Academy teachers will use state tests, state standards, and other standards (i.e. MA standards), to develop school-based standards for each class at each grade level. From these standards, teachers will complete Curriculum Alignment Templates (CATs) for each course. These include student learning goals for each standard, teaching activities to reach these standards, and assessments (both questions and full assessments). Using these assessment questions, teachers will create Trimester Comprehensive Assessments for every class, all before the start of school.

At Valor Academy the Director of Instruction and Head of School will oversee the internal assessment development process. Under the guidance of the Director of Instruction, teachers will map backwards from the state standards, and establish a clear set of internal standards to be taught through objectives and mastered at each grade level in each subject. They will then develop the End-of-Year and Trimester Comprehensive Assessments (12 week Benchmarks) to ensure student mastery of each standard. The Director of Instruction will provide models for all internal assessments to be developed, vet all internal assessments, and approve all final documents. After each assessment is administered during the course of the school year, results will be imported into an excel matrix and every teacher will receive specific feedback on how many students have met the standards with respect to each question on the assessment. The Head of School and Director of Instruction will work closely to ensure that teachers are re-teaching standards as needed, and providing the additional student supports beyond the classroom as needed.

During the course of the year, all curricula to be used in the classroom, including a weekly syllabus with standards-driven lessons for each day, will be provided two weeks in advance to the Director of Instruction for review and approval. The success of the curriculum will be measured by student performance on a number of assessments, most particularly on the CST and Stanford 10. We believe that strong assessments, aligned with CA standards will drive the development of highly effective unit plans, daily lesson plans, and all assignments and academic activities.

This process is based upon the success of some of the highest performing charter schools in underserved areas, including North Star (Newark, NJ), Amistad Academy (New Haven, CT), and most specifically to our curriculum design process, Roxbury Prep (Boston, MA).

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50 Please See Attachment U for Example of Valor Academy Internal Standards.
51 Models of Roxbury Prep (and other school’s) internally devised curricula are readily available to Building Excellent Schools Fellows.
52 Please See Attachment Q for an example of the Weekly Syllabus.
Success with a Similar Population

The student population at Roxbury Prep is 78% African-American, 22% Latino, and 26% Linguistic Minority; 62% of the demographic is eligible for the Free or Reduced Price Lunch Program, and 75% of the student body lives in the adjacent low income neighborhoods. Roxbury Prep was highlighted in Successful Charter Schools, a report issued by the U.S. Department of Education: “In some schools, the mission is to prepare low-income, urban students for higher education, students, for example, who enroll with below-grade-level skills and aspire to be the first members of their families to attend college. Such a mission led Roxbury Prep to structure the school day so that every student takes two periods of reading and two periods of math.”53

Since 2004 Roxbury Prep has ranked as the highest-performing urban public middle school in Massachusetts on the state test (MCAS).

In 2006 ninety percent of students at Roxbury Prep scored advanced or proficient on the eighth grade math test, 50% higher than the state average, and 67% higher than any other public school. Further, 91% of eighth graders scored advanced or proficient in ELA, 16% higher than the state average, and 37% higher than Boston Public Schools. In eighth grade science, students scored 16% higher than the state average and 40% higher than Boston Public Schools. These outstanding results are consistent among all grade levels and subject matters. The results described have been achieved with this population and success is evenly distributed, meaning that Latino students and English Language Learners have achieved comparable gains to the population as a whole.

The Roxbury Prep curriculum development process has demonstrated excellent results. As measured by the state assessment (MCAS), Roxbury Prep continues to be the highest-performing urban public middle school in MA, and one of the highest performing middle schools across all demographic groups.

This curriculum development process has also been adopted by a number of other charter schools serving an urban demographic, leading to the academic success of their students, even in their founding years. For example, West Denver Preparatory Charter School, a middle school in Denver, Colorado, founded by a Building Excellent School Fellow in 2005, has posted impressive scores in their first year of operation. Among schools composed of more than two-thirds students who qualify for Federal Free or Reduced Lunch, West Denver Prep’s scores ranked first in the city in Math, second in Writing, and among the top ten in Reading. In mathematics proficiency, West Denver Prep ranked third among open-enrollment schools, and fifth among all schools, while exceeding the state average by 6%. West Denver Prep has a population of which 87% of students live in poverty, and over half of the student demographic is classified as ELL. West Denver Prep’s scores in their first year of operation are outlined below in Table 1.50.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>West Denver Prep</th>
<th>DPS Average</th>
<th>State Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are confident that this combination of internally developed curricula along with our state approved texts will give our students the foundational skills and knowledge necessary to become advanced readers, writers, and mathematicians, and will ensure that they have the foundation in social studies and science necessary for more advanced study at the high school level.

Part F: The textbooks or other instructional resources to be used.

At Valor Academy we intend to use textbooks and instructional resources that align with Common Core. Alongside the texts, we will guide and support teachers as they devise internal standards and curricula that will allow for objective based learning that can be closely monitored and used for teacher professional development and student academic growth.

Listed below are examples of texts that might possibly be used at each grade level and subject.55

Table 1.51 – Possible Textbooks & Resources by Grade and Subject for Middle Scho

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE 5 – ALL CORE SUBJECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title: Saxon Math 76: An Incremental Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition: Third Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher: Saxon Publishers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title: Harcourt Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition: California Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher: Harcourt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN Number: 0153176555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Possible use of select FOSS science Kits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Studies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title: History Alive: America’s Past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition: First Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher: TCI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN Number: 1-58371-052-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title: Writer’s Express: A Handbook for Young Writers, Thinkers, and Learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition: Student Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher: Great Source Education Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN Number: 0-664-47163-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: 6+1 Writing, Step Up to Writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

55 Reference Element 1, Section 4, Part B: Scope and Sequence of the Application to view subject course descriptions and possible texts. These textbooks are at use at KIPP: KAO in Los Angeles, and have shown demonstrable success students.
## GRADE 6 – ALL CORE SUBJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Studies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## GRADE 7 – ALL CORE SUBJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Studies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISBN Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
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<td>Edition</td>
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<td>Publisher</td>
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<td>ISBN Number</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GRADE 8 – ALL CORE SUBJECTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Edition</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>ISBN Number</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
<td><strong>Algebra I: An Incremental Development</strong></td>
<td>Third Edition</td>
<td>Saxon Publishers</td>
<td>1-5677-134-6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
<td><strong>Holt Science and Technology Physical Science</strong></td>
<td>California 2001</td>
<td>Holt, Reinhart &amp; Winston</td>
<td>0-03-055797-6</td>
<td>Possible use of select FOSS science Kits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Studies</strong></td>
<td><strong>History Alive! The United States Through Industrialism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>TCI</td>
<td>1-58371-401-4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English</strong></td>
<td><strong>Write Source: A Book for Writing</strong></td>
<td>Package Edition</td>
<td>Great Source Education Group</td>
<td>0-669-50705-9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Computer Based Programs**

In addition to the aforementioned texts, Valor Academy utilizes the following technology based programs:

*Study Island*: Study Island supports the learning process and builds off of students enthusiasm for technology with engaging, interactive lessons and activities. Students can work through the web-based program at their own pace, or teachers can guide students through the program. And with dynamic content, students don’t memorize the answers, they learn the topics. Study Island is utilized in all grade levels and all subject content.

*Accelerated Reader*: AR serves as the practice component of our comprehensive reading program by promoting personalized practice combined with data to monitor and manage that practice. AR is used at every grade level at Valor.
Part G: How the school will recruit teachers who are qualified to deliver the proposed instructional program

RECRUITMENT

Research has shown conclusively that one of the greatest indicators in student achievement is the quality of teachers, leaders, and staff. At Valor Academy we intend to attract highly qualified, mission driven teachers who are pro-active, self-reflective, and focused on going to great lengths to make significant gains for their students. Valor Academy will recruit certified professionals who are organized, humble, team-oriented professionals who will uphold Valor Academy values that students can then emulate. Valor Academy teachers will have increased demands and pressures placed on them to increase student achievement, and in order to ensure student success, they will be heavily supported by school leaders who will consistently make classroom visits, run professional developments, and offer constructive feedback for continuous improvement. School structures and systems will also be an instrumental support that will allow for efficient classroom instruction. Each teacher will have a minimum of two planning periods within the seven-period school day, and will have ample opportunity for professional development through summer orientation, weekly professional development, and frequent observations coupled with feedback conversations. We realize that the demand for the high quality caliber teachers Valor Academy seeks will make recruitment challenging as we compete with like minded organizations for viable candidates. As such, we believe that in order to recruit, train and support the best staff, we must be prepared to cast a wide net, instate a rigorous and comprehensive selection process, and use our extensive networks in recruiting teachers qualified to deliver our instructional program.

RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

We will take a local and national approach towards recruiting our administrative and teaching staff. A major resource for recruitment will be the Teach For America Los Angeles office, which will be a funnel for mission aligned, like minded teachers and school leaders. The Building Excellent Schools Fellows have contracted with TFA for placement of teachers and have the support of the organization. The school’s proposed leader has strong access to the TFA network, and will work closely with the organization to effectively support the teaching needs of Valor Academy. Nationally, we will contact the alumni networks of colleges and universities and organizations such as New Leaders for New Schools. We also will recruit at all of the major colleges and universities in the area such as: UCLA, Loyola Marymount, USC, and the Cal State Universities. In addition, we will rely on word of mouth, advertising in the local papers, participation in annual charter schools job fairs, visits to private schools, and postings on websites such as Craigslist. We also might subscribe to headhunting services that recruit for charter schools such as Carnie, Sandoe, & Associates or Teach California Charter.

57 Please see TFA support letter in Attachment C and TFA contract Sample RFP contract in Attachment Q.
58 www.idealist.org.
INTERNALLY DRIVEN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development will be planned and executed internally, so as to maintain our disciplined focus on school goals and culture. Each teacher will have approximately two hours during the school day during which they can plan, adjust instructional plans based on assessment data, prepare for the week, or observe other teachers in the school. Formal professional development will occur every Friday; students will dismiss at 2:30 pm and teachers will have professional development from 2:30 until 5:00 pm. This weekly professional development will center around four core areas:

- Refining systems, routines, and procedures to minimize disruptions and maximize learning
- Discussing peer observations, analyzing student work samples, and readjusting our course accordingly
- Disaggregating data from assessments and determining which students will require intervention.
- Determining specific areas for re-teaching and readjusting plans to reflect student needs

Formal and informal collaboration will be integral to professional development at Valor Academy as teachers are expected to help one another improve and refine their practice. Informally teachers in the same content area will share common space and planning time to encourage professional interaction. Formal collaboration will take place at department meetings and inquiry groups during the Friday professional development sessions. The first hour of every professional development will be dedicated to department meetings which include updates on content and weekly curricula as well as periodic data analysis in grade level teams. As the school matures we will implement a vertical teaming process by which teachers at different grade levels can meet consistently to discuss strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum and create a strategic plan to improve the quality of instruction grade level to grade level based on these findings. The second hour of each professional development will be devoted to inquiry groups where teachers are grouped in cohorts of math and science as well as English and Social Studies in order to form critical masses of expertise to help with the improvement of curriculum and instruction. Each week the group will focus on one teacher’s lesson plan and one specific skill set. Best practices of instruction, curriculum, and materials will be shared amongst the groups. The final half hour of professional development will be devoted to school wide policies, procedures, and updates.\(^{59}\)

Valor Academy will additionally offer up to seven (7) Bright Star CMO led Professional Development days during the Academic school year.\(^{60}\)

**SCHOOL SITE VISITS**

Our professional development plan includes excellent school site visits. School leaders will be continually networking with leaders of other high performing charter schools in Los Angeles in order to be aware of new strategies and procedures that might be beneficial to Valor Academy. Teachers will be allowed two full days of school visits, or four half day visits per school year, in

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\(^{59}\) Time allocations for different segments of professional development might differ from year to year.

\(^{60}\) Please see Annual Calendar on page 108 of this application for specific dates.
order to observe best practices at other schools which have proven successful with students of similar socioeconomic backgrounds. Teachers will concentrate on instructional practice and procedure in their content and grade level and will share their findings at professional development on Fridays. This process will allow for constant reflection of standard practice and the incorporation of new ideas and strategies that will help students excel academically.

SCHOOL WIDE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Presenter</th>
<th>Team/Content</th>
<th>Content &amp; Items Due</th>
<th>FOCUS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T- 1. MS@Door 2. Power/Tutoring cont</td>
<td>Danielson DI = Direct Instruction: Admin guides teachers though an indepth understanding of the components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Data Director Presentation 2. Emergency Drills (Elijah)</td>
<td>C-1. Power/Tutoring Completion and Share Out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## October

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Special Education Professional Development - Differentiation 1 hr</th>
<th>2. Danielson 1.2 Discovery and Exploration</th>
<th>2. Danielson Discovery and Exploration: Teachers share out their research and experiences with the previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Doug Lemov</td>
<td>6. Staff Council Planning Time for Student Councils</td>
<td>Danielson Mastery: Teacher make brief presentations, showing how the information gained over the previous weeks has impacted their instruction, including presenting best practices based on previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. &quot;True Grit&quot; Presentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Danielson 3.3 A
- **Questioning**: Direct Instruction
- **2. Math Night**

### T: Home Visits, Harvest Festival, Family Math Night

### Danielson DI = Direct Instruction: Admin guides teachers through an indepth understanding of the components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November</th>
<th>CPR Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Danielson 3.3 A &quot;Questioning&quot;: Discovery and Exploration 2. Lemov Conference Share Out-Trae-Greenbarg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C- Doug Lemov Strategy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Danielson Discovery and Exploration: Teachers share out their research and experiences with the previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Grade Level Meetings: Systems, Norms |
| Content: Finals Review |

<p>| Schoolwide Intervention Professional Development |
| Technology- Istation, Khan, Power My Learning, Study Island, etc. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>December</th>
<th>January</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. New Unit Plan Template (w/Essential Questions and Enduring Understandings)</td>
<td>1. Danielson 3.3 B &quot;Academic Discourse&quot; DI 2. Bright Star Organization-Wide Professional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Special Education Professional Development - Differentiation 1 hr 3. Danielson 3.3 A &quot;Questioning&quot; Mastery, 4. CFY</td>
<td>1. Danielson 3.3 B &quot;Academic Discourse&quot; DI 2. Bright Star Organization-Wide Professional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielson Mastery: Teacher make brief presentations, showing how the information gained over the previous weeks has impacted their instruction, including presenting best practices based on previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.</td>
<td>Danielson DI = Direct Instruction: Admin guides teachers though an indeth understanding of the components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group Structures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Work Day</th>
<th>Teacher Work Day</th>
<th>Teacher Work Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group Structures/Resources and Instructional Materials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valor Academy Schoolwide Data and Systems Review Day</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Danielson 3.3 B Academic Discourse: DI</td>
<td>1. Elijah Attendance Policy 2. Family History Night (Booms) 3. Content Team Lesson Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Danielson 3.3 B Academic Discourse: Exploration</td>
<td>1. CCSS Exploration and Planning, 2. Family History Night (Booms) 3. Doug Lemov Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Special Education Professional Development - Differentiation 1 hr (Abby)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. CCSS Exploration and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Danielson 3.3 B Academic Discourse: Mastery A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Danielson 3.3 B Academic Discourse: Mastery B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Danielson 3.3 C Grouping Strategies: Direct Instruction; 2. Special Education Professional Development (Ester); 3. Lesson Plan Format Introduction; 4. School Culture Presentations (Vawter); 5. Team Planning and Work Time 6. Reading Learning Log Revisited (What changes will we make? What is our timeline for accountability?) 7. Test Accommodation/Modification Time (at least 1 hour)

1. CCSS Exploration and Planning (Danielson Mastery: Teacher make brief presentations, showing how the information gained over the previous weeks has impacted their instruction, including presenting best practices based on previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.)

1. Danielson 3.3 D Resources and Instructional Materials: Direct Instruction 1. CCSS Exploration and Planning (Danielson DI = Direct Instruction: Admin guides teachers through an in-depth understanding of the components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March</th>
<th>Teacher Work Day</th>
<th>Teacher Work Day</th>
<th>Teacher Work Day</th>
<th>Sequencing learning experiences/creating engaging learning experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Led Conferences</td>
<td>Student Led Conferences</td>
<td>Student Led Conferences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Danielson 3.3 D Resources and Instructional Materials: Discovery and Exploration

1. CCSS Exploration and Planning

Danielson Discovery and Exploration: Teachers share out their research and experiences with the previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.
1. Danielson 3.3 D Resources and Instructional Materials: Mastery

1. CCSS Exploration and Planning, 2. Doug Lemov Strategy Introduction

Danielson Mastery: Teacher make brief presentations, showing how the information gained over the previous weeks has impacted their instruction, including presenting best practices based on previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.

Danielson Revisited 1.2 A & B "Design and Sequence of Learning Experiences, and Cognitive Engagement"

1. CCSS Exploration and Planning

Danielson Revisited: During this process, a previously discussed Danielson standard is reviewed, and discussed in deeper context. This allows teachers to engage with the concept at a deeper level, approaching the close of the year.
<p>| 1. Special Education Presentation 1 hr (Esther); 2. Danielson Explorations and Discovery 1.2 A &amp; B “Design and Sequence of Learning Experiences, and Cognitive Engagement”; 3. School Culture Presentations (Vawter); 4. Team Meetings and Planning Time | 1. CCSS Exploration and Planning | Danielson Discovery and Exploration: Teachers share out their research and experiences with the previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>April</th>
<th>Danielson Mastery 1.2 A &amp; B &quot;Design and Sequence of Learning Experiences, and Cognitive Engagement&quot;</th>
<th>1. CCSS Exploration and Planning, 2. Doug Lemov Strategy Introduction</th>
<th>Danielson Mastery: Teacher make brief presentations, showing how the information gained over the previous weeks has impacted their instruction, including presenting best practices based on previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Danielson 3.3 A &quot;Questioning&quot;: Revisited</td>
<td>1. CCSS Exploration and Planning</td>
<td>Danielson Revisited: During this process, a previously discussed Danielson standard is reviewed, and discussed in deeper context. This allows teachers to engage with the concept at a deeper level, approaching the close of the year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Special Education Professional Development - Differentiation Abby; 2. Danielson 3.3 A "Questioning": Exploration and Discovery; 3. School Culture Presentations; 4. Team Meeting and Planning Time

| 1. Danielson 3.3 A "Questioning": Mastery; 2. Testing Logistics and Preparation | 1. CCSS Exploration and Planning | Danielson Discovery and Exploration: Teachers share out their research and experiences with the previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric. |

1. Danielson Mastery: Teacher make brief presentations, showing how the information gained over the previous weeks has impacted their instruction, including presenting best practices based on previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>1. Danielson 3.3 B Academic Discourse: Revisited</th>
<th>1. CCSS Exploration and Planning</th>
<th>Danielson Revisited: During this process, a previously discussed Danielson standard is reviewed, and discussed in deeper context. This allows teachers to engage with the concept at a deeper level, approaching the close of the year.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Danielson 3.3 B Academic Discourse: Exploration and Discovery</td>
<td>1. CCSS Exploration and Planning, 2. Doug Lemov Strategy Introduction</td>
<td>Danielson Discovery and Exploration: Teachers share out their research and experiences with the previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Group Structures/Instructional Materials</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LEL Trips Across Grade Levels</td>
<td>LEL Trips Across Grade Levels</td>
<td>LEL Trips Across Grade Levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valor Academy Charter School
<p>| 1. Danielson 3.3 B Academic Discourse: Mastery | 1. CCSS Exploration and Planning | Danielson Mastery: Teacher make brief presentations, showing how the information gained over the previous weeks has impacted their instruction, including presenting best practices based on previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric; Danielson Revisited: During this process, a previously discussed Danielson standard is reviewed, and discussed in deeper context. This allows teachers to engage with the concept at a deeper level, approaching the close of the year. |
| 2. Danielson 3.3 C Grouping Strategies: Revisited | | |
| 3. Special Education Presentation (Ester) | | |
| 4. School Culture Presentations (Vawter) | | |
| 5. Team Meeting and Planning Time | | |
| 1. Danielson 3.3 C Grouping Strategies: Exploration and Discovery | 1. CCSS Exploration and Planning 2. Cultural Vertical Articulation** | Danielson Discovery and Exploration: Teachers share out their research and experiences with the previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>June</th>
<th>1. Danielson 3.3 C Grouping Strategies: Mastery</th>
<th>1. CCSS Exploration and Planning, 2. Doug Lemov Strategy Introduction</th>
<th>Danielson Mastery: Teacher make brief presentations, showing how the information gained over the previous weeks has impacted their instruction, including presenting best practices based on previously discussed components of a particular section of the Danielson teacher evaluation rubric.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Danielson 3.3 D Resources and Instructional Materials: Revisited; 2. School Year Closing Out Logistics</td>
<td>1. CCSS Exploration and Planning</td>
<td>Danielson Revisited: During this process, a previously discussed Danielson standard is reviewed, and discussed in deeper context. This allows teachers to engage with the concept at a deeper level, approaching the close of the year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At Valor Academy we will set yearly school wide professional goals in order to keep all individuals goals within a framework and scope, so that we can grow incrementally as educators every year. School wide goals might look like:

### Table 1.52 – Sample Professional Development Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Returning Staff</td>
<td>By April 2014</td>
<td>100% of returning staff will be Advanced Proficient in the Valor Academy Culture and are able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Reinforce efforts towards big goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By April 2014</td>
<td>- Mobilize influencers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Facilitate/manage student practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100% of Sophomore* and older staff (that have taught for 2 years or more prior to Valor service) will be Exemplary in the Valor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Academy areas for Teaching As Leadership as measured by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Setting a big goal,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Standards Aligned Backwards planning,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Creating and obtaining standards aligned assessments-summative and formative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Clearly presenting academic material,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Communicating and enforcing high expectations,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Evaluating, tracking and communicating student performance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Staff</td>
<td>By April 2014</td>
<td>100% of returning staff will be Beginning Proficient in the Valor Culture areas for Teaching As Leadership as measured by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Reinforcement efforts towards big goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Mobilization of influencers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Facilitation/management of student practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By April 2014</td>
<td>100% of Freshmen* staff will be Advanced Proficient in the Valor Academy focus areas for Teaching As Leadership as measured by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Setting a big goal, Standards Aligned Backwards planning,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Creating and obtaining standards aligned assessments-summative and formative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Clearly presenting academic material,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Communicating and enforcing high expectations,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Evaluating, tracking and communicating student performance)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **By December 2015** | **100% of Freshmen staff will be Beginning Proficient…**
- Clearly presenting academic material
- Reinforce efforts towards big goals
- Setting a big goal
- Communicating and enforcing high expectations,
  -Evaluating, tracking and communicating student performance)
- Standards aligned backwards planning |
| **All Staff** | **By March of 2015** | **100% of all Valor teaching staff will be Proficient, as measured by**
- Gauge progress and gaps in achievement using data
- Identify student habits or actions influencing progress or gaps
- Isolate teacher actions contributing to students performance
- Identify the underlying factors causing teacher actions
- Access meaningful learning experiences (for improvement)
- After reflection, adjust course to maximize effectiveness
- Persist in the face of challenges, focused on goal
- Pursue/secure time/resources to increase student learning
Sustain energy to reach ambitious goals |

Part H: The school’s academic calendar and sample daily schedule, which explain the rationale for allocation of instructional time to different subject matter areas, as well as an assurance that the school will offer, at minimum, the number of minutes set forth in Education Code § 47612.5

**CALENDAR AND SCHEDULE**

At Valor Academy we realize that the time students spend in school is directly linked to the success they will have in demanding high schools and colleges. We employ an extended school day, an extended school week, and an extended school year with a “not a minute to waste” mentality, designed to provide academic rigor for all Valor Academy students. Included in the school design are a number of supports to ensure that students meet our uniquely demanding academic requirements.

**ASSURANCE**

Valor Academy will provide all students within grades 5-8 at minimum 54,000 instructional minutes each year as set forth in the Education Code § 47612.5:

a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law and as a condition of apportionment, a charter school shall do all of the following:

1. For each fiscal year, offer, at a minimum, the following number of minutes of instruction:
   
   (A) To pupils in kindergarten, 36,000 minutes.
   (B) To pupils in grades 1 to 3, inclusive, 50,400 minutes.
   (C) To pupils in grades 4 to 8, inclusive, 54,000 minutes.
   (D) To pupils in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, 64,800 minutes.

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61 School wide development goals reflect the goals of staff at KIPP: KAO, where lead founder Hrag Hamalian conducted a school leadership residency during his Building Excellent Schools Fellowship.

62 [http://law.onecle.com/california/education/47612.5.html](http://law.onecle.com/california/education/47612.5.html).
(2) Maintain written contemporaneous records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.

We intend to far exceed this baseline number of minutes through our extended day and longer school year. Please see Table 1.53 for approximate Valor Academy minutes.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES

Charter School shall offer, at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction set forth in California Education Code § 47612.5, and the number of school days required by Cal. Admin. Code, tit. 5, § 11960.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Grades Offered</th>
<th>Number of Regular Days</th>
<th>Number of Minutes Per Regular Day</th>
<th>Number of Early Dismissal Days</th>
<th>Number of Minutes Per Early Dismissal Day</th>
<th>Number of Minimum Days</th>
<th>Number of Minutes Per Minimum Day</th>
<th>Number of [Other] Days</th>
<th>Number of Minutes Per [Other] Day</th>
<th>Total Number of Instr. Days</th>
<th>Minutes Req’d Per State Law</th>
<th>Total Number of Instr. Minutes</th>
<th>Number of Instr. Minutes Above/Below State Req’t</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>507</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>54000</td>
<td>86034</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>507</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>54000</td>
<td>86034</td>
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<tr>
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<td>36</td>
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<td>178</td>
<td>54000</td>
<td>86034</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Select Y/N</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>54000</td>
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<td>64800</td>
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<td>-64800</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Valor Academy Charter School
Teachers will have a four week orientation before the start of the school year in order to devise the scope and sequence of their respective curricula, and to learn the philosophy and structures of school culture, and all school policies and procedures. The last week of teacher orientation coincides with the student’s week long student orientation, allowing for a juxtaposition which will promote the development of strong teacher and students relationships. This juxtaposition will promote the idea of school-wide, community-based, rather than classroom-bounded teachers and students. Students will be tested prior to the school year during orientation in order to assess proficiency levels.

- **Professional Development.** Teachers will receive 30 full days of professional development throughout the school year allowing for adequate teacher support and growth.

- **Assessment.** Students will continuously be tested through interim assessments on a six week basis, and Trimester Comprehensives on a twelve week basis. Students will also receive weekly quizzes and assessments, allowing families to be aware of student progress through weekly reports. The goal of Valor Academy is to ensure that every student is achieving to the highest of their abilities and performing at and above grade level in each core subject. The window for state testing is the first two weeks of May. After testing occurs, the remainder of the school year will be reserved for the remediation of students who are not performing at grade level, and demanding special projects in different subject areas for students who are excelling.
**End of the Year Trip.** At Valor Academy we believe in rewarding students for their hard work. We expect to culminate each school year in a grade specific field trip that students will be able to participate on in a merit and academic earned basis.\(^6\)

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

*Monday - Thursday*

Valor Academy’s school day runs from 7:30 am to 3:45 pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday allowing for 495 minutes spent in school a day. Based on a two-prong dismissal method, academic supports are offered until 5:00 pm every day, extending the possible time a child might spend in school each day to 570 minutes. Our extended school day includes Homework Center, Tutoring Club, and Literacy Support from 3:45 pm to 5:00 pm. Homework Center is designed to help students who have not completed their nightly homework assignments. Tutoring Club is held during the same time frame, allowing students who are having trouble with specific subject matter to have a one-on-one remediation opportunity. We will place students in our three prong literacy support program based on the remediation they need.

We believe that every moment a child is in school they should feel an urgent focus on utilizing every possible minute for learning. We allocate a significant amount of time conferring our belief and developing a strong school culture through character development activities in community circle and advisory periods. Our daily schedule reflects our mission and our urgency in ensuring that every student at Valor Academy excels academically. Our focus lies rooted in the core subjects of Math and English Language Arts with a heavy focus on literacy.

*Friday*

On Friday, the academic school day will end at 2:30 pm, allowing for two and a half hours during which teachers will engage in weekly planned professional development.\(^6\)

\(^6\) The possibility of and type of field trips will be determined by the amount of money we are able to raise for the trips each year through our development. We have currently budgeted $50 dollars per student.

\(^6\) Please see Part H of Element 1 for a detailed description of professional development.

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| Table 1.54 - Sample Valor Academy Grades 5 + 6 - Monday - Thursday Daily Schedule |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Time                            | Monday  | Tuesday | Wednesday| Thursday|

 Valor Academy Charter School
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:30-8:00</td>
<td>Arrival &amp; Breakfast</td>
<td>Arrival &amp; Breakfast</td>
<td>Arrival &amp; Breakfast</td>
<td>Arrival &amp; Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00-8:15</td>
<td>Community Circle</td>
<td>Morning Advisory</td>
<td>Morning Advisory</td>
<td>Morning Advisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:55-10:05</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:05-11:55</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:55-12:15</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15-12:35</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-1:50</td>
<td>Math Problem Solving</td>
<td>Math Problem Solving</td>
<td>Math Problem Solving</td>
<td>Math Problem Solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:50-2:35</td>
<td>P.E. Life Work</td>
<td>P.E. Life Work</td>
<td>P.E. Life Work</td>
<td>Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:35-2:40</td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>Snack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:40-3:30</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30-3:45</td>
<td>Focus Advisory</td>
<td>Focus Advisory</td>
<td>Focus Advisory</td>
<td>Focus Advisory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**First Dismissal 3:45**

**Second Dismissal 5:00**

- Total Daily Math: 100 Minutes
- Total Daily Academic Supports: 70 Minutes
- Total Daily Language & Literature: 100 Minutes
- Total Daily History: 50 Minutes
- Total Daily Science: 50 Minutes
- Total Daily Breaks (w/ Lunch+Recess): 55 Minutes
- Total Daily Advisory: 30 Minutes

* ELD instruction occurs during non-core academic periods as well as differentiated pull out during EL classes and DEAR as well as during after school support programs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arrival &amp; Breakfast</strong></td>
<td>7:30-8:00</td>
<td>Arrival &amp; Breakfast</td>
<td>Arrival &amp; Breakfast</td>
<td>Arrival &amp; Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisory</td>
<td>8:00-8:15</td>
<td>Community Circle</td>
<td>Morning Advisory</td>
<td>Morning Advisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8:15-9:05</td>
<td>Math Procedures</td>
<td>Math Procedures</td>
<td>Math Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9:05-9:55</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break</td>
<td>9:55-10:05</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10:05-11:55</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>11:55-12:15</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>12:15-12:35</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12:35-1:00</td>
<td>D.E.A.R Reading</td>
<td>Guided Reading</td>
<td>D.E.A.R</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1:00-1:50</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1:50-2:35</td>
<td>P.E.</td>
<td>H.S. Placement</td>
<td>P.E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>2:35-2:40</td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>Snack</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2:40-3:30</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Advisory</td>
<td>3:30-3:45</td>
<td>Focus Advisory</td>
<td>Focus Advisory</td>
<td>Focus Advisory</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>First Dismissal 3:45</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Literacy Support</td>
<td>3:45-5:00</td>
<td>Literacy Support</td>
<td>Literacy Support</td>
<td>Literacy Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Supports</td>
<td>3:45-5:00</td>
<td>Tutoring Club HW Center</td>
<td>Tutoring Club HW Center</td>
<td>Tutoring Club HW Center</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Second Dismissal 5:00</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Daily Math: 100 Minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Daily Language &amp; Literature: 100 Minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Daily History: 50 Minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Daily Science: 50 Minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Daily Academic Supports: 70 Minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Daily Breaks (w/ Lunch+Recess): 55 Minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total daily Advisory: 30 Minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arrival &amp; Breakfast</td>
<td>7:30-8:00 Arrival &amp; Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisory</td>
<td>8:00-8:30 Community Circle</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8:30-10:30 Math Block</td>
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<tr>
<td>Break</td>
<td>10:30-10:40 Break/Snack</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10:40-11:30 SS/Science</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>11:30-12:00 Lunch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>12:00-2:05 English Block w/ Snack</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Advisory</td>
<td>2:05-2:25 Focus Advisory/Prep Reports</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dismissal 2:30**

**Teacher PD**

2:30-5:00 Teacher Professional Development

**Total Daily Math:** 120 Minutes

**Total Daily Language & Literature:** 120 Minutes

**Total Daily History:** 50 Minutes

**Total Daily Science:** 50 Minutes

**SATURDAY ENRICHMENT**

Enrichment will be held on average every other Saturday at Valor Academy. Teachers will arrive early at 8:30 am for set up and students will attend from 9:00 am to 12:00 am. Students will always begin the day with Brain Breakfast but classes will be, for the most part, enrichment-based. Students will partake in two classes (of their choice) each semester.
MEETING STUDENTS’ NEEDS

Valor Academy anticipates that there will be a significant percentage of newly enrolled students who are socio-economically disadvantaged, not performing on grade level, special education students, English language learners, gifted, or a combination of any subcategory. In response to the diverse array of needs amongst our student body we provide both general as well as specifically tailored supports that will ensure that each type of learner is able to make strong academic progress. We believe that all students benefit from Valor Academy’s school design that keeps a sharp focus on student’s mastery of core skills through a longer school year, longer school day, and a primary focus on literacy and numeracy. Dutiful monitoring of progress through frequent assessments will provide school staff with data to address any deficiencies in a timely and appropriate manner, and to suggest specific support and remediation where necessary. This rigorous intervention combined with character development, study skills, and organizational skills prepares Valor Academy students for the rigors of high school and eventually college.

In order for Valor Academy to enact its mission and prepare our students for admission to and success in college preparatory high schools, we realize the importance of embedding support systems in our school design to help students reach our performance expectations. In addition to the long range supports tied in to the various assessments, we realize the need for a number of short range interventions that many students will require in order to achieve mastery of subject matter. Our school offers a number of long and short range supports, designed to address the needs of students, as outlined below.

LONG RANGE AND SHORT RANGE INTERVENTIONS

More Time on Task Marked by Frequent Assessment

High expectations for student performance are foundational to Valor Academy’s school design. Students are held to high performance expectations on national and state assessments, as well as Valor Academy’s interim (every six weeks) and comprehensive Trimester exams (every twelve weeks) assessments. In order to support students, the following corrective actions will be taken on a school wide basis:

- Content that 40% or more of students have failed to master will be re-taught in whole class instruction.
- Content that less than 40% of students have not mastered will determine tutoring for small group instruction
- Individual tutoring sessions will address content area that 15% or less of students have not mastered

The interim and comprehensive benchmark assessments will be instrumental in allowing teachers to review standards that have not been addressed appropriately, and restructure them into future interim and benchmark assessments to assure that mastery has been achieved. Review
of national and state test data will be conducted annually to inform Valor Academy’s instructional curriculum on a broader scale for the following year.

_Tutoring Club_

Student academic progress is tracked meticulously in every class in regards to the state standards, allowing teachers to provide tutoring where needed. Tutoring Club is available every Monday through Thursday in order to provide students with individualized help on any material with which they might be struggling and is run by Valor Academy teachers. Tutoring will be applied through a three-pronged approach to address student needs.

- **Singular Standard Tutoring.** Students having trouble mastering singular standards on weekly quizzes and assessments will be referred to tutoring during the week until they can demonstrate proficiency.
- **Interim/Benchmark Tutoring.** Students will be referred to tutoring sessions directly after interim or benchmark assessments to remediate on missed standards. Any student that scores lower than 70% on benchmark assessments will be referred to tutoring and will have to retake the exam to demonstrate proficiency.
- **Acceleration Tutoring.** All students are encouraged to attend tutoring sessions to further develop foundational understanding of content matter. Gifted students will be able to access higher level thinking in subject matter currently being taught in class.

_Homework Center_

We believe that homework is a fundamental component of the learning process. Homework should be a review of learned material and provide ample opportunity for students to master the skills and content learned in school. Students are assigned approximately two hours of homework a night, and they are expected to have it thoroughly completed by the start of each morning. We realize that this expectation might be challenging for some students, and thus we have a responsibility as a school to strategically support homework completion for every student. Thus we offer optional homework help through our afterschool provider for an hour each day after school. Additionally, for students who have not completed their days homework, we require them to stay and complete their homework under the supervision of a Valor teacher.

- **Homework Assignment.** The high value we place on homework is supported through a multi-faceted system through which students and their families can be aware of daily assignments. Homework assignments will be noted for each subject, in each class, in a standardized format on the board, to be copied down by students into a daily planner provided by the school. A weekly syllabus will be sent home with each student, on which daily homework assignments are specified.\(^{66}\) If for any reason students or families are still unsure of the daily homework assignment, they can call in to the school’s telephone homework hotline to receive an update on homework assignments.
- **Collection Procedures.** All students will turn in homework by subject to specialized bins before the start of the school day at 7:40 am. All homework will be delivered to

\(^{66}\) The weekly syllabus is inspired by and modeled after the work of Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, the highest performing public middle school in Boston. Please see Attachment X for a sample weekly syllabus.
respective teachers and checked for completion by 11:00 am and reported to the main office. Families will be notified during the day before 3:00 pm if their child is expected to stay at school past dismissal through an automated homework center messaging system.

- **Daily Expectations.** If a student has not completed homework or turns in inadequately completed homework they will be expected to make up the homework or stay at homework center at the end of that day.

**Community Circle and Advisory**

Students will meet in Community Circle every Monday and Friday morning for twenty minutes. Community Circle will be led by the Head of School, and will present a theme at the beginning of each week which will be then expanded upon in advisory sessions. The themes presented will be directly tied into the core virtues of Valor Academy and will emphasize character development through present day events, literature, music, and higher order thinking. Each advisory teacher will be responsible for their cohort’s academic and behavioral progress for each week. Advisors will monitor daily progress through V-PREP points, meet with student cohorts twice a day, and will immediately address any student concerns with students and family.

**Study and Organizational Skills**

One day, every other week, students will receive training on study, organizational, and life skills in the Life Work course in order to prepare them for college and beyond. The life skills courses are taught by school administrators and as all components of Valor Academy are designed to be developmentally appropriate to accommodate the needs of students, each school year the skills taught will vary. For example, in fifth grade students will be taught how to keep a daily planner and organize their Valor Academy Subject Specific Binders. In eighth grade, the course will evolve into a High School Placement course, which will allow students to research and apply to high performing high schools. The Life Work class will be planned and taught by the Head of School or Director of Instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.57 - How Each Support Benefits each Subcategory of Learner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-economic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent Assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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67 Please see the Valor Educational Philosophy for more information regarding school virtues.

68 Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>More Time on Task</strong></th>
<th>A longer school day and school year will provide a safe, quiet, environment in which students can flourish academically.</th>
<th>More time in school will allow for greater amounts of time to remediate and practice.</th>
<th>More time on task will allow for more opportunity to be in a “least restrictive environment” and will allow for more opportunities for pull out sessions during non core academics.</th>
<th>The double blocks of literacy offered in the early grades along with the D.E.A.R block will serve in fortifying ELL’s grasp of the English Language.</th>
<th>Gifted students will have more time to hone their skills and accelerate above and beyond expectations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tutoring Club</strong></td>
<td>Daily tutoring will ensure that all students are monitored closely through three tiers of tutoring support.</td>
<td>Daily tutoring will target remediation in single and multiple standard form allowing for quick progress and mastery of content matter.</td>
<td>Daily tutoring through single and multiple standard tutoring will benefit Special Education students by allowing for specific remediation of skill gaps indicated in IEPs.</td>
<td>Daily tutoring will allow for maximum proficiency and remediation of literacy skills.</td>
<td>Daily accelerated tutoring will allow for ample opportunities for engaging projects and higher order thinking to continually challenge and motivate gifted students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homework Center</strong></td>
<td>Daily HW support will ensure that all students have a safe and quiet place to complete homework.</td>
<td>Constant practice will embed content knowledge and fortify skills. The homework expectation will allow for close monitoring of completion of work and progress in skill mastery.</td>
<td>Homework tailored to each special education student’s needs will embed content knowledge and fortify skills.</td>
<td>Ample opportunities to practice language based skills and literacy will allow for increased vocabulary and fluency.</td>
<td>Gifted students will have homework assigned that will challenge them and motivate them to continually achieve at high levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Circle and Advisory</strong></td>
<td>Activities will create a sense of family and community in which every member feels respected and cared for. Community Circle and Advisory will introduce students to the virtues of the school and will educate them on current events in the community and the world abroad.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Skills</strong></td>
<td>Lessons will allow students to organize their materials and thoughts in a manner that will make them most efficient in academic learning and will prepare</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Parental Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication will Invest families by allowing them to take an active role in their child’s education through the constant feedback on the academic and behavioral performance of their student.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Academic and Behavioral Issue Support Structure**
If a student demonstrates that he or she is not meeting the appropriate expectations of academic or behavioral progress, Valor Academy will address the issue in a timely fashion. Please refer to the charts below for a general outline of how teachers and administrators will be trained to respond to different areas.
Figure 1.58 – Academic and Behavioral Issues Flow Charts

- ACADEMIC ISSUE
- Daily Assessments
- Weekly Assessments
- Referral
- Six Week Assessments
- Pre-referral Supports and Strategies
STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM

The SST process uses a systematic problem-solving approach to assist students with concerns that are interfering with success. The SST clarifies problems and concerns, develops strategies and organizes resources, provides a system for school accountability, and serves to assist and counsel the parent, teacher and student. The SST is a general education function, and all students can benefit from an SST, including but not limited to those students achieving below or above grade level, English Language Learners, students with special educational needs, and students who have experienced emotional trauma or behavioral issues.

Anyone who has a concern for a student can refer that student to SST for consideration. Anyone who is connected with that student can be included in the SST to provide information to share about the student’s strengths, concerns and strategies that have been used in the past. These people may include, but are not limited to, teachers, parents, counselors, doctors, administration,
social workers and law enforcement representatives. The meeting is designed to bring out the best in the people involved.

The Valor Academy SST meetings shall include the following steps:
1. Team members introduce themselves and their roles
2. Purpose and process of the meeting are stated
3. Timekeeper is appointed
4. Strengths are identified
5. Concerns are discussed, clarified and listed
6. Pertinent information and modifications are listed
7. Concerns are synthesized with one or two chosen for focus
8. Strategies to deal with are chosen; concerns are brainstormed
9. Team chooses best strategies to carry into actions
10. Individuals make commitments to actions
11. Person responsible and timelines for actions are recorded
12. Follow-up date is set

After implementation of a SST plan and follow up, if the problem continues, revisions to the plan may be discussed, or if necessary, a referral for special education or Section 504 assessment might be deemed necessary by the SST.

Part A: English Language Learners

ENGLISH LEARNERS
Valor Academy is required to timely identify potential English Learners (ELs) and provide them with an effective English language acquisition program that affords meaningful access to the school’s academic core curriculum. Instructional plans for English Learners 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), Valor Academy shall submit a certification to the LAUSD Charter Schools Division (CSD) that certifies that Charter School will either adopt and implement LAUSD’s English Learner Master Plan or implement Charter School’s own English Learner Master Plan. If Charter School chooses to implement its own EL plan, the instructional plan shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

★ How English Learners’ needs will be identified
★ What services will be offered
★ How, where, and by whom the services will be provided
★ How the school will evaluate its EL program each year, and how the results of this evaluation will be used to improve the program, including the provision of EL services

Valor Academy shall provide to the CSD an annual report of its EL program assessment.
Upon request, Valor Academy shall provide a copy of its current EL Master Plan to the CSD. Valor Academy shall administer the CELDT annually in accordance with federal and state requirements. Valor Academy shall ensure that it will provide parent outreach services and meaningfully inform parents with limited English proficiency of important information regarding school matters to the same extent as other parents.

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

Valor Academy will serve English Language Learners (ELL) in accordance with all applicable Federal Laws and regulations. Achieving high levels of success in this demographic of the student population is instrumental to ensuring the adherence to the school mission.

**ELL Identification**

Valor Academy will adhere to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations with regard to serving ELL students. The staff will adhere to Bright Star EL Master plan. In accordance with regulations Valor will ensure that:

- Families will complete a home-language survey upon enrollment in the school.
- Students whose primary language is not English will be assessed over the summer and/or within the first 30 days of school using the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). We will notify all parents of our responsibility for CELDT testing and of CELDT results within thirty days of receiving results from the publisher. The CELDT will be used to fulfill the requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act for annual English proficiency testing.
- Additional assessments (refer to Element Three for more details) will be administered to determine the specific language learning needs of the student (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary) in order to create a plan to best meet the student’s needs during both core classes and additional instructional times.
- ELL students will be placed in mainstream classes for core academics and will receive additional English Language instruction. Students receive 100 minutes of literacy instruction each day through reading and writing courses with an additional 30 minutes of guided reading through the D.E.A.R. program. Based on assessment data, the Principal and teachers will create a course of action for each student identified as an English Language Learner to meet additional instructional needs. This learning will take place during non core academic periods as well as during after school support programs. ELL students will be re-evaluated with the CELDT test each fall until re-designated as English Language proficient.

Students who have been identified as ELL who subsequently demonstrate that they are able to compete effectively with English-speaking peers in mainstream classes will be reclassified to fluent English proficient (RFEP) according to the following guidelines:

- English proficiency demonstrated by CELDT results
- Academic performance demonstrated by passing grades in the four core subjects of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies
- Parent opinion confirmed through a consultation meeting
- Comparison of basic skills to those of English-speaking peers demonstrated by a score of proficient or advanced on the English language arts section of the state test.
Students who are reclassified to RFEP will continue to be monitored for two years after their reclassification. During this monitoring period, CELDT testing will not be required.

Content area teachers will all have CLAD or BCLAD certification and will be supported in using sheltered (SDAIE) techniques, so that students can have equal access to the core curriculum.

*Existing Programmatic Elements*

The academic program at Valor Academy immerses English Language learners in an academic setting that is highly conducive to gains in literacy. Students receive 100 minutes of literacy instruction each day through reading and writing courses with an additional 30 minutes of guided reading through the D.E.A.R. program. Literacy is also intricately woven into the Science and History curriculums, and is a focal point of all school activities and enrichments.

Bright Star’s ELL plan lays out the scope of how Valor Academy will support students in regards to ELD standards.
Our class schedule allows for students in our moderate or non-functional groups to be pulled out during non-core academics as well as receive extra support during our after school extended hours.

In addition, Valor Academy’s supportive school culture with a “not a minute to waste” mentality and extensive student supports (as outlined below) will allow focused and appropriate instruction for all ELL students. All students will be taught within a Structured English Immersion (SEI) program. We believe that our philosophy of high expectations through rigorous academics as well as student supports will benefit our ELL learners and allow for high levels of success.
ELL Student Evaluation

Valor Academy will regularly assess ELL student performance through the CELDT, internal assessments, and benchmark assessments. ELL students will also be closely monitored by teachers in their performance in reading, writing, and verbal classroom participation. Valor Academy’s accountability plan will disaggregate all standardized test scores, so that we can annually increase the performance of ELL students. Individual modifications will take place for any students who do not make adequate yearly progress in reading and writing. ELL students will be re-evaluated with the CELDT test each fall until re-designated as English Language proficient.

Students who have been identified as ELL who subsequently demonstrate that they are able to compete effectively with English-speaking peers in mainstream classes will be reclassified to fluent English proficient (RFEP) according to the following guidelines:

- English proficiency demonstrated by CELDT results
- Academic performance demonstrated by passing grades in the four core subjects of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies
- Parent opinion confirmed through a consultation meeting
- Comparison of basic skills to those of English-speaking peers demonstrated by a score of proficient or advanced on the English language arts section of the California Standards Test

Students who are reclassified to RFEP will continue to be monitored for two years after their reclassification. During this monitoring period, CELDT testing will not be required.

Part B: Socio-economically disadvantaged students

SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

Valor Academy, through its mission and vision seeks to empower socio-economically disadvantaged students and allow each and every student to succeed in demanding high schools and colleges. Students socio economic status will be identified through our lunch program and students who are as identified as socio-economically disadvantaged will be provided with a variety of supports. In the 2014-2015 school year Valor MS will employ the Connectors program. The Connections Program is a comprehensive program created to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of our mainly low-income and minority students. The program consists of strategic initiatives, Student Services, and Family Services. Bright Star designed the Connections Program so that every student will have an ally on staff whose sole purpose is to help them graduate from high school prepared to enter and succeed in a four-year college or university or equipped with a viable post-secondary career plan. The Connections Program provides every VACS student with individual guidance counseling, academic support, and social service referrals from their personal advocate (“Connector”).
Connectors will:
Meet with their assigned students at least three times a year (and more as needed). Meet with their student’s family at least once a year (and more as needed).

Lead monthly Parent Education workshops based on topics taken from parent survey (such as college knowledge, health, gang prevention, positive discipline, etc.).

Meet weekly with seniors to assist in their college application process.

Meet monthly with juniors to assist in test preparation studies.

Begin developing a research based college and career advising program that we will call Grit Curriculum to be embedded into the daily curriculum at all campuses.

Create and implement a structured alumni support program.

Valor Academy will additionally provide enrichments and multiple field trips throughout the school year in order to provide socio-economically disadvantaged students with firsthand experience outside of the classroom in order to strengthen their “cultural currency” that will enhance their understanding of their grade-level curriculum inside the classroom. Valor Academy employs a longer school day and year, as well as a heavy focus on core subjects in the early grades to bolster all students’ skills and content knowledge. Additionally, multiple supports, after school intervention, and End-of-Year Remediation are provided for all students.

Part C: Gifted students

High-achieving students will be referred for an SST if they meet the following criteria:

1. performing more than one level above his/her actual grade level

GIFTED STUDENTS

The needs of gifted students will be met in a variety of ways. The first is through differentiated instruction, which affords opportunities to explore curriculum at a faster pace, in greater depth, with more complexity and with novel means of demonstrating mastery. Teachers will differentiate assignments in order to meet the needs of students performing below grade level, as well as those performing above grade level. Differentiated assignments may include:

- Inter-disciplinary and problem-based assignments
- Advanced and accelerated content
- Assignments involving higher-order thinking skills such as synthesis, analysis and evaluation
- Individual, teacher-guided projects
Extensive, advanced reading lists

A second means of addressing gifted students’ needs is through accelerated tutoring offered during our Tutoring Club Mondays through Thursdays after school hours. During these sessions students will be offered higher order learning activities based on topics they are currently learning in class. An important goal of Valor Academy is to develop capacity for leadership. All students—and gifted students in particular—are encouraged to take initiative in organizing and managing school clubs and leading certain activities. Finally, the development of a culture of inclusion addresses the emotional and psychological needs of gifted students, who often feel socially isolated. Valor Academy students become members of a family of learners where each student’s strengths are acknowledged and celebrated.

**Part D: Students achieving below grade level**

**STUDENTS ACHIEVING BELOW GRADE LEVEL**

Low-achieving students will be referred for an SST if they meet the following criteria:

1. performing more than one level below his/her actual grade level
2. not on track to make at least one grade level of growth in reading, writing, and math
3. earning below 70% in one or more core subjects and therefore in danger of failing the grade not on track to make at least one grade level of growth in reading, writing, and math

In the 2014-2015 school year Valor MS will employ the Connectors program. The Connections Program is a comprehensive program created to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of all students. The program consists of strategic initiatives, Student Services, and Family Services. Bright Star designed the Connections Program so that every student will have an ally on staff whose sole purpose is to help them graduate from middle school prepared to enter high school and succeed in a four-year college or university or equipped with a viable post-secondary career plan. The Connections Program provides every Valor Academy student with individual guidance counseling, academic support, and social service referrals from their personal advocate (“Connector”).

Valor Academy’s main goal is to ensure that all students are prepared for success in demanding high schools and colleges. Hence, our goals for academically low achieving students are the same as our goals for the entire student body. Our program and supports ensure that all students identified as low achieving have equal access to a rigorous, college-preparatory education. Based on the academic data of the elementary and middle schools in the area, Valor Academy expects that a great number of its students may be classified as “low achieving.” As such, Valor Academy’s entire curriculum, program, and supports have been adapted to improve performance for traditionally low achieving students. Low performing students will be identified through our various means of assessing students. Depending on the needs of the students, a number of interventions can be applied including but not limited to: SST meetings, trimester end “at risk of failing” meetings, small group TA pull out, individual pull out, tutoring club, homework center,
etc. Depending on the medium of intervention, a variety of school staff will be involved in providing support.

- We assess all students after enrollment to determine learning strengths and weakness, as well as overall proficiency in core subjects.
- We offer a number of supports to accelerate learning such as tutoring club and homework center.
- Our Life Work Course builds habits for success.

### Part E: Special Education – Special Education Students

**SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS**

**Our Philosophy**

We believe that all of our students, including those identified as disabled under California State Law and Federal IDEA law, can achieve at high levels if they are provided with the appropriate supports. Based upon local demographic data, we anticipate that approximately 10% of our population will be children with special needs. Several elements of our school design have been demonstrated to aid all students, including those identified with disabilities, to be prepared to enter into college and professional careers. These elements include double periods of literacy and math, frequent assessments, a highly structured and disciplined environment, and a multi-layered student support system. In addition, Valor Academy will respond quickly and accurately to students with special needs, identifying them through a structured process, developing and implementing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 plans that are appropriate, and consistently monitoring academic progress to assure that students are being held to the highest expectations of which they are capable.

**Our IEP Team and Inclusion Model**

Valor Academy will comply with all state and federal statutes in our belief that all students, regardless of ability, can learn at high levels if provided with the appropriate supports in an inclusion model. Valor Academy will hire one full-time special education certified professional (and/or contracted service professional through a service such as Total Education Solutions) to serve as our Director of Student Supports (DSS). This individual will be in charge of our inclusion model, whereby s/he will oversee all learning interventions, coordinate pull-out sessions during non-core academic subjects, and work closely with the Director of Instruction to secure outside resources (speech therapist, counselors, etc.) as required. The DSS will provide special education instruction as needed; all students receiving special education will be taught by an appropriately licensed and certified professional. For each student identified with a disability, Valor Academy will appoint a student support team consisting of the following members:

- Director of Instruction
- Director of Student Support/TES contracted service provider (Special Ed Certified)
- Two teachers who instruct the student

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69 The Head of School will be involved in the oversight of all Special Education services.
• The child’s parent(s) or guardian(s)

The student support team will develop a special education plan that demonstrates appropriate staffing, integrated resources, and appropriate measures to serve each student’s needs.

**Identifying Students with Special Needs and Developing IEPs**

Directly after student enrollment, Valor Academy will collect information from parents regarding any special education that their students have previously received. Once a prior IEP has been obtained it will be reviewed in order for the Director of Student Support to ensure our compliance to the provisions stated within. Valor Academy will look to existing IEPs and will train teachers and administrators to carefully monitor individual student performance. Based on the provisions indicated in the IEP, Valor Academy will comply with all state and federal regulations to provide the least restrictive environment for instruction.

In order to provide all IEP and Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act) services, we have designed a model that is flexible and fully compliant with applicable laws. In year one, Valor Academy will have at least one full-time administrator with certification in special education (the Director of Student Support) who will also provide direct special education instruction. The DSS will be responsible for implementing classroom-based IEP services and ensuring access to the general curriculum for all students on IEPs. The DSS will focus on providing classroom-based inclusion services and pull-out services when required by an IEP. When a student arrives with either an IEP or a 504 plan, the DSS will be immediately responsible for ensuring that the services indicated in the plan will be available

Our academic program’s structure of frequent internal assessments and close monitoring of student data will serve us in helping to identify students who are struggling academically and or behaviorally who do not have pre-existing IEPs. In the event that a student is not making sufficient progress, even with the supports and strategies put in place through the pre-referral process, the school will request the family’s permission for evaluative testing. Our request to families for testing will include reasons for the referral with documentation of student performance, an outline of interventions and actions already taken under the Pre-Referral Process, and an outline of any prior parental involvement. If testing should indicate a disability, and the student is identified as requiring special education services, we will with the IEP team write an IEP and follow the steps below to support student progress.

**Implementation of IEPs**

Ongoing school Professional Development will address the need for learning techniques, modifications, supports, and accommodations to be incorporated into every classroom in order to help students with special needs succeed. Our Director of Student Support will oversee and address every IEP to ensure that Valor Academy abides by all laws and all outside services are implemented by trained and properly licensed consultants.

**Review and Re-Evaluation**

Valor Academy values all students with special needs and will monitor their academic progress closely. When appropriate, we will seek, with parental consent and support, to re-evaluate
students and revise IEPs if we do not believe that the IEP allows the student a free and public education in the least restrictive educational environment. IEPs will be reviewed once a year for modifications, and every three years for re-evaluation.

Academic Assessment of Students with Disabilities

All students with IEPs will take interim and benchmark assessments, and all nationally normed and state tests, with the exception of students whose IEPs’ state otherwise. In these particular cases alternative assessments will be administered as required by law.

District Assurances

SPECIAL EDUCATION REQUIRED LANGUAGE

FEDERAL LAW COMPLIANCE

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Federal Law Compliance
Charter School shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

Special Education Program
All LAUSD-authorized 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 ensure 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 LAUSD Board of Education approval, [Charter School] will execute a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) by and between LAUSD and [Charter School] regarding the provision and funding of special education services consistent with the requirements of the LAUSD Special Education Local Plan Area (“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 commenced in the 2013-2014 school year requiring all District-authorized charter schools to
elect one of the three options available under the LAUSD SELPA. Prior to an Option election, all District-authorized charter schools were required to 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 Understanding (“MOU”), were required to execute a new MOU setting forth the LAUSD SELPA option election for the remainder of the charter petition term. The Charter-operated Program 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.

**Compliance with Child Find Activities: Conversion and Public School Choice (PSC) Schools**

District-authorized conversion and PSC charter schools must conduct Child Find activities for students residing in their pre-charter and/or PSC attendance areas (including private school students), so that students who have or are suspected of having a disability and needing special education and related services are appropriately identified and, if necessary, referred for evaluation in accordance with state and federal law. Conversion and PSC charter schools must distribute the District’s brochure, “Are You Puzzled by Your Child’s Special Needs,” prominently display the Parent Resource Network poster, and use other District materials to address the search and serve requirement of the law (e.g., “The IEP and You”).

**Modified Consent Decree Requirements**

All charter schools approved by the 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 MCD, student level data requests from District-operated and Charter-operated schools 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:

- **End of Year Suspension.**

  District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, date of suspension, number of days suspended, and reason for suspension.
● STAR – Preliminary and Final. (Including Charter Schools)

The usual file including District ID.

● Norm day – 2013

District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, location code, school name and local district for all students enrolled on norm day.

● CBEDS – 2013 (Including Charter Schools)

● All Students enrolled December 1, 2013.

District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, location code, school name and local district for all students enrolled on norm day.

● Dropout 2012-13 (Including Charter Schools)

District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, middle name, date of birth, grade, last location, school name and local district

● Monthly SESAC and Suspension data from non-SIS schools (Including Charter Schools)

● Graduation roster from all LAUSD schools (Including Charter Schools) with 12th grade SWD

The MCD requires charter schools to implement the District’s Integrated Student Information System (ISIS) which is now referred to as My Integrated Student Information System (MiSiS). MiSiS is a suite of applications which is designed to capture all District student data.

Section 6: The implementation plan for the school’s instructional program, including a timeline for the implementation of various components of the plan

As Valor Academy intends to grow each year by a grade level, we plan to roll out our instructional program year by year as demonstrated by our scope and sequence and textbook and resource needs indicated earlier in the petition.

SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Valor Academy plans to use textbooks and materials that are aligned with the school’s mission and vision of helping students to meet or exceed the California content standards. The process by which curriculum materials will be selected will include the involvement of teachers and administrators who will evaluate materials for potential use in the school. Valor Academy will ensure that connections are drawn between different curricular areas and that all curricular choices and resources are part of a comprehensive school wide plan. The materials and programs that Valor Academy purchases will be evaluated periodically and may be changed or augmented as deemed necessary, so long as the replacement materials or supplementary materials also contribute meaningfully to students’ pursuit of meeting or exceeding the California content standards.
ELEMENT 2 – MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by Valor Academy. ‘Pupil outcomes,’ for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school’s educational program.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(B)

No man should bring children into the world who is unwilling to persevere to the end in their nature and education. *Plato*
Section 1: Set specific, measurable, and realistic student achievement targets as closely as possible for the anticipated student population for the following:

“The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school." Pupil outcomes," for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school's educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both school wide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 47607. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(B).

LOCAL CONTROL AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

Valor Academy Charter School acknowledges and agrees that it must comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from time to time, which include the requirement that Charter School submit a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) to the Charter Schools Division and the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools on or before July 1, 2014. In accordance with California Education Code §§ 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall annually update its goals and annual actions to achieve those goals identified in the charter pursuant to Education Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), using the Local Control and Accountability Plan template to be adopted by the State Board of Education. Charter School shall submit its annual update to the Charter Schools Division on or before July 1 of each applicable year, beginning in 2015. Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Education Code § 47606.5, including but not limited to the requirement that Charter School “shall consult with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, parents, and pupils in developing the annual update.” § 47606.5(e).

MEASURABLE GOALS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM


Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from time to time, including all requirements pertaining to pupil outcomes.

VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL HAS CLEARLY DEFINED SCHOOLWIDE OUTCOME GOALS IN COMPLIANCE WITH CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE SECTIONS 47605(B)(5)(B) AND 52060(D).

Valor Academy charter School will pursue the following school-wide and subgroup outcome goals, as measured by multiple and varied benchmark assessments that are aligned to state and
federal standards (including the new Common Core) and reflect proficiency measures required by the STAR tests (and/or new MAPP/SMARTER Balanced Assessments), as well as state priorities detailed in California Education Code § 52060(d). For purposes of measuring achievement of these goals, a numerically significant pupil subgroup will be defined as one that meets both of the following criteria:

“(i) The subgroup consists of at least 50 pupils each of whom has a valid test score. (ii) The subgroup constitutes at least 15 percent of the total population of pupils at a school who have valid test scores.” Cal. Education Code § 47607(a)(3)(B).

The following chart delineates Valor Academy charter School’s school-wide and subgroup outcome goals and performance targets aligned to the state’s priorities, methods for measuring progress and the individual(s) with primary responsibility for each, all aligned with the state’s priorities defined in Cal. Ed. Code Section 52060(d). As the State and District finalize new standardized assessment tools (e.g., MAPP) and new school performance measures (e.g., API), and finalize the format for the new Local Control Action Plans as applicable to charter schools, Valor Academy will work with the District to ensure that it creates and updates its plans and goals accordingly. Actions intended to ensure that the school meets these goals and targets are delineated throughout this charter petition (e.g., Element 1: Educational Program; Element 4: Governance and parental involvement; etc.).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME GOALS</th>
<th>METHOD OF ASSESSING/Frequency</th>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
<th>PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
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<td>All teachers will be appropriately assigned in accordance with Section 44258.9, and fully credentialed in the subject area(s) they teach;</td>
<td>Required records maintained in school office in compliance with NCLB, State and District requirements.</td>
<td>Principal will work with Bright Star HR prior to the start of the school year to ensure that all hires meet requirements</td>
<td>Principal</td>
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<td>every pupil in the school will have sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials as determined pursuant to Section 60119; and</td>
<td>WASC Accreditation Review SARC</td>
<td>Principal will work with the Head of School and the Executive director to budget for materials each spring prior to the start of the new academic year</td>
<td>Principal</td>
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<td>school facilities will be maintained in good repair as specified in subdivision (d) of Section 17002. CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(1).</td>
<td>WASC Accreditation Review SARC</td>
<td>The Director of Operations will run facilities checks monthly and coordinate with the Head of Schools and Exec Director to meet any</td>
<td>Director of Operations, Executive Director &amp; Head of Schools</td>
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<td>The school will ensure that academic content and performance standards are implemented in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, including ensuring that English Learners will be able to access the common core academic content standards adopted pursuant to Section 60605.8 and the English language development standards adopted pursuant to Section 60811.3 for purposes of gaining academic content knowledge and English language proficiency. <em>CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(2).</em></td>
<td>Professional Development schedule and agendas Curriculum pacing and lesson plan review EL Plan Standardized Assessment Data: CELDT, MAPP, etc. (Annual) Standards-aligned internal benchmark assessments (Quarterly)</td>
<td>The Principal will prepare the Professional Development calendar prior to each year based on determined needs. The Principal will approve all scope and sequences for the year and support teachers weekly in their implementation. The Principal will abide by and implement all actions as delineated by the Bright Star ELL plan approved by the District.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>Parent input in decision-making and participation in programs will be a priority at Valor Academy charter</td>
<td></td>
<td>Parents will be elected to the</td>
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</table>
School, including for parents of individuals with exceptional needs:
- A minimum of three (3) parents of actively enrolled students of Valor Academy. At least one (1) parent representative will be the parent of a child with a disability;
- Valor Academy charter School Site Council will facilitate open communication among the entire Valor Academy community and ensure active parent involvement
- at least 80% of families will attend at least two school events each year (parent education workshops, school wide or grade level meetings, culminating and community building events);
- 80% of families will contribute volunteer hours to the school each year; and
- parent satisfaction in their involvement in school decision-making and school life will be at least 80% as measured by annual surveys. *CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(3).*

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<tr>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>Pupil achievement will meet all requirements, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</th>
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</table>
| (A) | • The state standardized testing participation rate (CST/MAPP/SMARTER Balanced Assessments or CAPA/CMA) will be at least 95%;
• the percentage of students scoring proficient or above in English Language Arts, Math, Social Science/History and Science will exceed the average proficiency of the Comparison Public Schools within LAUSD by at least 5%;
• all numerically significant subgroups will make at least 80% of the school’s overall growth target.
MAPP/SBAC Targets will be established in... |
| | Standardized test scores and participation rates API AYP |
| | The principal will fill out monthly Bright Star dashboards and reflect on the schools progress in relation to the expressed goals. |
| | Principal |
accordance with guidance released about the various reporting standards once they are finalized. *CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(4)(A).*

**B**
- Annual API will meet or exceed the established growth target, with a goal of reaching 900 within the five-year term of this charter.
- The school will meet or exceed Adequate Yearly Progress goals, as required by NCLB. *CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(4)(B).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(B)</th>
<th>API AYP</th>
<th>The principal will fill out triannual Bright Star dashboards and reflect on the school's progress in relation to the expressed goals. The principal is held accountable to the goals they set each year by the board of trustees</th>
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<td>Principal</td>
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**C**
*UC/CSU and other post-secondary requirements not applicable to middle school. CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(4)(C).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(C)</th>
<th>CELDT Student folders</th>
<th>The principal will fill out triannual Bright Star dashboards and reflect on the school's progress in relation to the expressed goals. The principal is held accountable to the goals they set each year by the board of trustees</th>
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<td>Principal</td>
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**D**
*English Learners will progress at least one grade level on the CELDT each year and 100% of students who are English Learners will achieve proficient to advanced levels of fluency in English Language Development by the time they graduate. CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(4)(D).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(D)</th>
<th>CELDT Student folders</th>
<th>The principal will fill out triannual Bright Star dashboards and reflect on the school's progress in relation to the expressed goals. The principal is held accountable to the goals they set each year by the board of trustees</th>
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<td>Principal</td>
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<td>75% of all English Learners will reclassify each year. Reclassification rates will meet or exceed the District’s reclassification rate and English Learners will meet Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs). CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(4)(E).</td>
<td>Reclassification data AMAOs</td>
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<tr>
<td>(E)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(F)</td>
<td>AP tests are not applicable to middle school. CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(4)(F).</td>
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<tr>
<td>(G)</td>
<td>College readiness per the Early Assessment Program not applicable to middle school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</td>
<td>Attendance reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>The school will maintain at least 95% Average Daily Attendance. CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(5)(A).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B)</td>
<td>Chronic absenteeism rates will not be greater than 5%</td>
<td>Attendance reports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When students are absent, the school notifies the parents through standard communication that non-excused absenteeism is no acceptable. In flagrant cases, the school will schedule a parent meeting to develop a support plan to improve attendance.
of the school population at any given point in time and will be lower than the comparison schools. *CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(5)(B).*

| (C) | No student will drop out of middle school for academic reasons – 100% will graduate and matriculate to high school. *CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(5)(C).* | Dropout and graduation data. | The Principal will meet with all parents of students who | Principal |
|     | | | | |
|     | meets with the Director of Operations monthly to ensure that attendance targets are on track When students are absent, the school notifies the parents through standard communication that non-excused absenteeism is no acceptable. In flagrant cases, the school will schedule a parent meeting to develop a support plan to improve attendance. | Director of Operations |

Valor Academy Charter School
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High school dropout rate not applicable to middle school. CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(5)(D).</th>
<th></th>
<th>are risk of failing at each trimester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(E)</td>
<td>High school graduation rate not applicable to middle school. CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(5)(D).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A)</td>
<td>No more than 5% of the student population will be suspended each year CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(6)(A).</td>
<td>Suspension data</td>
<td>The Dean of Students will send weekly reports of PREP behavior and will intervene with grade level teams to ensure that student behavior is proactively addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B)</td>
<td>No more than 2% of pupils will be expelled each year CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(6)(B).</td>
<td>Expulsion data</td>
<td>The Dean of Students will send weekly reports of PREP behavior and will intervene with grade level teams to ensure that student behavior is proactively addressed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principal
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Local school measures of Valor Academy Charter School’s achievement of its mission include:</th>
<th></th>
<th>proactively addressed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(C)</td>
<td>• Special education students will achieve or make progress toward the learning goals in their Individualized Education Plans.</td>
<td>IEPs/student folders</td>
<td>The Resource Team and principal meet monthly to review student progress and to ensure that all goals are met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students will demonstrate cultural awareness and critical thinking skills.</td>
<td>School-designed rubrics; student folders and report cards. Participation Logs, Portfolios, Presentations of Learning, Annual Projects, Student Surveys, Teacher Observations, Report Cards, PREP reports</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students will develop of life-long learning skills, social/interpersonal skills, and life skills needed to become conscientious, responsible citizens.</td>
<td>Teacher Retention Rates, Attendance, Survey Results</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The school will realize a higher teacher retention rate and higher teacher attendance rate than the District average, and demonstrate high levels of teacher job satisfaction.</td>
<td>Annual student and parent surveys.</td>
<td>Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• At least 80% of students and parents will indicate satisfaction with the school and their opportunities for participation.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CA Ed. Code § 52060(d)(6)(C).

| (7) | Valor Academy Charter School will offer all students, including those in all sub-groups, a broad course of study in English, Social Science/History, Math, Science, Visual & Performing Arts, technology and more as detailed in Section 51220, with a special emphasis in our inclusive model on serving students with exceptional needs. | Course list/schedule; student folders WASC Accreditation Review SARC | The Principal will work in conjunction with staff during summer planning to ensure that all courses meet the state and |
|     | | | Principal |
All students will demonstrate appropriate developmental or age/grade level mastery of State and National as defined by the CCSS or State of California (see [http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/) and [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)), aligned with the state’s priorities detailed in California Education Code Section 51220. Individual performance goals will be established for each student at the beginning of each year based on his/her baseline benchmark assessments, past academic performance, special needs/IEP, and other available data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>federal requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Student folders/report cards  
Standardized test scores and participation rates (annual)  
API  
AYP  
Internal benchmark assessments (quarterly)

The principal will fill out tri-annual Bright Star dashboards and reflect on the schools progress in relation to the expressed goals. The principal is held accountable to the goals they set each year by the board of trustees.

The principal will lead data meetings based off of interim internal assessments and will align professional development to meet student and teacher needs.
To the extent that the targets set forth in the charter do not meet state requirements, the state targets shall supersede the state standardized assessment goals identified here.

To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card. Cal. Ed. Code 47605(b)(5)(C).

As noted in section (8) above, students will demonstrate appropriate developmental or age/grade level mastery of State and National standards (see [http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/) and [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)) and the state’s priorities detailed in California Education Code Section 51220 (grades 7-12). As an inclusion model school, it is important to note that in each core academic area, students will be expected to achieve outcomes appropriate to their development, age and grade level. For example, some students with significant developmental delays might be expected to achieve some outcomes that are typically expected for chronologically younger students. Other students, who have more specific disabilities such as learning disabilities or orthopedic impairments, are expected to achieve outcomes that are consistent with their chronological age peers in most areas, but may need alternative goals or special adaptations in some curriculum areas. Still other students, who are gifted and talented, may achieve outcomes that are generally expected of older students. Thus, although outcomes will be explicitly defined for each grade level in alignment with state standards, these will be adjusted according to students’ individual abilities and developmental levels.

The Executive Director, Head of Schools, Principal and faculty will monitor and support the academic achievement and psychological well-being of the students, with the Board of Directors ultimately responsible for the school’s achievement. As stated previously, the Executive Director, Head of Schools and Principal will be held accountable to the Board of Directors for student outcomes. The Executive Director, Head of Schools and Principal will also be held accountable to the Board of Directors for the Charter School meeting Adequate Yearly Progress as required by NCLB, with the Board bearing the ultimate responsibility.

These goals and Valor Academy Charter School’s progress toward the goals will be communicated with the entire school community annually.

### Section 2: Identify any additional specific, measurable student outcomes that the school will set for the students, and explain how these outcomes are consistent with the school’s proposed instructional program

**SELECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Valor Academy plans to use textbooks and materials that are aligned with the school’s mission and vision of helping students to meet the CCSS. Our texts will be selected from the list of district approved or recommended curricula. The process by which curriculum materials will be selected will include the involvement of teachers and administrators who will evaluate materials for potential use in the school. Valor Academy will ensure that connections are drawn between different curricular areas and that all curricular choices and resources are part of a comprehensive school wide plan. The materials and programs that Valor Academy purchases
will be evaluated periodically and may be changed or augmented as deemed necessary, so long as the replacement materials or supplementary materials also contribute meaningfully to students’ pursuit of meeting or exceeding the California content standards.\(^{70}\)

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

The school leader and the Valor Academy Board are ultimately accountable to the LAUSD for students’ success. Within a culture of mutual accountability, we have established a clear and specific set of measurable performance goals against which the school will measure the success of its academic program. All parties within the school are also accountable to one another. Everyone, from student, to parent, to teacher, to administrator holds some level of accountability in student performance. See the table below, which depicts accountability for student performance at Valor Academy. These accountability measures will be conferred at orientation and all parties will sign a contract ensuring understanding of ensuing responsibility.\(^{71}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Student** | Held accountable through direct performance on standardized and teacher/publisher devised tests | Referral to Tutoring  
Parent-Teacher Conference |
| **Parent** | Held accountable through checking weekly Prep Reports, weekly syllabus, and report cards  
Held accountable through attending Parent-Teacher Conferences | Teacher Calls Home  
Called in for Conference |
| **Teacher** | Instructional delivery of CCSS  
Held accountable for administering all tests  
Held accountable for addressing weaknesses through Professional Development  
Held accountable through reporting to parent | Observation and feedback from administrators  
School wide Professional Development |
| **Administrator** | Held accountable for oversight of student and teacher performance  
Held accountable for reporting to district  
Held accountable for | District Reporting  
Continuously investing self in developing and recruiting best practices |

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\(^{70}\) Please see Element 1, Section 4 for the full Valor Academy Instructional Plan.  
\(^{71}\) Please see Attachment V for Contract of Excellence.
All of our curriculum and resources will be selected to allow students to achieve at these high expectations. Our school wide performance goals are ambitious for all students including high and low achievers, special education students (unless otherwise stated in IEP), socio-economically disadvantaged students, and English Learners. Due to the college preparatory nature of the school, high goals are imperative. Performance goals address student academic achievement and organizational success, and all students will be supported based on their needs to reach these academic goals. Please see Table 2.2 below for Valor Outcomes and Measurement in each subject (CAHSEE is not referenced because Valor Academy is a middle school):

At Valor Academy we will maintain high goals for student achievement on all state, national, as well as in-house exams. As students progress through the grades our accountability measures increase, in relation to the amount of time and support students have received. Please see Table 2.3 for our specific student performance goals for each subject on state, national, and in-house exams based on year of school growth.

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72 Please see Instructional Program for possible curricular choices.
ELEMENT 3 – METHOD BY WHICH STUDENT OUTCOMES WILL BE MEASURED

“The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(C)

Education is a social process. Education is growth. Education is, not a preparation for life; education is life itself.  

*John Dewey*
Section 1: Describe the methods for assessing attainment of student outcomes and how these assessment measures are consistent with the school’s proposed instructional program

ASSESSMENT

We believe that all children can learn at high levels and can be held to the same high standards regardless of their academic level when they enter middle school. In order to ensure that all students reach these goals, we must be able to accurately measure how well students are mastering core skills, content, and standards. To do this, we will establish a baseline measure of student achievement and then continuously monitor and assess progress from that point. This will allow teachers to gauge content mastery levels and adjust instruction as needed. Students will take the end-of-year exams as well as a nationally normed test such as the Stanford 10 during student orientation and then again each June thereafter. The initial data collected from these results will serve as the baseline data against which we will compare all future growth. In addition, this comparative data will provide information on the strengths and weaknesses of our academic program and will be used to modify and improve content delivery and instructional decisions from year to year.

BASELINE ASSESSMENT

Baseline assessment will be obtained using data from both internal and external/district-wide assessments. At the beginning of the year, all students will take the end-of-the-year exams for all of their courses (after the first year). Additionally, incoming students will also take the Stanford 10 for their current grade level and an English proficiency exam after they have been notified of their acceptance to the school. Students’ initial performance on these assessments will be used as a baseline against which we can compare year-end results, and through which we can measure longitudinal academic growth from year to year. In this way, the school will accurately interpret the results of these tests and the effectiveness of instruction during the year. These comparative results, in addition to data from internal assessments, will be used to improve instruction for the following school year.

Section 2: Identify additional “in house” benchmark assessments to be used by the school to assess student progress on an ongoing basis and how frequently the assessments will be administered

INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

Valor Academy will have several “in-house” assessments designed to monitor student mastery of content and performance standards:

- **Do Now s** will be very brief assignments given for the first 4-5 minutes of each class. These will give teachers quick snapshots of whether or not a student understands a particular concept or have mastered a particular skill. Do Nows may be counted as classwork.

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73 For its baseline data, Valor Academy will utilize a district-wide assessment that has been accepted by the LAUSD in addition to the end of the year course exams. Please see the ELL section of this application for details on the administration of the CELDT.
• **Homework** will be given nightly in each subject and will integrate review material (material that was taught a week or more prior to the current material) with material that has been taught in the class during the week. Homework will be graded according to common rubrics that are teacher developed and are communicated clearly to students.

• **Weekly quizzes** will be given at the end of the week and will focus on the skills and content that have been taught in class during that week. This will provide data to help teachers assess how students are progressing with the mastery of multiple concepts and allow them to make accurate and informed decisions about the additional supports that the student might need. Quizzes may be teacher developed, developed by the publisher of the text being used, or a combination of the two.

• **Unit Assessments** will be given at the end of a particular unit. These will provide data on how well a student is able to master and integrate concepts within a particular class. Unit assessments may be teacher developed, developed by the publisher of the textbook being used in the class, or a combination of the two.

• **Internal Assessments** are given every six (6) weeks and do not count towards a student’s grade. Their primary role is to assess student’s progress towards the benchmark exams, and allow teachers to determine what standards require revisit and review.

• **Trimester Comprehensive Exams** are cumulative exams (every 12 weeks) that primarily evaluate students’ mastery of material taught since the start of the school year. Trimester comprehensive exams will be given at the end of the first and second trimesters. They will account for 25% of a student’s overall grade for each respective trimester. These exams will be teacher developed and must be approved by the Director of Instruction before they are administered to students.

• **Projects, Essays, and Lab Reports** may be used as additional assessments to evaluate students’ academic progress. These may be counted as homework, unit assessments, or quizzes at the teacher’s discretion. Projects may also be incorporated as part of the Trimester Comps.

• **End-of-the-Year, Trimester Comprehensive Exams** are cumulative exams that evaluate students’ mastery of content and performance standards for the entire course. These exams will be given at the end of the third trimester and account for 25% of a students 3rd trimester grade and 25% of a student’s overall grade for the year.
Each of these assessments will be aligned with content and performance standards. This will provide teachers with several opportunities to monitor students’ progress toward mastering content and performance standards.

Quality of student performance on assessments such as projects, essays, and lab reports will be evaluated using teacher-developed rubrics. Teachers will be encouraged to collaborate both with teachers within their department and teachers in other departments to develop rubrics for assignments. The Head of School and/or Director of Instruction will review and approve all rubrics before they are implemented. Starting in the third year of operation, Department Chairs will primarily be responsible for the review of newly designed rubrics.
Section 3: Assure that state mandated assessments will be administered

**STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Charter school agrees to comply with and adhere to state requirements for participation and administration of all state mandated tests. If charter school does not test with the district, 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 charter school.

**REPORTING OF DATA**

Valor Academy will also upload all data requested by the California Department of Education (CDE) to complete a School Accountability Report Card (SARC).

The Board of Directors will issue an annual report that shall include demographic data, academic achievement, financial reports, and a summary of other significant developments and accomplishments over the course of each academic year. The school’s leadership will report the results of state assessments to all community members including parents. The annual report will be a public document, published on the school’s website (www.valoracademy.org) and delivered to the District, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, CDE, and any other parties who request it.

**Table 3.2 – Assessments and Purpose**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Component</th>
<th>Type of Assessment</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Grades Tested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Common Core</td>
<td>• Standards-based</td>
<td>• Measure proficiency with national content standards</td>
<td>• 5 to 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•</td>
<td>in English-Language Arts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Measure proficiency with national content standards</td>
<td>• 5 to 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>• Standards-based</td>
<td>• Measure proficiency of English Language Learners and reclassify students as appropriate</td>
<td>All—based on student’s previous ELD level and repeated annually until student is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>• Multiple-choice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>• Performance assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test (CELDT)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition all students will be required to take the Stanford 10. This will serve as a means to compare our students with a national pool.

### Section 4: Describe how assessment data will be used to inform instruction and professional development on an ongoing basis

#### DATA ANALYSIS

Management of assessment data will be accomplished through the use of Data Director that allows for the recording and monitoring of student progress.

Interim assessments will be scored and analyzed using Data Director. Teachers will meet with the Head of School or Director of Instruction after each round of interim assessments to closely inspect the data, look for patterns, and create an action plan for both the class and individual students based on the results.

Action plans will be revisited frequently in grade-level and content-area team meetings to ensure that students are making adequate progress toward mastery.
USE OF INTERNAL AND BENCHMARK ASSESSMENTS

After each interim assessment is given, data will be generated and made available to teachers. This data will include, but is not limited to, the standards that each test item assessed, the percentage of the class with correct or incorrect responses, each individual’s responses, and newly taught vs. reviewed standards. Teachers will use this data to complete a comprehensive item analysis of the test results. Based on the results of the analysis, teachers will be able to determine which standards need to be re-taught in whole group instruction, the students who require small group instruction to reinforce concepts, the students who need additional support or tutorial, and the standards that have been mastered and only require integration or spiraling into the existing curriculum or homework. This attention to detail and focus on altering curriculum to respond to student needs will enable our teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in both student achievement as well as personal instruction. This will allow us to respond quickly and make instructional planning decisions that will support our students in the most efficient and effective manner.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By close item analysis of all types of internal and external assessments, Valor Academy teachers will be able to improve upon their practices by altering pacing, instructional style, content matter, and review of material in order to best educate their students. Professional development days after benchmark assessments will be devoted to analyzing student performance and determining how individual students and group cohorts can best be supported to reach their goals.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Because we consider ourselves a community and family partner, we will keep parents advised of their child’s academic progress toward promotion on a consistent basis. Parents will receive both verbal and written communication concerning the progress of their child. Parents of all students will receive V-PREP reports weekly that will alert them of their student’s progress. Parents will also receive Report Cards at the end of each trimester that will contain anecdotal data for each class, in addition to the student’s grades. Parents will receive phone calls from the student’s advisor at least bi-monthly. During these calls, advisors will be able to update parents on the academic progress of their student.

- **Valor PREP Reports and Report Cards.** Teachers and staff use Valor PREP reports on a weekly basis to keep families informed of the academic and behavioral progress of students. Three annual Report Cards are distributed at the end of each trimester to communicate students’ academic and behavioral performance on a larger scale and plan for future remediation. Grades reflect both tangible effort and achievement. Grades are comprised of homework (25%), achievement on tests/quizzes (50%), and other individual teacher assessments (25%). PREP reports and report cards are sent home with students to be signed by their parents and brought back to school the next school day.

- **Family-Teacher Conferences.** Parents are expected to meet with their children’s teachers during the three Family-Teacher Conferences held after each trimester. We ask all families
to reserve the afternoon or evening after each trimester to attend family conferences. All families of fifth grade students will need to attend the first Family-Teacher Conference in order to receive their child’s first report card. All families of students in grades five to eight who are failing one or more classes for the year or the trimester will receive notice prior to the Family-Teacher Conferences. All families of all students are expected to attend the Family-Teacher Conferences.

**GRADING POLICY**

Students at Valor Academy will earn grades based on their demonstration of mastery of the California Content Standards. Grades will include student performance on in-class work, homework, assessments, and other components as applicable to each content area.

Table 3.3 indicates the ways in which letter, percentage, and rubric grades will be used at Valor Academy and what these grades mean in terms of a student’s level of mastery of the State Content Standards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Score</th>
<th>Rubric Score</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98-100%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A student earning an A in a course is consistently demonstrating advanced levels of mastery with the content standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-97%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>A student earning a B in a course is consistently demonstrating proficiency with the content standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-87%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-79%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A student earning a C in a course is consistently demonstrating basic competency with the content standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-77%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY74</td>
<td>Below 70%</td>
<td>0 or 1</td>
<td>A student earning less than 70% in a course is not yet demonstrating a basic level of mastery with the content standards and needs to demonstrate mastery of the standards before credit will be earned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There will be school-wide standards for grading. Teachers will be trained on the school’s policy and will work with the Head of School and teacher teams to ensure that grades are calibrated and assigned in a fair and consistent manner that corresponds with student mastery of State Content Standards.

**Basis for Promotion and Advancement**

At Valor Academy we understand that a solid academic foundation at the middle school level is critical for success in challenging college-preparatory programs and ultimately college. Our

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74 The Not Yet grade is intended to require students to re-do substandard work and demonstrate mastery before being assigned a grade. This grading philosophy is based on the work of William Glasser. Glasser, W. *Schools without failure*. New York: Random House, 1969.
curriculum is designed to ensure that students master benchmarks necessary on the road to success. Therefore, we believe that we would do our students a grave disservice to promote them to the next grade or level without their having demonstrated a sufficient level and depth of mastery.

**GRADE LEVEL PROMOTION**

Promotion to the next grade is dependent upon sufficient mastery of all subjects. Sufficient mastery in a subject is indicated by a grade of 70% or better. All grades will be calculated based upon a student’s achievement in three areas: homework, tests and quizzes, and individual teacher assessments. While teachers will have some flexibility in determining the exact percentage of the total grade that each carries, the percentages must fall within the school guidelines.

The Principal will meet with parents of students who are at risk of failing at each Trimester to ensure that the appropriate supports and intervention are activated in order to ensure student success. Students who are failing two or more core subjects in any grade level at the end of the academic year will be recommended for retention. While retention due to lack of effort is not something to be celebrated, we believe that when students recognize their mistakes and make a conscious decision to do better - that is something worth celebrating. Therefore, we will cultivate a school atmosphere where retention is not something to be ashamed of, but rather it is an indication that a student is willing to persevere and do the hard work necessary to be a leader who truly exhibits Valor Academy’s values. Additionally, we work with parents throughout the year to ensure that parents are a part of the decision to retain a student when and if necessary.
Figure 3.5 – Promotion Policy

Student passes all 6 core academic classes with a grade of 70 or better

Student fails 1 or 2 core academic classes with a grade below 70

Student attends 2 week remediation at end of year

Student remediation requirements by passing minimum competency exam with grade of 70 or better

Student does not fulfill remediation requirements

Student is promoted to the next grade

Student repeats current grade
ELEMENT 4 – GOVERNANCE

“The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(D)

Laws control the lesser man... Right conduct controls the greater one ... I've never let my school interfere with my education. **Mark Twain**
GENERAL PROVISIONS

As an independent charter school, Valor Academy operated as or by its nonprofit public benefit corporation, is a separate legal entity and shall be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of Charter School.

Valor Academy shall comply with the Brown Act and the Public Records Act.

All employees and representatives of Charter School, including members of the Valor Academy’s governing board, members of school or governing board committees or councils, school administrators, and managers, shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards, and LAUSD’s charter school policies, regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

Charter School shall ensure that, at all times throughout the term of the Charter, the bylaws of its governing board and/or nonprofit corporation are and remain consistent with the provisions of this Charter. In the event that Charter School amends its bylaws, it shall provide a copy of the amended bylaws to CSD within 30 days of adoption.

Charter School shall send to the CSD copies of all governing board meeting agendas at the same time that they are posted in accordance with the Brown Act. Charter School shall also send to the CSD copies of all board meeting minutes within one week of governing board approval of the minutes.

Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from time to time, including all requirements pertaining to pupil outcomes.

If Charter School does not test with the District, 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 Charter School.

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

Section 1: State whether the school is proposing to be an independent or affiliated charter.

STATEMENT OF INDEPENDENCE

Valor Academy Charter School is an independent charter governed and operated by the Board of Directors of Bright Star Schools which is responsible for ensuring progress toward the mission, faithfulness to the charter, and fiscal viability.
Section 2: Affirm that the school will be operated by a nonprofit public benefit corporation.

Section 3: Provide articles of incorporation and by-laws for the nonprofit public benefit corporation.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION (AOI)
Any amendments to the AOI, will be submitted to the District.

BYLAWS
Any amendments to the organization’s bylaws will be submitted to the District.

Section 4: Describe the proposed school’s governance structure and demonstrate how it will maintain active and effective control of the school.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE
The work of Bright Star Schools’ Board of Directors is organized to accomplish the following objectives:

- Ensure the mission and vision of VACS.
- Ensure adherence to all state and federal requirements as well as those requirements set forth by VACS in its charter.
- Evaluate the Executive Director annually and hold him/her responsible for meeting the academic and fiscal goals of the school.
- Ensure effective organizational planning for the school.
- Provide support and assistance to the school in its fundraising efforts, as well as other needs as they arise.
- Ensure the long-term financial stability of VACS.
- Establish broad support and future partnerships to further the mission of Bright Star Schools to prepare students for college and career.

The Board governs the school, holds the school to its mission, ensures its financial viability over time, holds the leadership team accountable and ensures that the school remains true to the terms of its charter. The Board delegates all management decisions to the Executive Director (as described in Element 5), who oversees the Head of Schools and Culture & Accountability Officer. The Head of School is responsible for the hiring, evaluation of the principals and for ensuring that the schools meet the performance benchmarks established by the Board of Directors. Day-to-day oversight of the school is the responsibility of the Principal, who hires, supports and evaluates all school staff, and monitors the implementation of the program. A strong working relationship between the Board Chair, Executive Director, Head of Schools and all administrators ensure the flow of information necessary for responsive, strong governance.
BOARD MEMBERS

The charter school board includes individuals who have expertise in fields spanning from education, to finance, to real estate, to law, to advertising, to fundraising, etc., ensuring that the schools are monitored by a body of individuals that understand all aspects of operation. The board establishes the goals, policies, and direction of the organization and looks to the management to implement them effectively.

The role of a member of the Board is as follows:

- Advocate for Bright Star Schools and its mission of preparing students for college and career;
- Adhere to the Brown Act;
- Attend board meetings, committee meetings and important related meetings;
- Serve with professionalism, integrity and enthusiasm;
- Volunteer for and accept assignments and complete them thoroughly and promptly;
- Stay informed about committee matters, prepare well for meetings and review and comment on minutes and reports;
- Get to know other board and committee members and build a collegial working relationship that contributes to consensus;
- Actively participate in the board’s professional development, annual evaluation and planning efforts;
- Participate in fundraising for the organization, cultivate prospective donors and volunteers and give an annual financial gift (determined by the board chair) to the best of personal ability;
- Abide by all legal responsibilities and comply with applicable rules and regulations; and
- Disclose any potential conflict of interest, whether real or perceived.

OFFICERS

Chair

It is the duty of the Board Chair to preside at all meetings, to guide the Board in the enforcement of all policies and regulations relating to VACS and to perform all other duties normally incumbent upon such an officer. The Chair helps to direct and mediate Board discussions about organizational priorities and governance concerns and to ensure that the Board engages in a self-evaluation at least once a year. In addition, the Board Chair works with the Executive Director, Board officers and committee chairs to develop the agendas for Board meetings.

Treasurer

The Treasurer has a general understanding of financial record keeping, accounting systems and financial reports and works with the Executive Director and Controller to ensure that appropriate financial reports are made available to the Board on a timely basis. The Treasurer shall also assist in presenting the annual VACS budget to the Board for review and approval and shall review the annual audit and answer Directors’ questions regarding the audit. In addition, the Treasurer will ensure that current records are maintained to reflect the financial condition of VACS.
Secretary

The Secretary ensures that all actions of the Board are documented. The Secretary shall, in advance of all meetings of the full Board and Committees, serve or cause to be served all meeting notices and ensure that written agendas and support materials are provided to all members. The Secretary ensures that written minutes are provided to Directors within the specified time, approved minutes are filed and official attendance and votes of Directors are maintained in accordance with procedure and adherence to the Brown Act.

All Board Members of Bright Star Schools receive a board orientation packet and sign member expectations agreeing to uphold the mission and vision of the school, advocate for VACS and ensure organizational viability, student achievement and faithfulness to the terms of the charter.

Part A: How often the governing board will meet?

The Board of Directors of Bright Star Schools meets monthly except in August. The Annual calendar of meetings is typically set at the June meeting (end of school year) for the next school / fiscal year. Emergency/unscheduled meetings are called as necessary per the terms of the Brown Act. Meetings take place within the jurisdiction of LAUSD and always on one of the school campuses. Meeting notices are posted at every school site on public bulletin boards and also on the Bright Star website's home page.

Part B: What is the process for selecting governing board members?

The process of selecting members includes an initial interview with the Executive Director and school tour; interview with current board members; submission and resume, written responses, and board member questionnaire; and, reference checks. The Board is currently comprised of twenty four who serve three year staggered terms. In order to bring on a new board member the Executive committee will make a recommendation to the full board. Bringing on a new board member will require a full board vote.

Part C: What is the manner for posting meeting notices, distributing agendas and recording governing board actions?

The Bright Star Schools Board will meet in accordance with California Law and the Brown Act. Per the Brown Act the time, place, and dates of such meetings will be made available 72 hours in advance to the general public via posting on our school website, around campus and in school newsletters. Should a previously posted meeting time or location change, Bright Star will give due notice by posting the new time and/or place in accordance with the Brown Act. Members of the public can request the minutes of any

75 See Appendix (Tab 6, Section F) for samples of Board Commitment Contract and Member Expectations.
board meeting by directly contacting the Bright Star Schools Main Office. Special meetings may be called with 24 hours notice.

Bright Star schools will do its best to hold board meetings both in the Valley as well as the West Adams neighborhood on an alternating basis to allow for equitable access to all constituents. Board members may abstain from any vote, and must abstain from any vote where a conflict of interest has or may be deemed to exist. We do not allow teleconference participation at full board meetings. For committee meetings, teleconference is sometimes an option, and when teleconference meetings are set the agenda will include the address information of all participating locations (per Brown Act) and a majority of the members must dial-in from within the jurisdiction (per Brown Act).

Section 5: Provide an organizational chart showing the relationship of the governing board to the leadership of the school, as well as any relevant site committees, etc.
The organizational chart demonstrates some of the committees that may be convened by the Governing board. The makeup of these committees is strictly restricted to board members. The Governing board makes all final decisions by board vote on all school related matters including but not limited to curriculum, instruction, financial, facilities, etc. The committees will heavily inform these decisions, but all decisions will be made by Governing Board vote.

BOARD COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Directors may create or convene the following committees. The Committees advise the full board. The Committees are not empowered to approve but only to monitor, advise, and recommend action to the full Board.

- **Governance Committee**
  - Recruit, nominate, train new directors;
  - Establish responsibilities and evaluate individual board members;
  - Review the performance of the Board as a whole;
  - Review Board Handbook;
  - Support and review performance of Executive Director;

- **Finance/ Budget/ Audit Committee**
  - Monitor budget implementation through periodic financial reports;
  - Approve accounting policies;
  - Provide for an independent annual audit by qualified CPA;
  - Ensure adequate insurance

- **Development Committee**
  - Identify fundraising opportunities;
  - Plan fundraising events or programs;
  - Develop and evaluate fundraising goals.

- **Academic/ Personnel Committee**
  - Review and support mission statement;
  - Ensure programs and services are consistent with mission & charter;
  - Develop and review measurable academic outcomes;
  - Review and approve guidelines for teacher evaluations;
  - Review and approve guidelines for administration/staff evaluations;
  - Monitor progress in achieving outcome and goals;
  - Develop and maintain adequate academic personnel policies and procedures.

- **Facilities & Strategic Planning Committee**
  - Review facilities maintenance requirements;
  - Review and negotiate lease agreements;
  - Develop and maintain adequate facility personnel policies procedures;
  - Supports Executive Director’s efforts to explore growth and facility opportunities
  - Evaluate growth opportunities
  - Ensure growth implementations conform to mission statement.
Section 7: Provide an assurance that the governance meetings will comply with the Brown Act.

BROWN ACT ASSURANCE

All meetings of the Board of Directors of Bright Star Schools have and will continue to comply with the Brown Act, Government Code 1090 and all applicable laws relating to charter schools. VACS shall comply with the Brown Act and the Public Records Act.

Section 8: Explain the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNANCE

While parents of VACS students do not serve as members of the Bright Star Schools Board of Directors, it is critical that they are invested in the success of the school and have a voice in matters critical to the school’s success. VACS believes that parental support is an integral part of a student’s education, and makes every effort to ensure that parental input is considered in the Board’s decision-making process. We have recently created a position titled Dean of Student Affairs who is a full time employee dedicated to bridging the gap between the school and families.

In addition, representatives of the parent body are encouraged and invited to address the Board regarding any input, comments or concerns they have about the school. Time is reserved at the start of each Bright Star Schools Board meeting for this purpose.

Parents will serve as members of the School Site Council (SSC). The VACS SSC is comprised of ten members of the school community and includes the Principal, teachers, parents, and other staff members. There will be 4 faculty seats, 4 community seats, and 4 parents seats, and 5 students seats. The SSC is always comprised of an odd number of individuals as to avoid a tie vote situation. SSC members are nominated and elected by their peers and serve three year terms. As a member of the SSC, parents must attend monthly meetings and are responsible for examining student achievement data, revising and maintaining the Single Plan for Student Achievement, and for providing oversight of the Title I budget. Information from the SSC meetings will be communicated at board meetings through parent representative or minutes that will be shared by the principal of the school.

Other parent engagement strategies that we employ include:

- Parent education initiative featuring evening sessions on topics such as college admissions, financial aid, financial literacy, etc.
- Posting of Board agendas in the school’s main office.
- Mid-year Parent Satisfaction Survey.
- End-of-Year Parent Satisfaction Survey.
- Regular parent newsletters.
- Multi-media communication strategy including mail, e-mail, text messaging, “robocalls,” and regular parent meetings.
- Translation of all parent communication materials into Spanish.
• Frequent opportunities for parent involvement in school activities, including invitations to family dinners, Evening of Excellence, etc.
• Volunteer opportunities on campus including campus beautification and traffic duty.

TITLE IX, SECTION 504, AND UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS
Charter School shall 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 shall notify all its students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated employee or employees.

Charter School shall adopt and publish complaint 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 shall adopt and implement specific and continuing procedures for notifying 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 Charter School, that Valor Academy does not discriminate on the basis of sex or mental or physical disability in the educational programs or activities which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and Section 504 not to discriminate on any such basis.

Charter School shall establish and provide a uniform complaint procedure in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including all applicable requirements of Cal. Admin. Code, tit. 5, §§ 4600 et seq.


Charter School shall extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints pursuant to the local control funding formula. (Cal. Educ. Code section 52075).

*LEGAL AND POLICY COMPLIANCE
Valor Academy shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, and District policy as it relates to charter schools.
*RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES*

Valor Academy, including its nonprofit corporation, shall promptly respond to all inquiries, including but not limited to inquiries regarding financial records from the District, and shall cooperate with the District regarding any inquiries. Valor Academy, including 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 or other evidence of waste, fraud, abuse, or other material violation of law related to Charter School’s operations is received or discovered by the District, Charter School shall cooperate with any resulting investigation undertaken by the District and/or the Office of the Inspector General Investigations Unit.

NOTIFICATIONS

Valor Academy shall notify the Charter Schools Division in writing of any citations or notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside regulatory or investigative agencies, lawsuits, or other formal complaints, within one week of receipt of such notices by Valor Academy. Charter School shall also notify the CSD in writing of any internal investigations within one week of commencing investigation.

TRANSFER OF STUDENT RECORDS

When a student transfers for any reason from Charter School to any other school, Charter School shall transfer the student’s complete cumulative record within 10 school days of receiving a records request from the receiving school. In the event Charter School closes, Charter School shall comply with the student records transfer provisions in Element 16.
ELEMENT 5: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATION

“The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school.” Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(E)

Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?  
Martin Luther King, Jr.
SELECTION OF STAFF

As Jim Collins emphasizes in *Good to Great*, one of the most important factors of insuring an organization’s success is hiring the right people. 76 Our selection process is designed to be rigorous and comprehensive to minimize the risk of hiring staff not suited for the unique responsibilities and demands of Valor Academy. The Head of School and Director of Instruction will share the responsibility of reviewing applications and conducting phone and personal interviews. All final hiring decisions will be made by the Head of School. The hiring process will consist of a multi-step application and interviewing process.

1. Application, resume, and cover letter submitted by candidate.

2. Head of School and Principal will review and rate applications on a rubric, separating them into three categories: Strong, proficient, and weak candidates. Weak candidates will receive a notice of acknowledgement. Proficient and strong candidates will be invited to submit a written application designed to evaluate communication skills, educational philosophy, and commitment to academic achievement.

3. Candidates who seem to be mission aligned with Valor Academy’s values will then be asked to engage in a thirty minute phone interview.

4. Any candidate who does well in the phone interview will be asked to provide Valor Academy with a sample lesson plan and if possible, will arrange a time to be observed by the Head of School and/or Director of Instruction in their classroom. After Valor Academy has been established, the candidate may be asked to visit Valor Academy and teach a sample lesson in one of our classrooms.

5. If the classroom observation and the lesson plan samples are strong, we will request references from the candidate.

6. If the candidate has completed the hiring process successfully, references are strong, and positions are available, an offer of employment will be made - contingent upon a successful background check and hiring rubric.77

7. Any candidates who show potential, but are not hired for the year will be placed in an internal database for possible future recruitment.

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Part H: How the school will provide ongoing professional development to ensure that teachers have the skills to deliver the proposed instructional program

SUMMER STAFF ORIENTATION

Staff members will participate in four weeks of orientation in the summer to develop internal curricula, introduce teacher and student expectations, and to model and practice school wide systems to ensure consistency among all staff members. Teachers will work in collaboration to practice and refine school structures in preparation for the first day of school. With all teachers

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77 Please see Hiring Rubric in Attachment X.
providing a common and consistent message of high academic and behavioral expectations, a strong school culture will be established on the first day, keeping behavioral problems at a minimum so as to maximize learning.

Teachers will receive specific training in the following fundamental areas: using formative and summative assessments, doing curriculum alignment, developing long-term plans, standards-based unit plans and daily lesson plans, and working with mastery tracking systems. Teachers will be given a scope and sequence and internal standards and then will be allowed time and guidance to evaluate state and national exams to refine summative assessments for their curriculum, create Curriculum Alignment templates, as well as the lesson plans for the first weeks of school.

TEACHER OBSERVATIONS

We believe that teachers must receive frequent constructive feedback to become more effective and to grow professionally. As such, all teachers will be observed by the Director of Instruction or Head of School at least once per week and evaluated on school wide systems, which include common blackboard configuration, behavior management, pacing, and rigor in their classrooms. They will be given feedback in a timely manner as well as provided with constructive support and opportunities to improve upon their practice. Constructive feedback will focus on specific, short-term areas for improvement as well as long-term areas of focus in planning, execution, and management.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Valor Academy acknowledges and agrees that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. Charter School shall not discriminate against 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, selection, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall, and dismissal from employment.

NCLB AND CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS

Valor Academy shall adhere to all requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB)) that are applicable to teachers and paraprofessional employees. Charter School shall ensure that all teachers meet the requirements for employment set forth in California Education Code section 47605(l). Teachers of core and/or college preparatory subjects, and special education teachers, must hold and maintain a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit or other document equivalent to that

78 Please see Classroom Observation Template in Attachment X.
which a teacher in a non-charter public school would be required to hold in the same assignment.

Charter School shall maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and make them readily available for inspection.

Section 1: Describe the necessary job description and qualifications for school employees.

Job descriptions have been prepared by the Executive Director, Culture and Accountability Officer and the Human Resource & Operations Manager. The most updated descriptions are provided below. All job descriptions shall include, but is not necessarily limited to, the below duties specified per position.

BRIGHT STAR SCHOOLS—CHARTER MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION (CMO)

1. Executive Director

The Executive Director (ED) oversees and advances all Bright Star Schools. S/he embodies and advocates for the mission, vision, and strategic direction of the school. S/he is passionate and completely dedicated to Bright Star Schools’ mission and has a steadfast belief that all students deserve an excellent public education in preparation for high school and college. The ED has an unwavering belief that all students, regardless of demographics, can achieve at the highest academic levels and can effectively communicate and inspire such beliefs to all aspects and positions of the schools. The ED directly manages all positions in the CMO.

Characteristics and Qualifications:

- Bachelor’s degree, Master’s Degree in similar field with several years of urban teaching experience preferred.
- Training or relevant experience in management and development of a business or a non-profit organization.
- Demonstrated significant business/academic gains in past experiences leading a company or a school, with a preference in low income/urban demographics.
- Experience and success in management of higher-level positions.
- Critical thinker and decision maker who has overcome complex organizational challenges.
- Inspirational leader who has a proven record of success in driving individuals and organizations to succeed.
• Strong communicator capable of effective public speaking as well as persuasive writing and able to attract and maintain support from a broad range of constituents, both within West Adams & Westchester, as well as among the greater landscape of Los Angeles.
• Openness to feedback, willingness to take personal responsibility, and desire to learn from mistakes.
• Capability to oversee the complex administrative and financial responsibilities associated with opening and operating highly successful charter schools.
• Ability to attract, screen, develop, motivate and retain an exceptional team of administrators and leaders.

Responsibilities:
• Monitor, and help sustain the high standards of a rigorous school climate and school culture.
• Ensure compliance with accountability requirements set by the school’s charter and all relevant laws and requirements set forth by the Los Angeles Unified School District, State of California and No Child Left Behind (NCLB).
• Communicate as the primary spokesperson for the school and advocate to all external audiences, including investors, media, community partners, government agencies, educational organizations, and local leaders.
• Serve as member of board committees, providing them with the essential data, relevant reports and information necessary to effectively govern the school in a timely manner.
• Provide leadership and professional development for the CMO and all other school leaders within the CMO.
• Coordinate with external grant writer for an integrated comprehensive internal and external fund raising effort related to a major capital campaign, and fiduciary responsibilities related to any foundations that contribute
• Work directly with the Culture and Accountability Officer (CAO) and Head of Schools (HOS) to ensure academic success and employee and family safety and satisfaction.
• Locate, secure and improve facilities for current schools and for future sites.
• Analyze and negotiate funding and contracts for facilities.
• Manage strategic planning process for all schools.

2. Culture and Accountability Officer

The Culture and Accountability Officer (CAO) is the leader for the cultural programs of the school. The CAO reports to the Executive Director.

Characteristics and Qualifications:
• Bachelor’s degree, Master’s Degree preferred in similar field with several years of urban teaching experience.
• California Administrative Credential preferred.
• Training or relevant experience in teacher management and development of school programs.
• Passionate and completely dedicated to Bright Star Schools’ mission of preparing students for college and career and a steadfast belief that all students deserve an excellent public education in preparation for high school and college.
• Unwavering belief that all students, regardless of demographics, can achieve at the highest academic levels.
• Proven ability to work collaboratively with a diverse team of teachers.
• Ability to give constructive feedback on issues that will facilitate growth and achievement of both students and teachers.
• Professional demeanor, strong work-ethic, detail-driven work style with excellent organizational and communication skills.
• Ability to prioritize, multi-task, and lead by example.
• An entrepreneurial spirit, who embraces the opportunity for creativity and hard work inherent in a start-up.
• Openness to feedback, willingness to take personal responsibility, and desire to learn from mistakes.
• Sensitivity to and respect for the great diversity of race, class, gender, ability and perspectives that come together in our school.

Responsibilities:

• Lead selected professional development sessions throughout the year.
• Collaborate with the Head of Schools and Executive Director concerning student achievement, student assessment, and student discipline.
• Communicate regularly with the Head of School & Executive Director regarding student achievement, curriculum development, professional development, staff evaluations, and the budgetary needs for each.
• Create a culture of high academic and behavioral expectations.
• Work with Head of School to plan and implement summer orientation for staff.
• Seek and share best practices from other schools and professional journals.
• Lead regular, school-wide staff meetings.
• Implement effective internal assessment systems and uses data to inform decisions.
• Implement external assessment systems and uses data to inform decisions.
• Maintain and develop relationships with school leaders to share and identify best practices and attempt to find solutions for similar small and independent school gaps and needs.

3. Head of Schools (HOS)

The Head of Schools is responsible for overall school performance and organizational management, and is the primary person responsible for the management of the school’s growth, culture and the viability of the school over time. He or she manages all external and non-operational issues, such as working with the Board, reporting to and interfacing with the authorizer, fundraising, public relations and ensuring the finance and operation of the school.
The Head of School oversees the Principals, Assistant Principal, the Director of Student Services, and the Director of Special Education in their management and guidance of the VACS staff. The Head of School is hired and evaluated by the Board of Directors of Bright Star Schools.

**Characteristics and Qualifications:**

- Bachelor’s degree, Master’s Degree preferred, and at least three years of urban teaching experience.
- California Administrative Credential preferred.
- Training or relevant experience in school management.
- Student-focused leader committed to implementing a standards based curriculum and using data and assessments to drive instructional decisions.
- Relentless achiever who works tirelessly towards achieving the school’s mission.
- Flexible and able to adapt as situations require.
- Organized, systems-oriented leader who has experience in managing several different projects simultaneously.
- Subscribes to a similar educational philosophy to that espoused by VACS’s culture and curriculum.
- Capability to oversee the complex administrative and financial responsibilities associated with opening and operating a highly successful charter school.
- Ability to attract, screen, develop, motivate and retain an exceptional team of teachers, staff members and administrators.
- Competence at stewarding public funds responsibly.
- Openness to feedback, willingness to take personal responsibility, and desire to learn from mistakes.
- Sensitivity to and respect for the great diversity of race, class, gender, and perspectives that come together in our school.

**Responsibilities:**

- Ensure compliance with the school’s charter and all relevant law and requirements set forth by the State of California.
- Ensure compliance with accountability requirements set by the Los Angeles Unified School District.
- Hire, coach, and evaluate Principals.
- Serves as instructional leader with Principals to oversee curriculum development and assessment.
- Ensure that schools (all Bright Star schools including Valor schools) meet performance benchmarks established by the Board of Directors
- Ensure curriculum alignment with California state standards and California Common Core Standards.
- Communicate regularly with the CAO & Executive Director regarding student achievement, curriculum development, professional development, staff evaluations, and the budgetary needs for each.
Create a culture of high academic and behavioral expectations.
Work with CAO to plan and implement summer orientation for staff.
Seek and share best practices from other schools and professional journals.
Lead regular, school-wide staff meetings.
Provide daily coaching and feedback to instructional staff.
Implement effective internal assessment systems and uses data to inform decisions.
Implement external assessment systems and uses data to inform decisions.
Set and monitor core subject grading policies and practices to ensure consistency across the school.
Ensure that every student demonstrates achievement gains.

4. Controller

The Controller provides proper financial oversight for the organization. S/he is primarily responsible for ensuring that the school’s financial records are accurate and up-to-date. S/he also ensures that programmatic guidelines for reporting and implementation are properly followed on a timely basis. The Controller reports to the ED.

Qualifications and Experience

- Bachelor’s degree; advanced degree preferred.
- Five years of experience in operations and/or finance preferred.
- Passionate and completely dedicated to VACS’s mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve preparation for the college of their choice.
- Unwavering belief that all students can achieve at the highest academic levels.
- Results-driven business leader with experience in, and commitment to operational and financial excellence.
- Professional demeanor, strong work-ethic, detail-driven work style with excellent organizational and critical thinking skills.
- Ability to prioritize, multi-task, delegate and lead by example.
- Ambition and desire to grow as a leader.

Responsibilities

- Coordinate federal forms, checks, payroll and benefits for Bright Star Schools staff.
- Administer Department of Education grants.
- Oversee school financial controls.
- Provide accurate, updated financial statements to the ED.
- Ensure that the school is in compliance with all programs, including, but not limited to attendance, fiscal policies, and HR policies.
- Work with the ED to create school budgets.
- Coordinate annual financial review.
• Record and track all income and expenses.
• Record all cash receipts, invoices for accounts payable.
• Prepare vendor checks.
• Apply for and manage grants, disbursements, guidelines, and reporting.
• Apply for and manage Title I funding and other applicable financial aid.
• Pursue timely receipt of Block Grant, Title I, and other payments to the school.
• Oversee all auditing measures and ensure Bright Star Schools meets all financial compliance and mandates by Federal and State laws.

6. Human Resource Manager

The Human Resource Manager job description namely involves coordinating hiring, supporting, and evaluating Bright Star employees. The HRM also manages the day-to-day HR operations and is responsible for overseeing HR policies, programs, services, recruiting and selection, payroll processing, workers’ compensation claims, wage & hour, legal compliance and employee relations.

Characteristics and Qualifications:

• Bachelor’s degree in appropriate field from a regionally accredited university
• 2-3 years of experience in related area.
• Strong communication skills to reach different levels of employees and outside vendors.
• Excellent organizational skills and detail oriented.
• Ability to multi-task and create systems for follow-through of employee requests and needs.
• Dedicated to the privacy of employee complaints and files.
• Able to maintain consistent professional relationships with employees at all levels.
• Passionate and completely dedicated to VACS’s mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve an excellent public education in preparation for high school and college.
• Unwavering belief that all students, regardless of demographics, can achieve at the highest academic levels.

HR Responsibilities:

• Oversee the organization’s personnel benefits program; payroll and benefits administration and teacher credentials.
• Handle workers compensation claims and Family Medical Leave of Absences.
• Provides leadership and daily support to managers and principals relative to:
  o Issue resolution;
  o Policy and process development;
  o Adherence to federal and state regulations to ensure legal compliance;
  o Exit interviews.
• Responsible for handling:
o Escalated employee relations issues where objective involvement is necessary
o Policy issues;
o Answering questions about HR programs and practices;
o Implementing company-wide HR programs;
o Monitor unemployment claims and handles appeals process;
o Monitors company attendance records (Personal Time Off).

- Coordinate recruitment process; facilitate activities attendant to management of Job Fairs; and provide technical assistance to administrators in the employee selection process in addition to processing all new employees and all change-of-status forms.
- Maintain job vacancy posting and Human Resources web page.
- Design personnel forms and direct the maintenance of personnel records by all departments and is responsible for the release of any confidential information such as verifying employment or requests from agencies.

7. Operations Manager (OM)

The Operations Manager (OM)’s job description is namely involved compliance with grants and programs as well as facilities. OM coordinates, participates and estimates time and material requirements for routine and special maintenance assignments and projects. S/he prepares contract specifications and requests for quotations; schedules maintenance work in accordance with labor, health and safety requirements. S/he also monitors the performance of contractors to assure compliance with contracts, timelines and perform various oversight functions concerning large facility construction and renovations.

Characteristics and Qualifications:
- Bachelor’s degree in appropriate field from a regionally accredited university.
- 2-3 years of experience in related area.
- Strong communication skills to reach different levels of employees and outside vendors.
- Excellent organizational skills and detail oriented.
- Ability to multi-task and create systems for follow-through of employee requests and needs.
- Dedicated to the privacy of employee complaints and files.
- Able to maintain consistent professional relationships with employees at all levels.
- Passionate and completely dedicated to VACS’s mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve an excellent public education in preparation for high school and college.
- Unwavering belief that all students, regardless of demographics, can achieve at the highest academic levels.

Facility Responsibilities:
- Supervise the operations of the school in accordance with school policies.
- Plan, coordinate, evaluate and estimate time and material requirements for routine and special maintenance assignments and projects for school facilities, grounds and physical plant; plan specific projects to meet the needs of the District plan.
- Identify, schedule and oversee the removal of hazardous materials including asbestos and lead” added to the representative duties of his job description.
• Confer with administrators regarding work requests, priorities and maintenance needs at facilities; coordinate projects to cause minimal disruption to school activities.
• Conduct periodic building inspection to assure compliance with structural, roofing, painting, plumbing, heating and electrical requirements; make recommendations concerning needed repairs and appropriate priorities and follow up as needed.
• Maintain records relating to building projects such as architectural drawings, specifications, and construction cost breakdowns, bids, material and equipment specifications and job history files.
• Establish and maintain effective working relations with maintenance personnel.

8. Director of Student Services
The Director of Student Services (DSS) maintains lines of communication with parents and other family members to facilitate high levels of meaningful participation between the school and the communities we serve. The DSS acts as a liaison for family and community members to the Principal(s). S/he coordinates training of parents/guardians to act as partners in education and brings community members into the life of the school in ways that enhance the mission and vision of the school. The DSS directly leads the following outlets: The Connector Program, Counseling Services, Dean of Student Affairs, Parent Ambassadors and Parent Education. The DSS reports to the HOS.

Characteristics and Qualifications:

• College degree.
• At least two years working in a school environment or as a community organizer.
• Evidence of strong organizational and interpersonal skills.
• Desire to be a team player; ability and willingness to lead community outreach.
• Passionate and completely dedicated to VACS’s mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve an excellent public education in preparation for high school and college.
• Unwavering belief that all students, regardless of demographics, can achieve at the highest academic levels.

Parent Ambassador Program:

• Work with the Head of School and PTs to create programs and initiatives to increase family involvement in the school.
• Develop and help coordinate parent and school activities, to improve communication between the school and families.
• Act as a liaison/moderator between parents and the school
• Provide appropriate support and resources to schools to ensure that it meets its commitment to coordinate parent volunteer hours that is aligned with the mission of the school.
• Work with parent leaders and the school site council to define annual goals, conduct local fundraising activity.
**Parent Education:**

- Work with the Dean of Student Affairs to define the scope and breadth of the parent education curriculum.
- Coordination of parent education program including organizing materials, speakers, venue, etc. for monthly parent education meetings.
- Develop a parent education curriculum that addresses a variety of topics of interest to our parent community: college readiness, financial literacy, how to pay for college, etc.

**8. Director of Special Education**

The Director of Special Education (DSE) will be responsible for the maintenance of records for special needs and will be the primary person responsible for ensuring that students with special needs receive the proper accommodations and/or modifications within the classroom.

**Qualifications and Experience**

- Bachelor’s Degree
- Certified Special Education teacher or administrator
- CLAD certification preferred
- Certified to administer CELDT preferred (can be trained)
- Teaching Credential
- At least two years of classroom experience working with students with IEPs
- Experience working with EL students and implementing SDAIE methods
- Passionate and completely dedicated to Valor Academy’s mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve preparation for the college of their choice
- Unwavering belief that all students can achieve at the highest academic levels

**Responsibilities**

**Special Education Responsibilities**

- Coordinate and review special education needs of incoming students as indicated on the family questionnaire responses
- Provide direct special education services as needed
- Coordinate with schools to receive IEPs of all incoming students
- Facilitate review of intake assessments for incoming students
- Schedule and coordinate pull-out services for students on an as-needed basis
- Follow all Federal and District guidelines concerning the development and implementation of IEPs
- Facilitate necessary testing for evaluation process
- Ensure compliance with all Federal and District SPED regulations regarding parental consent
- Coordinate with Principals and grade-level teachers any pre-referral meetings and SST
- Ensure that all general education teachers know and understand classroom accommodations for the special needs students they serve
- Coordinate with HOS and grade level teachers to monitor implementation of appropriate accommodations for students during instruction
- Serve as the point of contact for parents of students with special needs
• Organize and coordinate professional development opportunities for general and special education teachers
• Work directly with general education teachers on issues that may arise in classroom settings
• Facilitate the evaluation/reevaluation process
• Create and coordinate a master schedule for annual IEP meetings
• Be responsible for student files, including maintaining a system that monitors viewing of files and confidentiality, as well as ensuring that all files are current
• Assist with interviewing of special education teachers and related service professionals
• Coordinate annual or biannual formative and summative evaluations of the special education program
• Create and maintain a system for monitoring and compliance, ensuring that all federal and state rules and policies are followed
• Serve as the point of contact in matters involving special education due process

CAMPUS EMPLOYEES

1. Principal

The Principal (PT) is responsible for driving the school’s mission and vision. The PT accomplishes this through frequent observations and coaching, requiring peer cross-evaluations and by positive, constructive communication among Board Directors, administrative staff, teachers, students, & parents, especially as related to curriculum, instruction and assessment. The PT is a student-focused leader committed to implementing a standards based curriculum and using data and assessments to drive instructional decisions. S/he creates, monitors and sustains the high standards of a rigorous school climate and school culture. The Principal is directly responsible to the Head of Schools.

Characteristics and Qualifications:
• Bachelor’s degree; Master’s Degree preferred.
• At least three years of urban teaching experience.
• California Administrative Credential
• Openness to feedback, willingness to take personal responsibility, and desire to learn from mistakes.
• Acknowledge praiseworthy efforts of staff, students, and parents.
• Collaborate with HOS and CAO concerning student achievement, student assessment and student discipline.
• Teach and lead one non-core class per day when possible/necessary.
• Respond to complaints and suggestions from staff, students, and family members.
• Work closely with the Director of Student Services to ensure consistent and positive communication with all families.
• Communicate as the primary spokesperson for the school and advocate to all external audiences, including investors, media, community partners, government agencies, educational organizations, and local leaders.
• Along with the ED and Controller, oversee the school’s finances: managing the budget, financial relationships, and relationships with vendors.

**Staff Responsibilities:**
• Oversee and manage all matters regarding employment and dismissal of personnel; salaries and contracts; job assignments and performance evaluations; and orientation and training of new instructional staff.
• Facilitate collaboration among teachers in developing and implementing curriculum, instruction and classroom management.
• Support and evaluate the professional development and growth of all teachers and support staff.
• Support instructional practices through observation and discussion.
• Recruit, appoint, support, manage, and evaluate the Assistant Principal (APT), Student Data Coordinator (SDC), Principal in Residence (PTiR) and Office Support personnel.
• Recruit, appoint, support, and evaluate all instructional staff with support from the Assistant Principal.

**Student and Program Oversight:**
• Oversee staff and student scheduling.
• Day to day oversight of the school.
• Monitors implementation of the program through evaluating academic achievement and behavior through detailed data analysis of student and teacher performance.
• Oversee and assist with student discipline.
• Maintain and manage the enrollment, retention and attrition of students.
• Ensure that students are passing the academic programs and those that need additional resources and interventions are receiving set support.
• Oversee Testing Coordinator to ensure timely submissions of all deadlines related to mandated state exams.
• Coordinate with the school’s special education program Resource Teacher to ensure compliance with the school’s charter and all relevant law and requirements set forth by the State of California.

2. Assistant Principal
The Assistant Principal (APT) also called the Principal in Residence (PTiR) has proven experience working with schools as an advocate, organizer or staff person. These candidates should have experience representing a constituency or coordinating group activities. The candidate also drives the mission and vision of the school; s/he effectively communicates this understanding to any personnel that is not a teacher, and coordinates participation and supervision in ways that support the school’s charter. The Assistant Principal and the PTiR report to the Principal. Some of these responsibilities may be delegated to teachers interested in pursuing administration as their specialization track.

**Characteristics and Qualifications:**
• Bachelor’s degree, Master’s Degree preferred.
• At least three years of urban teaching experience.
• Teaching Credential
• California Administrative Credential preferred.
• Acknowledge praiseworthy efforts of staff, students, and parents.
• Openness to feedback, willingness to take personal responsibility, and desire to learn from mistakes.
• Assist and collaborate with the Principal.
• Teach at least one non core subject or course to one group of students if possible/ necessary.
• Respond to complaints and suggestions from staff, students, and family members.
• People and activity/events planning oriented.

Staff Responsibilities:
• Oversee staff to ensure safe and adequate departure and dismissal procedures.
• Supervise staff for transition into the afterschool program smoothly.
• Recruit, appoint, support, and evaluate all support staff with feedback from the teachers.
• Support the professional development and growth of all TAs.

Student and Program Oversight:
• Create supervision schedule for breaks and lunches.
• Create and manage individual TA schedules.
• Create, oversee and manage the cultural/extra & co-curricular programs i.e. Field Trips, Friday activities, Advisory Program and Dances.
• Oversee the lunch program, the people that serve and cater the food and all compliance issues with the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program.
• Manage transportation if applicable, i.e. bus schedule, bus company liaison.
• Oversee, schedule, staff and manage the afterschool program.
• Ensure accurate attendance tracking and compliance related to all grants per the afterschool program(s).

3. Teachers
VACS complies with the California Charter Schools Act with respect to teacher certification. All certified teachers teaching core subjects as per NCLS requirements, and uncertified teachers teaching non-core subjects, comply with subject matter competency and all other requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. Characteristics that add to the multilingual, multicultural nature of the faculty are valued as assets. Bright Star Schools’ believe that part of the equation for a successful teacher includes a teacher who is willing to go above and beyond the call of duty when necessary. Our teachers are meaningfully committed to protecting the safety, interests and rights of all individuals in the classroom.

Teachers help develop and implement the curriculum. All teachers report to the Principal.

Characteristics and Qualifications:
• Bachelor’s Degree.
• NCLB Highly Qualified in core subjects (ELA, Math, English, Science, History)
• Two years of urban teaching experience preferred.
• Passionate and completely dedicated to VACS’s mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve preparation for the college of their choice.
• Unwavering belief that all students can achieve at the highest academic levels.
• High level of professionalism.
• Willingness to engage in frequent dialogue and to be relentlessly self-reflective with regards to personal teaching practices.
• Commitment to developing professionally as a teacher and as a leader.
• Commitment to analyzing student’s academic achievement results and using assessment data to inform instruction.

• Teachers should possess an ELL authorization either embedded in their credential or added authorization issued by CTC.

**Instructional Responsibilities:**
• Ensure that the school’s academic standards are rigorous, clear, measurable and aligned with California State Standards.
• Use the school’s scope and sequence to develop unit plans and daily lesson plans when applicable i.e. for English Language Arts.
• Submit lesson overviews to the PT on a weekly basis.
• Work with grade level team, subject chair and PT to revise, edit and improve lessons.
• Develop curriculum that addresses different learning styles.
• Develop assessments that measure student progress.
• Create a course syllabus and write and introductory letter for students and families before the academic year begins.
• Use a variety of methods to engage students in the classroom.
• Assume responsibility for the progress of all students.
• Continuously use assessment data to refine curriculum and instructional practices.
• Communicate effectively with students, families and colleagues.
• Use planning periods for the advancement of student academics.

**Whole School Responsibilities:**
• Provide continual assessment of student progress and maintain accurate records of schoolwide promotion goals (OTCU).
• Support student discipline policies.
• Make meaningful connections with students who may engage in disruptive classroom behavior.
• Arrange for substitute teaching staff as needed.
• Communicate efficiently and timely with parents regarding child’s progress in order to maintain close relationships with parents and guardians and involve them in their children’s education.
• Also acts as advisor to his/her advisory period and supports the advisory students through the school’s academic program.
4. Dean of Student Affairs

The Dean of Student Affairs (DSA) is the primary person responsible for the oversight of non-academic and behavioral concerns regarding students. S/he serves as the primary interface between the schools and the students’ homes, ensuring consistent and timely communication from the school in regards to student discipline. The DSA must have experience with counseling students, supporting student discipline and instilling behavior interventions. S/he should have some experience working in a school. The DSA reports to the Principal and manages the Connecting Place Coordinators.

**Characteristics and Qualifications:**
- Bachelor’s degree.
- Fluency in Spanish preferred.
- At least two years of experience in the fields of Social Work, Counseling, Psychology or Family Therapy.
- Must have excellent communication and interpersonal skills for interaction with students, staff and parents.
- Able to supervise a classroom of 1 to 30 students in the event of special non core lesson or emergency.
- Proficient with Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Outlook.
- Highly organized and excellent with follow-through on tasks.
- Strong focus on the creation of an orderly academic environment.

**Disciplinary Duties:**
- Organize meetings with Principal, and teachers to strategize individual student cases.
- Develop specific mentoring and peer counseling programs.
- Provide intervention for student discipline issues.
- Develop programs to promote positive student behavior by coordinating school activities to enhance discipline.
- Communicate student disciplinary concerns to the student’s parent and staff timely and efficiently.
- Service as a liaison officer with community organizations, police and probation officers affected.
- Responsible for reports on investigations of offenses committed by students.
- Organize Staff Development Seminars and Workshops for parents on discipline.
- Perform other related duties assigned.

**Whole School Responsibilities:**
- Passionate and completely dedicated to VACS’s mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve preparation for the college of their choice.
- Unwavering belief that all students can achieve at the highest academic levels.
- Create, evaluate and seek to constantly improve overall school culture, with an emphasis on academic achievement, structure, discipline, and fun.
5. **Student Data Coordinator**

The Student Data Coordinator (SDC) has two years of experience working with data entry. S/he has experience with student information systems. The SDC is ideally a bilingual speaker; fluent in Spanish/English with some experience working in a school environment. The Student Data Coordinator must be highly proficient with Microsoft Excel, Word, Access and Outlook.

**Characteristics and Qualifications:**

- Generate reports by operating the Eagle Aeries Student Information System.
- Assist with monthly reports to be submitted to the District and home office (LAUSD Classification, LAUSD attendance, Federal Food program, After School Education and Safety Program (ASES), and internal student progress reports.
- Ensure student data accuracy by developing and implementing standardized process around data entry and reporting of student information.
- Assist and coordinate in distribution of data to schools and home office.
- Assist and coordinate with yearly mandated exams (STAR, CELDT).
- Assist yearly District and state reports such as: (CBEDS, R30 Language Census, SARC, CALPADS, STAR data growth reports).
- Assist in completing quarterly reports (Annual survey oversight, prep/accounting).
- Support Lunch Supervision, Friday Activities, Open Houses, etc.
- Assist in translating documents into other languages where applicable
- Efficiently and timely print all student related reports such as report cards and transcripts.
- Maintain an excellent accounting system of all student cumulative files in VACS’s main office.
- Organize and aggregate data related to students including STAR scores/ paperwork and schoolwide promotion goals.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

**Whole School Responsibilities:**

- Passionate and completely dedicated to VACS’s mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve preparation for the college of their choice.
- Unwavering belief that all students can achieve at the highest academic levels.
- Create, evaluate and seek to constantly improve overall school culture, with an emphasis on academic achievement, structure, discipline and fun.

6. **Teacher’s Assistant**

VACS’s teacher’s assistants (TAs) are of great value to the overall academic program of the organization. Not only do they assist the teachers, but many TAs also serve as tutors and lead individual classes during the afterschool program. TAs are not only fully committed to the vision and mission of the school, but they are our primary source for substitute teachers and some even matriculate to become full-time teachers in the general education classroom with Bright Star Schools. As teachers teach the academic curriculum, our TAs have their own unique duties to drive the cultural framework of the schools during Friday activities, while teachers are in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and when we go on our intensive Life Experience Lessons. Our TAs help our schools realize our extensive academic and cultural programs.
Characteristics and Qualifications:
- Must be enrolled in a college or university, BA degree preferred.
- Must meet NCLB requirements
- Must be organized, creative, independent and self-motivated, enthusiastic, dependable, detail-oriented, flexible in scheduling and prioritization and driven by excellence.
- Must possess good communication skills to present facts and recommendations effectively in oral and written form, including accurate grammar and business correspondence knowledge.
- Interpersonal skills to establish and maintain effective relationships; demonstrated ability to communicate in situations requiring tact and poise; skilled in confidentiality and discretion.
- Must present a neat, professional appearance.
- Must be able to adjust tasks and focus with composure, and in accordance with changing deadlines and priorities.

Responsibilities:
- Supervise children in all indoor and outdoor activities ensuring a safe environment, especially during transitions and bathroom breaks.
- Supervise children during breakfast, lunch and snack time, encouraging good eating habits are developed.
- Assist in teaching children to become responsible for their decisions and actions.
- Guide children’s behaviors in a positive way that teaches self-respect along with respect for others and the community around them.
- Encourage children to interact positively with other children and people around them.
- Provide a wide variety of age appropriate activities that offers physical and emotional growth.
- Prepare instructional materials needed to implement the daily activity plans with the classroom teacher.
- Maintain open lines of communication with the classroom teacher and team to ensure individual needs of all children are met.
- Prepare and distribute healthy snacks as necessary for children.
- Lead the classroom if teacher is running late or requested a substitute.
- Help and supervise during any field trip and school-related activities.

7. Office Manager
The office manager of VACS ensures the efficient operation of the school’s main office and work with members of the administrative team to ensure the success of the school. The office manager reports to the Principal. Office Managers should have at least two years of experience working as an office manager, administrative assistant, project manager or equivalent position. They effectively use standard office machines and computer software programs such as Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook. They speak, comprehend, read and write fluently in English and Spanish. They effectively attend to the details of work, and conduct all job duties with accuracy and preparedness.
Characteristics and Qualifications:
- A minimum of an Associate’s Degree or two years of college.
- A minimum of two years experience in a similar position.
- Demonstrated proficiency with letter and report writing, accurate mathematical calculations, word processing, record keeping and data collection systems.
- Perform clerical and administrative procedures for daily school operations.
- Interact pleasantly and professionally with all members of the learning community and the public.
- Maintain a neat and welcoming atmosphere in the office.
- Prepare correspondence, forms, reports, memoranda, and student attendance and enrollment data in an accurate and timely manner.
- Assure that student data, permission slips, and other required paperwork are kept current for each student as needed.
- Prepare and mail correspondence to students’ parents.
- Exemplary communication skills in English and Spanish, including impeccable grammar and fluency in order to translate school documents and communications to Spanish or English as needed.
- Answer high volume of calls, return general voicemails or emails.

Responsibilities
- Monitoring the school’s entryway, greeting parents and visitors to the school and maintaining school safety.
- Contacting parents regarding absences, missing assignments, teacher concerns or student illness.
- Implementing systems to support the work of teachers and administrative staff.
- Independently, or in accordance with administrative instructions, developing school communications in English and Spanish based on a thorough knowledge of school policies, programs and systems.
- Translating for parent meetings and school events.
- Preparing and maintaining a variety of student, personnel and school records.
- Maintaining and operating a variety of office equipment, such as the copy machine, printers, fax machine and scanners with speed and accuracy.
- Assisting in the coordination of special events.
- Place orders for office and classroom supplies.
- Collect necessary paperwork and assist in the full enrollment of a new student.
- Assist the Principal and members of the administrative team, as directed.

8. Connector
The connector educates students and parents about colleges, the college admissions process, trends, procedures, and testing; advising and supporting classes of 30-50 seniors and families as they go through the process; and helping students and families to choose wisely and realistically.
Characteristics and Qualifications:

- Bachelor’s degree in an appropriate field from a regionally accredited university, Masters preferred
- Must have strong communication skills and supervisory experience.
- Experience in college admissions
- Experience high school college counseling, teaching experience, and computer skill

Responsibilities:

- Meeting with all college admissions representatives who visit our campus and facilitating meetings between college representatives and our students.
- The Connector also serves as a liaison with College admissions offices throughout the year.
- Compiling an annual Profile of the School, as well as information on grade distributions in junior and senior courses and courses offered at our school.
- Working with school offices to maintain records on seniors, including GPA's and transcripts.
- Administering the College Counseling Office budget and purchasing, maintaining, and sharing information on colleges, college guides, scholarships, financial aid, and paying for college.
- The Connector also keeps parents informed through a monthly column, a newsletter for parents, and in letters about test dates, local college events, and financial aid.
- Acting as lead advisor to the senior class as a whole and advising several individual seniors each year, providing academic and personal counseling. In addition to working with senior class on class events, class meetings provide an opportunity to disseminate information about the college application process.
- Making informational presentations to parents, such as the annual presentations to parents of 8th graders, parents of juniors, new parents, and the Parents’ Association.
- Being aware of issues and trends in college admission, higher education, testing, as well as keeping up-to-date about specific colleges and maintaining membership in professional organizations.
- Maintaining and disseminating information about standardized tests such as SAT, ACT, and TOEFL, helping to administer PSAT exams and working with the Registrar to arrange for or extended time on these tests, as warranted.
- Coordinating selection of college book award winners and presents them on Graduation weekend. The College Counselor has also handled various aspects of Graduation such as the graduation photo, certificates, and creating programs for
RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

VACS takes a local and national approach towards recruiting our administrative and teaching staff. A major resource for recruitment is the Teach for America Los Angeles office. We recruit at all of the major colleges and universities, such as: UCLA, Loyola Marymount, USC, Pepperdine and the Cal State Universities. In addition, we rely on word of mouth, advertising in the local papers, participation in annual charter schools job fairs, visits to private schools and postings on websites such as Edjoin and Craigslist. Additionally, we subscribe to headhunting services that recruit for charter schools such as Carnie, Sandoe & Associates or Teach California Charter. Nationally, we contact the alumni networks of colleges and universities and organizations such as New Leaders for New Schools.

SELECTION OF STAFF

Our selection process is designed to be rigorous and comprehensive to minimize the risk of hiring staff that are not suited for the unique responsibilities and demands of VACS. The HRM is responsible for recruiting and posting the job openings; reviewing the applications and conducting the first informal phone interview. The hiring process consists of a multi-step application and interviewing process.

1. Application, resume and cover letter submitted by candidate.
2. HRM reviews and separates the applications into three categories: strong, proficient, and weak.
   a. Weak candidates will receive a notice of acknowledgement.
3. Proficient and strong candidates are invited to a demonstration lesson or depending on the position, an interview.
   a. A teacher will be scheduled for a demonstration interview observed by Principal and possibly the grade level of subject level chair.
   b. A teacher’s assistant will do walkthroughs with the Assistant Principal and do a series of questions and answers.
   c. A full-time exempt classified position consists of a series of interviews ranging from the Board of Directors to the Principal(s).
4. Candidates whose mission is aligned with VACS’s values and needs are then assessed by all relevant members of the hiring team. The HRM requests for references from the candidate and follows-up on them
5. Any candidates who show potential, but are not hired for the year are placed in an internal database for possible future recruitment for six months.

EMPLOYEE APPLICATION PROCESS AND AGREEMENTS

The application procedure includes a written application, review of references and a demonstration lesson for teachers. Prior to signing the agreements, applicants spend time with the Principal or other staff member(s) to ensure that they share the school’s mission and vision.
Employee’s job duties and work basis are negotiated in individual employment agreements. Full-time staff is hired for a one-year term. Agreements may be renewed based on demonstration of meeting or exceeding the requirements of individual contracts and adhering to policies, procedures and expectations. These expectations are designed to support the mission and vision of the school and comply with state laws.

These agreements may take the form of employment contracts, at-will employment agreements or other agreements. All agreements not specifically stating that they are Employment Contracts are deemed to be at-will employment agreements.

**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

VACS utilizes “360°/upward evaluation” where students, parents and staff members have an opportunity to provide feedback to the teachers, other staff members, the administrators and ultimately each other. These evaluations are within the formal evaluation process that is the responsibility of the Principal, Assistant Principal or Head of Schools. All evaluations—informal and formal, are based on a rubric that all employees understand and acknowledge.

The senior management team that consists of the Head of Schools, Principals, Executive Director and the Culture and Accountability Officer has all contributed to the development of a comprehensive rubric that encompasses both the CCSS for the Teaching Profession and employee qualities that are of value to the organization. Bright Star Schools has also adopted a new program called Echospan to streamline the evaluation process. New teachers and teachers that need improvement are assessed by their site-supervisor at least two times formally throughout a calendar year. Returning and high-performing teachers are evaluated formally at least once by their site supervisor. The Principal however, conducts many and frequent classroom visits and observations annually.

All teachers will participate in classroom observations, walkthroughs and peer evaluations of each other. In addition to a formal assessment conducted by the Principal, the teaching staff will continuously engage in reflection and discussion about instructional and management practices during Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and Professional Development (PD). Teachers will also be responsible for partially evaluating their TA’s performance. When the feedback is critical and there are unsatisfactory marks by a fellow teacher or the supervisor, the Principal will provide appropriate measures for improvement and place interventions as needed. The Assistant Principal will be responsible for evaluating all non-certificated staff, based in part on the evaluations by the teachers. The Principal will be responsible for annually evaluating all certificated teachers and the Assistant Principal, based in part on evaluations by staff, parents and students. The Head of Schools will be responsible for evaluating the performances of the Principal(s), based in part on the evaluations by staff, students and parents.

**SALARIES FOR ALL EMPLOYEES**

Bright Star Schools has developed its own salary scale that is on average 5 – 15% above the LAUSD scale. The difference in salary is contingent upon the number of years served as a Bright Star Schools teacher. As Bright Star Schools teachers work longer hours during a regular school day (8 hours vs. 6 hour days), Bright Star Schools believes in compensating for how much our teachers go “above and beyond” the normal call of duty as best we can monetarily.
Teachers and administrators are also eligible for merit-based bonuses; it is an effective tool that drives staff achievement and morale. Bonuses are available to teachers approximately halfway through their second year of teaching. It is based on subject cohort growth or schoolwide growth coefficients (for teachers who teach a non-testable subject), and as long as the school budget allows. These bonuses do not track the typical school year, but instead are granted in December, based on a teacher’s track record for the prior school year and improvements observed during the first quarter of the following school year. Bright Star Schools believes that every employee has areas for potential improvement and that bonuses should be based on those efforts.

Section 2: State that the charter school will conform to the legal requirement that all charter school teachers shall hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold.

PROCESS FOR STAFF SELECTION

VACS adheres to California laws, including fingerprinting, drug testing and prohibitions regarding the employment of any person who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony. All employees must furnish or be able to provide:

1. Proof of negative tuberculosis (TB) testing or negative chest x-ray for TB.
2. Fingerprinting for a criminal record check. VACS will process all background checks as required by Education Code Section 44237.
3. Documents establishing legal employment status.

The HRM is responsible for monitoring and maintaining documentation of medical and criminal investigation clearances, as required by California and federal laws.

Section 3: Assure that the school will maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and that they will be readily available for inspection and procedure for monitoring credentials.

ASSURANCE

The school maintains current copies of all teacher credentials and/or proof of credential clearances. Since starting on January 1, 2006, the CTC no longer issues paper certificates of clearance, but instead it posts such information on its website.

Appropriate record keeping of credentials held by teachers as well as other documentation are monitored and maintained on file by the administrative designees. Credentials are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that teachers carry the necessary certifications, as required by law. Teachers’ credential information are readily available for inspection by the school’s charter authorizer. The HR manager and Principal are responsible for monitoring and ensuring compliance while staff members are responsible for updating the status of their own credentials. Employees are also responsible for their own fees related to their credentials.
Section 4: Assure NCLB compliance for teachers and paraprofessionals.

VACS furthermore assures that all paraprofessionals are also NCLB compliant in accordance with Title I funding parameters. All paraprofessionals must have:

(1) Completed two years of study at an institution of higher education; (2) Obtained an associate’s (or higher) degree; or

(3) Met a rigorous standard of quality and are able to demonstrate, through a formal State or local academic assessment, knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing and mathematics (or as appropriate, reading readiness, writing readiness and mathematics readiness).

The above requirements do not apply to paraprofessionals working primarily as translators or solely on parental involvement activities. Individuals who work solely in non-instructional roles, such as food service, cafeteria or playground supervision, personal care services and non-instructional computer assistance are not considered to be paraprofessionals for Title I purposes. All paraprofessionals however, in accordance with Title I funds respectively, have a secondary school diploma or equivalent.
ELEMENT 6: HEALTH AND SAFETY

“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 record summary as described in Section 44237.” Ed. Code Section 47605(b)(5)(F)

Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are. John Wooden
HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PLAN

Valor Academy shall have a comprehensive site-specific Health, Safety and Emergency Plan, including the acquisition and maintenance of adequate onsite emergency supplies, in place prior to beginning operation of the charter school. Valor Academy shall ensure that staff receives annual training on Charter School’s health, safety, and emergency procedures, and shall maintain a calendar for, and conduct, emergency response drills for students and staff. Charter School shall periodically review, and modify as necessary, its Health, Safety and Emergency Plan, and keep it readily available for use and review upon CSD request.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Valor Academy, including its employees and officers, shall 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 Charter School, all volunteers who will be performing services that are not under the direct supervision of a Charter School employee, and any onsite independent contractors or vendors having unsupervised contact with students, to submit to criminal background checks and fingerprinting in accordance with state law. Charter School shall maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for employment all employees prior to employment, and documentation that independent contractors and vendors have conducted required criminal background checks for their employees prior to any unsupervised contact with students. Charter School shall also ensure that it requests and receives subsequent arrest notifications from the California Department of Justice to ensure the ongoing safety of its students.

IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

Charter School shall require its employees, and any volunteer, vendor, or independent contractor who may have frequent or prolonged contact with students, to be examined and determined to be free of active tuberculosis as described in Education Code section 49406. Charter School shall maintain TB clearance records on file.

Charter School shall provide for the immunization and health screening of its students, including but not limited to screening for vision, hearing, and scoliosis, to the same extent as would be required if the students were attending a non-charter public school. Charter School shall maintain immunization records on file.
Section 1: Provide, if known, the address of the facilities to be used by the charter school; (If the charter is approved by the District, and the charter school wants to relocate to an area different from the targeted area originally designated in the charter, a material amendment will be required by the charter’s board of directors, prior to opening the charter school in the new location).

SCHOOL ADDRESS
8755 Woodman Ave Panorama City CA 91331

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES
All employees are responsible for their own safety, as well as that of others in their workplace. VACS relies upon its employees to ensure that the work areas are kept safe and free of hazardous conditions. Employees report any unsafe conditions or potential hazards to their supervisor or the HRM immediately. If an employee suspects a concealed danger is present on the premises, or in a product, facility, piece of equipment, process or business practice for which the school is responsible, the employee brings it to the attention of the Principal, HRM or another member of the administration immediately. The school’s administration arranges for the correction of any unsafe condition or concealed danger immediately and contacts the Head of Schools regarding the problem.

Periodically, VACS will issue rules and guidelines governing workplace safety and health. All employees familiarize themselves with the rules and guidelines, as strict compliance is expected. Failure to comply with rules and guidelines regarding health and safety or work performance is not tolerated. All employees are required to maintain current First Aid and CPR certification. Annual trainings are provided on site by the American Red Cross or other authorizing agency.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING PROCEDURES
VACS shall comply with the Child Abuse Reporting Laws set forth in the California Penal Code. In accordance with state law, all VACS teachers and staff are mandated to report any suspected child abuse. The report is filed with either the Police Department Child Abuse Unit or the Department of Children and Family Services. The mandated individual will meet with the appropriate authorities accordingly. Teachers and staff shall receive in-service training twice a year and sign documentation verifying notification and understanding regarding this responsibility. All staff will be required to follow federal guidelines to immediately notify DCFS and file the proper reports regarding any reported child abuse.

DRUG FREE/ALCOHOL FREE/SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT
VACS functions as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.
ELEMENT 7: RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

“The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school District to which the charter petition is submitted.” Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(G)

Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments.  
Chief Justice Earl Warren
COURT-ORDERED INTEGRATION

Charter School shall comply with all 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 District’s Student Integration Services (collectively the “Court-ordered Integration Program”). The Court-ordered Integration Program applies to all schools within or chartered through LAUSD.

Charter School has set forth below its initial plan for achieving and maintaining the LAUSD’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal of 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 lists specific dates and locations of recruitment activities that Charter School will undertake in order to achieve the District’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal. Charter School shall monitor the implementation and outcomes of the initial plan, and modify it as necessary to achieve its goals. Upon request, Charter School shall provide the District with a copy of its current written plan.

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 Valor Academy 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”). Valor Academy 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 memorialize separately any agreed-to number of NCLB-PSC placements of District students at the charter school.

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

Valor Academy shall ensure that all of its NCLB-PSC students are treated in the same manner as other students attending Charter School. NCLB-PSC students are and will be eligible for all applicable instructional and extra-curricular activities at Charter School. Valor Academy shall make reasonable efforts to invite and encourage the participation of the parents of NCLB-PSC students.
PSC students in the activities and meetings at 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 places at Valor Academy under the NCLB-PSC program increases in subsequent years, Valor Academy agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of increasing the number of NCLB-PSC places available at Charter School.

FEDERAL PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

As a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, Valor Academy 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. Valor Academy understands that it is a local educational agency (LEA) for purposes of federal compliance and reporting purposes. Valor Academy agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of 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 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 Program eligibility and 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
• Maintain appropriate time-reporting documentation, including semi-annual certification and personnel activity report, for staff funded with categorical resources, where applicable

Valor Academy also understands that as part of its oversight of Charter School, the District may conduct program review for federal and state compliance.

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**Section 1: Include a thorough description of the annual outreach efforts of the charter school.**

**OUTREACH EFFORTS**

VACS implements a coordinated advertising and recruiting strategy that ensures all parents and families are notified about the educational opportunities we offer. These efforts will be carried out from December–August. VACS is committed to serving all ethnic groups and thus, uses various advertising techniques to recruit students from all backgrounds.

Each year Bright Star Schools conducts an analysis of enrollment trends in order to optimize our efforts to recruit and retain students. A committee, comprised of various stakeholders from the instructional, administrative and operational sides of the school, meets regularly to complete a complex problem solving model. Using both quantitative and qualitative feedback from the previous year, the model allows the team to work together to clearly identify enrollment trends and their root causes, determine potential solutions, and generate strategies to successfully implement and track solutions in the upcoming year. One of the most valuable sources of data for this exercise comes from non-mandatory exit interviews (of families that have transferred from Valor to another school site) through which feedback is gathered by VACS administrators from the students and parents who choose not to enroll or re-enroll at VACS.

Externally, VACS will address retention and attrition through the development of school-based family engagement systems and strong partnerships that support teaching, learning, and student achievement. Director of Student Services will oversee coordinated efforts to strengthen two-way communication between parents and the school. This includes projects that give parents immediate access to critical information, help them better navigate the school and communicate possible concerns. The bi-annual parent surveys are an important component for they provide feedback that guides our parent engagement efforts. Because we understand parents play a fundamental role in their child’s education, we do our best to support parents in their role as parent educators by providing them with resources to develop their skills and monitor their children’s learning at home. Resources will include parent workshops and meetings, skills development opportunities and online tools. This collaboration not only helps parent relations, but also increases student achievement and hopefully retention.
PART A: What methods the school will use to advertise and recruit students (flyers, newspaper advertisements, informational fairs, etc.)

RECRUITMENT PLAN

Some of the methods shall include, but are not limited to the following:

- Distribution of informational materials to community organizations including Panorama Neighborhood Council, Arleta Watchdogs, CD7 and CD*, community religious institutions, and other organizations that serve various racial and ethnic populations, such as the Panorama City libraries, recreation centers, local businesses, middle schools and faith based organizations.
- Presentations at various multi-ethnic events, including community fairs and festivals.
- Announcements in local media, such as “The Neighborhood News” serving the communities of Arleta, Panorama City, Pacoima, North Hollywood, and others.
- Outreach meetings in several educational areas of the District to reach prospective students and parents.
- Providing opportunities for parents to speak to our representatives outside popular shopping venues.
- Development of promotional materials in various languages, including Spanish, Tagalog, Armenian and others to inform non-English speaking populations about our school.

Our efforts are centered on providing equal opportunities to all residents of the District, regardless of racial and ethnic background. Our student body is comprised of Latino/a, African American, Asian, Armenian, Pacific Islander, and other students.

PART B: What geographic areas will be targeted in outreach efforts?

TARGETED AREAS

Our efforts target Panorama City, Arleta, Pacoima, and North Hollywood communities is based on our desire to serve students who will matriculate from our 5-8th grade middle school program.

PART C: What languages will be used to do outreach?

OUTREACH LANGUAGES

The primary languages for outreach are in English and Spanish. If Tagalog or Armenian translation is needed, VACS has staff members to accommodate the language barrier. VACS provides translation services for in-person interaction requiring translation to the extent we have those language services available.

PART D: How these outreach efforts will attain a racial and ethnic balance at the charter school that is reflective of the District?

ACHIEVING RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

VACS will keep on file documentation of the efforts made to achieve racial and ethnic balance and the results achieved, as well as an accurate accounting of the ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled in the school. VACS seeks to serve the families of Los Angeles, with a
particular emphasis on reaching out to and recruiting in the underserved communities of Panorama City, Arleta, Pacoima and North Hollywood. The local public school population has a high Hispanic demographic, as well as a high socio-economically disadvantaged population. VACS’ demographics also reflect such statistics.

As stated in our vision, VACS seeks to narrow the achievement gap by offering all students, regardless of background, an excellent public education. As such, VACS is committed to maintaining a racial and ethnic balance of its students that is reflective of the general population residing within the Los Angeles Unified School District’s (LAUSD) territorial jurisdiction. In order to accomplish this, VACS conducts the following recruitment efforts, outreach programs and activities:

- Maintain student demographic data to ensure accurate accounting of racial and ethnic balance of students enrolled in the school.
- Develop and distribute flyers or brochures, applications and other recruitment materials that reflect the diversity of the community in English and Spanish (the languages of the families in the surrounding neighborhood).
- Use various distribution channels to enable public relations efforts to reach a wide audience, including community presentations, flyers, the school website and/or sending out press releases to the local media.
ELEMENT 8: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

“Admission Requirements, if applicable.” Ed. Code Section 47605(b)(5)(H)

The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically... Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.  

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*
MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

Charter School shall 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. Charter School shall provide specific information, in its outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings, that notifies parents that the school is open to enroll and provide services for all students, and provides a District standard contact number for access to additional information regarding enrollment.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Charter School shall not require a parent/legal guardian/student to provide information regarding a student’s disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, legal or economic status, primary language or English Learner status, 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, or any other information that would violate federal or state law, prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment. Charter School may request, at the time of, and as part of, conducting its lottery process, the provision of information necessary to apply specific admissions preferences set forth in this Charter.

Charter School shall not request or require submission of a student’s IEP, 504 Plan, or any other record or related information prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment.

Section 1: State that the charter school will admit all pupils who wish to attend as outlined in Education Code § 47605 (d)(2)(A)

ASSURANCE

As a public school, VACS admits all grade-level eligible pupils who wish to attend up to capacity, in accordance with California Education Code § 47605 (d)(2)(A).

Valor Academy Charter School:
- Is non-sectarian in all areas of operations, including student admission.
- Does not discriminate based on race, sex, color, creed, handicap, national origin, ancestry, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.\(^79\)
- Does not charge tuition.
- Accepts all students who are California residents.
- Does not require any pupil to attend the charter school.
- Does not enroll pupils over 19 years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements.

Valor Academy Charter School adheres to all provisions of No Child Left Behind regarding:

- Receiving students from Program Improvement schools as part of Public School Choice.
- Ensuring highly qualified status of teachers and paraprofessionals.
- Meeting the needs of "at-risk" students if the school is designated a targeted assistance school.

If the number of pupils who wish to attend the Charter School exceeds the school's capacity, attendance, except for existing pupils of the Charter School, shall be determined by a public lottery. Preference is extended to pupils as described in Part F below except as provided for in California Education Code § 47614.5. Charter schools are schools of choice and VACS’s admissions policies reflect this compliance with state and federal requirements. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605 (d)(2)(A), VACS admits all students who wish to attend, up to the school’s enrollment capacity.

**Section 2: Describe any specific admissions requirements of the proposed school, and provide an assurance that they are consistent with non-discrimination statutes.**

See assurance above.

**Section 3: Describe the efforts the school will employ to recruit academically low-achieving, economically disadvantaged students, and special education students.**

**EFFORTS TO RECRUIT CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS**

By charter school law, VACS has open admission for any student who seeks to enroll in our academic program. Our recruitment efforts reflect our objective nature as a charter school and in no way favor or bias any demographic. When students with IEPs enroll, it is the school’s policy to collect any and all information pertaining to the student’s IEP. VACS is committed to serving academically low-achieving and economically disadvantaged students to offer them a seamless path to success in high school and college. We have proposed our location in a community where on average 80-95% of the students in our target population qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch according to federal guidelines. We are dedicated to making sure that all community members are equally aware of the alternative we are providing to high school students in the communities of Panorama City, Arleta, Pacoima, and North Hollywood.

Our school recruiting team conducts student outreach activities from December through August annually. A variety of techniques are utilized including canvassing, local school visits, community-based organization visits, public business tabling (sitting outside markets and other businesses that allow us to pass out flyers to the public) and various advertising in Los Angeles-based English and Spanish publications. In order to ensure we attract low-achieving, economically disadvantaged and special education students, we plan to conduct our outreach in
communities with similar demographics. VACS marketing and recruiting materials highlight that our program is available to all students with a variety of needs and backgrounds. Our recruiting teams are trained to ensure all families are notified that our program currently serves a large population of economically disadvantaged students and that we accept students regardless of past academic performance.

Upon acceptance to the school program through public lottery, it is the school’s policy to collect any and all information pertaining to the student’s IEP, so that VACS can provide all necessary and timely services.

Section 4: Describe the manner in which the school will implement a public random drawing in the event that applications for enrollment exceed school capacity. This description should address:

Our admissions process will begin with the submission of an application at any time during the year. Once a student is offered a space in the school, families will complete an enrollment packet. In the late spring and summer months, families will attend a “Welcome Meeting” where the school culture and academic policies will be reviewed prior to the first day of school. At this orientation, students and parents will sign our Commitment to Excellence Form. By reviewing and signing this form, parents acknowledge that they will be actively involved in their child’s education, both at home and at school. School staff is flexible and reasonable in working with parents to determine various ways that they can be supportive of their child’s education. While parents are encouraged to sign the Commitment to Excellence form, it is their decision and a choice not to sign the form does not in any way impact their enrollment or admission.

SUMMARY OF VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL’S APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Open Enrollment Period Beginning of active academic year (late August) through March.
   a. Recruitment/Informational Meetings.
2. Random Public Drawing
   a. Lottery (if necessary).
   b. Notification of families.
   b. Completion of Intent to Enroll forms for students selected in public random drawing/lottery (these materials are also available online).
      a. Acceptance letter signed and mailed to school by parent/guardian.
      b. Completion of all necessary paperwork, including but not limited to:
         1. Proof of age.
         2. Immunization records.
         3. Home language survey.
         4. Emergency medical information.
         4. Welcome Meeting (May-August).

Enrollment during years 2-5 will be open year round at our school, beginning at the start of the prior school year and continuing into the active school year, as seats are available. However, the official “Open Enrollment” period before the Public Random Drawing is held begins the first day of school during the active academic year and continues through March.
a. Parent & Student attendance at Welcome Meeting.
b. Parent and student signature of school Commitment to Excellence.

PART A: The method the school will use to communicate to all interested parties the rules to be followed during the lottery process.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

All students interested in attending VACS are required to complete an Intent to Enroll application form that meets district standards and submit an Intent to Enroll application directly to the school before the annual open enrollment period deadline. Applications are available digitally online on the Bright Star Schools and VACS web pages and hard copies are available at the school site during a publicly advertised open enrollment period each year generally beginning the first business day of school during the active academic calendar and continuing through late March. Typical methods for advertising the open enrollment period include, but are not limited to, web advertising, newspaper and magazine ads, home mailers, distributing flyers in the community, and sign/billboard advertising. Submitted applications are date-and-time stamped and student names added to an application roster to track receipt.

Following the open enrollment period, Intent to Enroll forms are counted to determine if any grade level has received a number of applications which exceed available seats. In this event, the school holds a public random lottery to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level. The public is notified of the public random drawing through written notices posted on our website and fliers in the community. For applicants who have submitted an Intent to Enroll form, they are notified of the public random drawing via automated phone messages, email notifications, and letters sent to the home addresses. These notices outline admissions policies and highlight the lottery process and timeline on the School Calendars.

PART B: The method the school will use to verify lottery procedures are fairly executed.

METHOD

The lottery is coordinated by the school but moderated by an objective third party (usually a community leader or liaison). Given the native languages of the anticipated target community, all proceedings are conducted in English and Spanish. The names of each prospective student are put on cards that are of equal size and shape. The cards indicate if the applying student has any siblings that are applying for admission the same year. The name on each card is read as it is placed into a container or lottery device that randomly mixes the cards. A person assisting with the lottery, a non-interested party, draws the cards one at a time and reads the name on the card. As each card is pulled it is posted visibly on a display in the order it was chosen. Names are given a numerical ranking based on the order they were chosen. The drawing continues until all cards have been drawn and all names have been assigned a numerical ranking. These rankings are recorded in an electronic database that is double checked.

If a student is drawn who has a sibling, then the sibling who has enrolled in the same open enrollment cycle will receive an admissions preference according to #1 under “Admissions Preferences”.
Separate lotteries are conducted for each grade in which there are fewer vacancies than pupils interested in attending. All lotteries take place on the same day in a single location, typically in the school multi-purpose room or a local community center. Lotteries are conducted in ascending order beginning with the lowest applicable grade level. Due to preference given to students as listed below in Admissions Preferences, if a card is drawn that indicates said student, the student will be assigned the next available numerical ranking for the appropriate grade level.

The lottery is open to the public and families are encouraged to attend, however, families are not required to be present at the time of the drawing to be eligible for admission. Results are also mailed to all applicants and follow up phone calls are made by the Outreach Coordinator.

In the event of a Public Random Drawing, admission to the school is offered to pupils according to their numerical ranking until capacity is reached. All remaining names are placed on a waiting list in order according to their numerical rank. Families who have been offered admission are notified of acceptance within 3 business days of the lottery by the Office Manager and must accept enrollment for their students at VACS within two weeks of notification by confirming in writing their intent to enroll by returning the Enrollment Packet to the Office Manager. Any families who decline admission or who fail to confirm lose their position to the next name on the waiting list.

The waiting list is kept on file at the school and is valid for the duration of the school year for which students applied for. Parents who do not want their child to remain on the wait list provide, in writing, their request for removal. If no request is received, the student’s name remains on the waiting list until the end of the school year they have applied for.

Applications received after the public random drawing has occurred are marked with the date and time of receipt and added to the waiting list on a first come, first served basis.

The lottery process is conducted by our Outreach Coordinator, including organizing the public random drawing, ensuring proper communication to all stakeholders, and management of all waitlists.

**PART C: The timelines under which the open enrollment period and lottery will occur.**

Please see above under Section 4 for timeline of enrollment and lottery activities.

**PART D: The location where the lottery will occur and the efforts the school will undertake to ensure all interested parties may observe the lottery.**

The lottery will takes place at Valor Academy Charter School Currently, the middle school is located at 8755 Woodman Ave. Arleta CA 91331. The lottery process is open to the public.
PART E: The date and time the lotteries will occur so most interested parties will be able to
attend.

TIME OF LOTTERY
The lottery will be held in April. If there is no need for a lottery because VACS is under-
enrolled, no lottery will take place. If there needs to be a lottery, it is publically announced and all steps mentioned above will also follow. The lottery will be held sometime between the hours of 6pm and 8pm on a weeknight.

PART F: The preferences to be granted, if any, to potential students and the basis upon which those preferences shall be granted.

ADMISSION PREFERENCES
If the Charter School receives a number of applications that exceeds the number of available spaces, a single public random drawing/lottery will be conducted. Exemptions and preferences will be offered in the following categories in accordance with reconciliation of state and federal laws:

Existing pupils of the charter school will be exempt from the lottery.

1. Sibling(s) of current Valor Academy Charter School students will be exempt from the lottery.
2. Children or wards of VACM staff will be exempt from the lottery and admitted to the school as long as the number admitted by this exemption does not exceed 10 percent of total enrollment at VACS. VACS will comply with the District’s Founding Family Preference Policy.
3. In-District Students – in accordance with state law, Valor Academy Charter School will employ a single lottery with a higher weighting for students in this category. All students in the lottery living in the Los Angeles Unified School District boundaries will receive weighted drawing preference over students living outside the LAUSD boundaries by having their names submitted twice in the lottery pool (a weighting of 2:1).
4. Matriculating students from and other schools operated by Bright Star Schools
5. Other California residents.

PART G: The procedures the school will follow to determine waiting list priorities based upon lottery results.

In the event of a lottery, admission to the school will be offered to pupils according to their numerical ranking until capacity is reached. After the lottery all remaining names will be placed on a waiting list in order, according to their numerical rank. New applicants after the lottery who fall within the above admissions preferences will be provided a numerical ranking in the waitlist.

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82 See Open Enrollment section for methods of public announcement used.
83 Admissions Preferences will be in accordance with federal non-regulatory guidance per the CDE requirements for an application to the Public Charter School Grant Program (PCSGP). See the PCSGP guidelines at http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r1/pcsgp12rfa.asp
84 See POLICY FOR CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZING, LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, Revised February 7, 2012. View on web HERE.
Based upon those preferences. As a seat becomes available, the student with the lowest numerical ranking will be offered that seat.

### PART H: The means by which the school will contact the parents/guardians of students who have been promoted off the waiting list and timelines under which parents/guardians must respond in order to secure admission.

**WAITING LIST**

The waiting list is established from the names of students drawn in the public random drawing that do not receive admission and is used to fill enrollment vacancies that occur during the year. If a position opens during the school year, the office manager contacts the family at the top of the wait list by telephone and/or emails to offer their student admission to the school. The student and family has two weeks to either come in person or contact the School Office by phone or email to secure admission. Should the family decline the seat or fail to respond within two weeks, the next family on the list is contacted until the open position is filled.

### PART I: The records the school shall keep on file documenting the fair execution of lottery procedures.

Copies of all application packets, lottery results and waiting lists shall be made readily available for inspection at the school office. These records will be maintained by the Office Manager at each site. The school has developed a Lottery Policy document that has been approved by Bright Star Schools Board of Directors. It is available to the public at any time by contacting the Bright Star Schools CMO office.

Acceptance letters are distributed to families whose students earn space through the lottery. All families, including those whose children are admitted through the lottery but are not present at the time of the drawing, are notified by mail. To secure their set, all admitted students must return acceptance letters within two weeks of receiving the notification.

**ATTENDANCE ACCOUNTING**

VACS shall utilize an appropriate student information system for attendance tracking and reporting purposes and utilizes attendance accounting procedures that satisfy requirements for LAUSD, LACOE and CDE. Required reports are completed regarding daily attendance and submitted to the requesting agencies. This includes reporting enrollment and attendance figures to LAUSD as required by the District.

VACS provides to LAUSD the following information for each academic year:

- Norm Day Classification.
- List of all highly qualified Certificated Personnel in core subjects as defined in No Child Left Behind and State policy and regulations.
- Total School Enrollment.
- List of Emergency Credentialed Teachers in non-core subjects.
- Number of Students by Grade Level.
- Unfilled Classroom Teacher Positions.
- Number of Students by Ethnicity & Grade Level.
- Number of Students Living Outside LAUSD Attendance Area.
ELEMENT 9: FINANCIAL AUDITS

“The manner in which an annual, independent financial audit shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority.”

Ed. Code Section 47605(b)(5)(I)

Never regard study as a duty, but as the enviable opportunity to learn to know the liberating influence of beauty in the realm of the spirit for your own personal joy and to the profit of the community to which your later work belongs. Caine & Caine
The annual audit shall be conducted in compliance with the California Education Code 47605(b)(5)(I) as it is amended from time to time.

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

a. Provisional Budget – Spring prior to operating fiscal year
b. Final Budget – July of the budget fiscal year
c. First Interim Projections – November of operating fiscal year
d. Second Interim Projections – February of operating fiscal year
e. Unaudited Actuals – July following the end of the fiscal year
f. Audited Actuals – December 15 following the end of the fiscal year
g. Classification Report – monthly according to school’s Calendar
h. Statistical Report – monthly according to school’s Calendar of Reports In addition:

- P1, first week of January
- P2, first week of April

i. Instructional Calendar – annually five weeks prior to first day of instruction
j. Other reports as requested by the District
Section 1: Ensure that annual, independent financial audits employing generally accepted accounting principles will be conducted.

INDEPENDENT CHARTER STATUS

VACS is a fiscally independent, directly funded charter school.

ASSURANCE

Each fiscal year an independent auditor will conduct an audit of the financial affairs of VACS to verify the accuracy of the school’s financial statements, attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and to review the school’s internal controls. VACS will retain auditors to conduct independent financial audits, which employs generally accepted accounting principles and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Controller General of the United States.

To the extent required under the applicable federal laws for audits of the major federal programs, the audit scope expands to include items and processes specified in any applicable U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars.

The financial audits will be conducted by a qualified Certified Public Accountant familiar with school finances and operations. The audits assure that the school’s money is being handled with responsibility and that financial statements conform to the Government Accounting Standards. Audit exceptions and deficiencies will be resolved in conference with the auditor to the satisfactions of the auditing agency prior to the completion of the auditor’s final report. Audit exceptions and deficiencies are resolved to the satisfaction of LAUSD. VACS provides LAUSD with final audit results within 60 days of completion or December 15th, whichever is earlier.

In addition, financial statements audited by a Certified Public Accountant are submitted to the District within four months following the close of the fiscal year.

Section 2: Describe the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies will be resolved.

Resolving Exceptions and Deficiencies

Valor Academy Board Finance Committee reviews any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report recommendations to the full Board as to how these have been, or will be, resolved. Valor Academy Board acts upon these recommendations, and reports its action to Los Angeles Unified School District to the satisfaction of the District, and within an outlined timeline. The Executive Director will be tasked with ensuring that audit findings are effectively corrected and the school is in compliance.
Section 3: Describe the plans and systems to be used to provide information for an independent audit.

ANNUAL AUDIT

Adequate cash flow for VACS is ensured by maintaining a funds balance (reserve) of its expenditures as required by section 15450, Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. The Executive Director and Controller regularly prepare financial reports, including balance sheets and cash flow statements that the Board of Directors reviews during their board meetings. The Head of Schools and Bright Star CMO maintain financial documents and supporting documentation such as receipts, invoices and credit card statements in a uniform and orderly fashion for easy accessibility by the auditor(s).

On an annual basis, the Executive Director is responsible for contracting services with an independent Certified Public Accountant who has been certified by the State of California Controller’s Office on its list of education auditors with education finance experience to audit the school’s financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and in accordance with the provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller’s Guide.

Any audit exceptions or deficiencies are resolved to the satisfaction of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

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

a. Final Budget – Spring prior to operating fiscal year
b. First Interim Projections – November of operating fiscal year
c. Second Interim Projections – February of operating fiscal year
d. Unaudited Actuals – July following the end of the fiscal year
e. Audited Actuals – December 15 following the end of the fiscal year
f. Classification Report – monthly according to school’s Calendar
g. Statistical Report – monthly according to school’s Calendar of Reports

In addition:

a. P1, first week of January
b. P2, first week of April

h. Instructional Calendar – annually five weeks prior to first day of instruction

Other reports as requested by the District
ELEMENT 10: STUDENT SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS

“The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled.” Ed. Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(J)

It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.
Section 1: Describe rules and procedures for suspension and expulsion that are consistent with state and federal law:

PART A: GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION

VACS does not use at-home suspensions unless a student poses a clear and present danger to students, faculty or staff. Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

1. Conference
   a. Suspension is preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted with the Dean of Student Affairs with the student and his or her parent(s) and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student is notified of the student’s right to return to school for the purposes of a conference.
   b. At the conference, the pupil is informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him/her and is given the opportunity to present his/her version and evidence in his/her defense.

2. Notice to Parents/Guardians
   At the time of suspension, the Dean of Student Affairs 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 is notified by phone and then in writing of the suspension and the date of return following the suspension. This notice states the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice states the date and time when the student may return to school. If the Dean of Student Affairs or designee wishes 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 and shall not exceed twenty (20) school days per year. Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Principal Teacher, the pupil and the pupil’s guardian or representative is invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination is made by the Principal upon either of the following determinations:
   a. The pupil’s presence is disruptive to the education process; or
   b. The pupil poses a threat or danger to others.

Upon either determination, the pupil’s suspension is extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing. Students will be provided with a packet of assignments to complete during suspension and will be expected to make up all missed assignments, projects, and assessments within three schools days of returning to school.
PART B: GROUNDS FOR EXPULSION

VACS informs parents and students of all discipline policies and procedures, including grounds for suspension, expulsion, and due process, through the annual Student and Family Handbook. The Principal teacher shall automatically recommend expulsion for the following Mandatory Expellable Offenses:

**Mandatory Expellable Offenses—Non-discretionary**

1. Possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm or explosive.
2. Brandishing a knife at another person.
3. Unlawfully selling a controlled substance as defined by Education Code
4. Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault.

A student may be 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:

- While on school grounds.
- While going to or coming from school.
- During the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus.
- During, going to or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

**May Expel – Discretionary Offenses**

Students may be expelled or suspended 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 in self-defense.
2. Possessed, sold or otherwise furnished any knife or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee with the Principal Teacher 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. Engaged in any form of dishonesty (lying, cheating, or stealing).
8. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
9. 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.

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

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

12. 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.

13. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.

14. 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.

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 any prescription drug.

17. Engaged in or attempted to engage in hazing of another.

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.

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

22. Committed any repeated willful violation of the suspendable offenses as specified in the student handbook.

23. Bullying defined as intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261 of the California Education Code, directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel.

**PART C: GENERAL DISCIPLINE POLICIES IN PLACE AT THE SCHOOL**

**Student Handbook**

VACS has implemented a comprehensive connections policy, which is outlined in more detail in the Student Handbook (SHB). All students and parents receive and acknowledge the stipulations written in the SHB upon enrollment. The policy clearly describes the school’s expectations regarding attendance, mutual respect, violence,

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85 See Appendix (Tab 6, Section F) for the Student and Family Handbook.
safety and work habits. The policy is not discriminatory, arbitrary or capricious and follows the general principles of due process.

The connections policies are subject to review and revision by VACS’ Governing Board. When a policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend a pupil from regular classroom instruction and/or expel a pupil from the charter school.

Each student and his or her parent or guardian are required to verify that they have reviewed and understand the policies prior to enrollment. By signing the school's handbook acknowledgement forms (Commitment to Excellence Form), the students and parents acknowledge their understanding of and the responsibility to the standards set forth in the connection policy. The policy defines student responsibilities, unacceptable behavior and the ways that the school attempts to connect students and their parents to the school’s culture and expectations.

Our suspension and expulsion policy is only needed when all of the connection attempts outlined in the SHB have been exhausted or when an immediately expellable offense (drugs, violence, or weapons – as defined in the SHB) has put our school community in danger.

**PART D: SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES**

**Expulsion Procedures**

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to an evidentiary due process hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed upon parent request and for good cause—e.g. parent needs additional time to prepare—the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Principal Teacher recommends the pupil for expulsion. The Principal Teacher makes a recommendation to disciplinary administrative panel for a final decision whether to expel. The panel should be comprised of at least three members of the Bright Star Board of Directors; the Principal Teacher is not part of this panel. The hearing is held in a private and confidential setting. Should the parent or guardian appeal the decision to expel, the Bright Star Board of Directors, minus the three members of the original panel, shall hear the appeal.

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

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
2. A statement of specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
3. A copy of VACS’s disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
4. 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;
5. 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;
6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student’s behalf including witnesses.

**Record of Hearing**

A record of the hearing is made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate record or minutes 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 if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. Findings of fact shall be based on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel is based solely on hearsay and sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the panel determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

The decision of the panel is in the form of written findings of fact based on substantial evidence and an expulsion order if applicable. The panel makes a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the panel is made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing. The panel’s decision may be appealed within 10 days to the VACS Governing Board which will meet to hear the appeal within 30 days of the parent requesting an appeal. In order to appeal the panel’s decision to expel, the parent must initiate the process by contacting the Principal Teacher or Dean of Students Services in writing or by telephone. Appeal hearings are conducted according the same procedures as the initial hearing.

If the panel decides not to expel, the pupil is immediately returned to his/her educational program. In some cases a behavior support plan may be created by the Principal Teacher.

**Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Bullying and/or Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses**

VACS 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 is examined only by the panel members. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, is available to the pupil.

1. The complaining witness in any bullying and/or 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.
2. VACS must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness’ use prior to and during breaks in testimony.

3. 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.

4. The panel conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.

5. The panel 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.

6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. The person presiding over the hearing may remove 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.

7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, VACS must present evidence that the witness’ presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to VACS. The panel 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 from the panel 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.

**Written Notice to Expel**

The Principal Teacher or designee, following the Bright Star Schools disciplinary panel’s decision to expel, sends written notice of the decision to expel, including the Bright Star Schools Governing Board’s adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian within three business days. This notice also includes the following:

1. Notice of the panel’s findings and expulsion order.
2. 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 VACS.

3. Notice of student’s reinstatement eligibility review date, a copy of the student’s rehabilitation plan, and notice of appeal rights and procedures.

4. Information regarding placement

The Principal Teacher or designee sends a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the student’s district of residence. This notice includes the following:

1. The student’s name.

2. The specific expellable offense committed by the student.

**Disciplinary Records**

VACS maintains records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the Charter School. Such records are made available to the District upon request.

**Expelled Pupils / Alternative Education**

The Charter School is responsible for facilitating post expulsion placements and enrollment by providing parents with contact information for programs where the student may be placed, LAUSD Expulsion Unit, LA County programs, return to District of residence information, or another charter school that can serve the student and clearly explaining next steps to parents.

**Right to Appeal**

The panel’s decision may be appealed within 10 days to the Bright Star Schools Governing Board which will meet to hear the appeal within 30 days of the parent requesting an appeal. In order to appeal the panel’s decision to expel, the parent must initiate the process by contacting the Principal or Dean of Students Services in writing or by telephone. Appeal hearings are conducted according the same procedures as the initial hearing. Should the parent or guardian appeal the decision to expel, the Bright Star Board of Directors, minus the three members of the original panel, shall hear the appeal.

If the panel decides not to expel, the pupil is immediately returned to his/her educational program on a probation agreement to be presented by the Principal or designee and approved by the panel.

**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Charter School shall provide due process for all students, including adequate and timely notice to parents/guardians and students of the grounds for all suspension and expulsion recommendations and decisions and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights of appeal.
Charter School shall ensure that its policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically reviewed, and modified as necessary, in order to conform to changes in state law.

Charter School shall ensure that its staff is knowledgeable about and complies with the District’s Discipline Foundation Policy and/or current equivalent policy, as required by the Modified Consent Decree.

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 and shall facilitate the post-expulsion placement of expelled students.

Charter School shall document and implement the alternatives to suspension and expulsion that Charter School utilizes in response to attendance-related concerns, e.g. truancy or excessive tardiness.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Charter School shall implement operational and procedural guidelines ensuring compliance with federal and state laws and regulations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. If a student is recommended for expulsion and the student receives or is eligible for special education, Charter School shall identify and provide special education programs and services at an appropriate interim educational placement, pending the completion of the expulsion process, to be coordinated with the LAUSD Special Education Service Center.

In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”), or a student who has a 504 Plan, Charter School shall ensure that it follows 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 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 Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a 504 Plan, 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?

**NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT**

Upon expelling any student, Charter School shall notify the Charter Schools Division by submitting an expulsion packet to the CSD immediately or as soon as practicable, which shall contain:
• completed “Notification of Charter School Expulsion” [form available from the CSD website or office], including attachments as required on the form
• documentation of the expulsion proceeding, including statement of specific facts supporting the expulsion and documentation that Charter School’s policies and procedures were followed
• copy of parental notice of expulsion hearing
• copy of expulsion notice 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
• if the student is eligible for Special Education, documentation related to expulsion in compliance with IDEA and the MCD, including the Expulsion Analysis page of the pre-expulsion IEP
• if the student is eligible for Section 504 accommodations, documentation that Charter School conducted 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 Charter School’s failure to implement 504 Plan?

Notwithstanding the documentation sent to the Charter Schools Division as indicated above, if the student is a resident of a school district other than LAUSD, Charter School must notify the Superintendent of the student’s district of residence within 30 days of the expulsion. Additionally, upon request of the receiving school district, Charter School shall forward student records no later than 10 school days from the date of the request as stated in Education Code sections 49068 (a) and (b).

**OUTCOME DATA**

Charter School shall gather and maintain all data related to 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 Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by 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 apply to Charter School for readmission. Charter School shall inform parents in writing of its processes for reinstatement and applying for expungement of the expulsion record.
**READMISSION**

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, Charter School’s governing board shall readmit the pupil, unless 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**

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

**GUN FREE SCHOOLS ACT**

Charter School shall comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act.
ELEMENT 11: RETIREMENT PROGRAMS

“The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employees’ Retirement System, or the federal social security.” Ed. Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(K)

When the Principal sneezes, the whole school catches a cold. Todd Whitaker
ASSURANCES

VACS makes any contribution that is legally required of the employer, including STRS, 403b, Social Security and unemployment insurance. Valor Academy sets salary scales and benefits, working conditions, calendars, holidays, vacations, work days and the work year. When appropriate, the Board may obtain feedback from the school community (i.e. administrators, teachers, parents) on these items.

Valor Academy’ controller is responsible for working with any applicable vendors (i.e., payroll companies, etc.), to ensure that the following retirement program data, paperwork and payments are completed and submitted accordingly and that contributions are made on behalf of all eligible staff members.

STATE TEACHERS’ RETIREMENT SYSTEM (STRS)

VACS’ certificated teachers and eligible administrators is a part of the State Teachers' Retirement System, (STRS). Employees accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of STRS. Any full-time certificated employees who are eligible may elect to participate in the State Teachers’ Retirement System (STRS). Participating employees contribute the required percentage (currently 8% of salary), and BBSCA contributes the employer’s portion (currently 8.25%) required by STRS. Retirement data is reported and payments are made via the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) in accordance with procedures established by STRS.

CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

For non-certificated, full-time employees, the school contributes to Social Security and a 403(b) account. We reserve the right to change the retirement program for classified personnel if the school administration becomes aware of a more efficient retirement program for which they qualify.

REPORTING

Retirement reporting is contracted out to a qualified service provider, however, the Controller is responsible for ensuring that such retirement coverage is arranged. VACS forwards any required payroll deductions and related data to the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) as required by Education Code 47611.3 and 41365.
ELEMENT 12: ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES

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

One of the tests of leadership is the ability to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency. *Arnold H. Glasow*
Pupils who choose not to attend Valor Academy may choose to attend other public schools in their district of residence or pursue an inter-district transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the District.

### Section 1: Describe attendance alternatives for students consistent with District policy for intra-District attendance.

Though it is not the expectation that students will attend schools within the purview of LAUSD, some of the LAUSD schools in the Arleta / Panorama City / North Hollywood neighborhood that students may attend include:

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### Section 2: Inform parents/guardians of each pupil enrolled in the charter school has no right to admission in a non-charter District school as a consequence of charter school enrollment except to the extent that such a right is extended by the District.

In case of a desire to transfer, enrollment at VACS does not guarantee a student admission at any non-charter District school, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the District. This information is provided to parents by the main office.
ELEMENT 13: EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

“A description of the rights of any employee of the school District upon leaving the employment of the school District to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school District after employment at a charter school.” Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(M)

*Failure is not fatal but failure to change might be.  John Wooden*
Employees of the District who choose to leave the employment of the District to work at Charter School shall have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment at Charter School unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement or policy of the District as aligned with the collective bargaining agreements of the District. Leave and return rights for District union-represented employees and former employees who accept employment with Charter School will be administered in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements and any applicable judicial rulings.
“The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.” Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(N)

*Frederick Douglass taught that literacy is the path from slavery to freedom. There are many kinds of slavery and many kinds of freedom. But reading is still the path. [Carl Sagan]*
Section 1: District required language regarding dispute resolution to be provided to the petitioner by the District.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The staff and governing board members of Bright Star Schools agree to resolve any claim, controversy or dispute arising out of or relating to the Charter agreement between the District and Bright Star Schools, except any revocation proceeding under Education Code section 47607(c), (“Dispute”) pursuant to the terms of this Element 14.

Any Dispute between the District and Bright Star Schools 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: Valor Academy Charter School

                   c/o Head of School
                   8755 Woodman Ave
                   Arleta CA 91331

To Director of Charter Schools: 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 5:00p.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 attorney’s 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 may be administered in accordance with the mediation rules or guidelines of the American Arbitration Association, or otherwise by agreement of the parties.

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.
ELEMENT 15: EMPLOYER STATUS AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

“A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act.” [Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code]. Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(O).

To know what to leave out and what to put in; just where and just how, ah, THAT is to have been educated in the knowledge of simplicity. Frank Lloyd Wright
Valor Academy is deemed the exclusive public school employer of all employees of the charter school for collective bargaining purposes. As such, Charter School shall comply with all provisions of the Educational Employment Relations Act (“EERA”), and shall act independently from LAUSD for collective bargaining purposes. In accordance with the EERA, employees may join and be represented by an organization of their choice for collective bargaining purposes.

Section 1: State clearly whether the school will be the exclusive employer for the purposes of collective bargaining.

As such, Bright Star Schools complies with all provisions of the Educational Employment Relations Act and acts independently from LAUSD for bargaining purposes. In accordance with the EERA, employees may join and be represented by an organization of their choice for collective bargaining purposes. However, unless the employees elect to be represented by an organization for bargaining purposes, all employees are individually contracted.
ELEMENT 16: CLOSING PROCEDURES

“A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school. Including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records.” Ed. Code Section 47605(b)(5)(P)

We cannot teach people anything; we can only help them discover it within themselves.

*Galileo Galilei*
Section 1: District required language regarding revocation, renewal, and closure procedures to be provided to the petitioner by the District.

REVOCATION

The District may revoke the Charter if Valor Academy 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 Valor Academy if the District finds, through a showing of substantial evidence, that Charter School did any of the following:

- Valor Academy committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the Charter.
- Valor Academy failed to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the Charter.
- Valor Academy failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.
- Valor Academy 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 Valor Academy in writing of the specific violation, and give Valor Academy 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.

PURSUANT TO AB 97, CHARTER SCHOOLS MAY BE IDENTIFIED FOR ASSISTANCE BASED ON STATE EVALUATION RUBRICS AND BE SUBJECT TO REVOCATION PURSUANT TO EDUCATION CODE SECTION 47607.3.

CHARTER RENEWAL

VACS must submit its renewal petition to the District’s Charter Schools Division no earlier than September of the year before the charter expires.

CLOSURE ACTION

The decision to close Valor Academy, either by the governing board of Valor Academy or by the LAUSD Board of Education, must be documented in a “Closure Action”. A Closure Action shall be deemed to have been automatically taken when any of the following occur: the Charter is revoked or non-renewed by the LAUSD Board of Education; the governing board of Valor Academy votes to close 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

CLOSURE PROCEDURES  The procedures for charter school closure set forth below are guided by California Education Code sections 47604.32, 47605, and 47607 as well as California Code of Regulations, Title 5 (5 CCR), sections 11962 and 11962.1, and are based on “Charter School Closure Requirements and Recommendations (Revised 08/2009)” posted on the California Department of Education website. All references to “Charter School” apply to Valor Academy, including its nonprofit corporation and governing board.

Designation of Responsible Person(s) and Funding of Closure

Upon the taking of a Closure Action by either the governing board of Valor Academy or the LAUSD Board of Education, the governing board of Valor Academy shall immediately designate a person or persons responsible for conducting all closure procedures and activities, and determine how Valor Academy will fund these activities.

Notification of Closure Action

Upon the taking of a Closure Action, Charter School shall send written notice of its closure to:

1) The CSD, if the Closing Action is an act of Valor Academy. Note: If the Closure Action is a revocation or nonrenewal by the LAUSD Board of Education, the charter school may omit this step.

Parents, guardians, and/or caretakers of all students currently enrolled in Valor Academy within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Valor Academy shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written parent notification to the CSD.

2) Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). Valor Academy shall send written notification of the Closure Action to LACOE by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.

3) The Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) in which the school participates. Valor Academy shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the SELPA in which Charter School participates by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action.
Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.

4) The retirement systems in which the school’s employees participate. Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action, Valor Academy shall notify the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), and the Los Angeles County Office of Education of the Closure Action, and follow their respective procedures for dissolving contracts and reporting. Charter School shall provide a copy of this notification and correspondence to the CSD.

5) The California Department of Education (CDE). VACS shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the CDE by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.

6) Any school district that may be responsible for providing education services to the former students of Charter School. Valor Academy shall send written notification of the Closure Action within 72 hours of the Closure Action. This notice must include a list of potentially returning students and their home schools based on student residence. Charter School shall provide a copy of these notifications, if any, to the CSD.

7) All school employees and vendors within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Valor Academy shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written employee and vendor notification to the CSD.

Notification of all the parties above, with the exception of employees and vendors, must include but is not limited to the following information:

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

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

1) A description of the circumstances of the closure
2) The location of student and personnel records
3) Information on how to enroll or transfer the student to an appropriate school
4) A certified packet of student information that includes closure notice, a copy of the student’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

5) Information on student completion of college entrance requirements, for all high school students affected by the closure

Notification of employees and vendors shall include:

1. The effective date of the school closure

2. The name(s) and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure

3. The date and manner, which shall be no later than 30 days from the effective date of school closure, by which Charter School shall provide employees with written verification of employment.

Within 30 days of the effective date of closure, Charter School shall provide all employees with written verification of employment. Charter School shall send copies of such letters to the CSD.

SCHOOL AND STUDENT RECORDS RETENTION AND TRANSFER

Valor Academy shall adhere to the following requirements regarding the transfer and maintenance of school and student records:

1) Charter School shall provide the District with original student 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, of Charter School. Transfer of the complete and organized original student records to the District shall occur within seven (7) calendar days of the effective date of closure.

2) Charter School’s 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) Charter School shall prepare and provide an electronic master list of all students to the Charter Schools Division. This list shall include the student’s identification number, Statewide Student Identifier (SSID), birthdate, grade, full name, address, home school/school district, 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 to which each student is transferring, if known. This electronic master list shall be delivered to the CSD in the form of a CD.

4) Valor Academy must organize the original cumulative files for delivery to the District in two categories: active students and inactive students. Charter School will coordinate with the CSD for the delivery and/or pickup of the student records.

5) Charter School must update all student records in the California Longitudinal Pupil...
Achievement Data System (CALPADS) prior to closing.

6) Charter School must provide to the CSD a copy of student attendance records, teacher gradebooks, school payroll and personnel records, and Title I records (if applicable). Personnel records must include any and all employee records including, but not limited to, records related to performance and grievance.

7) Charter School shall ensure that all records are boxed and clearly 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 of any liabilities the charter school owes the state, which may include overpayment of apportionments, unpaid revolving fund loans or grants, and/or similar 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.

Valor Academy 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.

Valor Academy shall pay for the financial closeout audit of Charter School. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt incurred by Valor Academy will be the responsibility of Valor Academy and not LAUSD. Valor Academy understands and acknowledges that Valor Academy will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Valor Academy. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. Valor Academy 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 Valor Academy participates, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.
Valor Academy shall ensure the completion and filing of any annual reports required. These reports include but are not necessarily limited to:

8) Preliminary budgets
9) Interim financial reports
10) Second interim financial reports
11) Final unaudited reports

These reports must be submitted to the CDE and the authorizing entity in the form required. If 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 identify the disposition of all liabilities of the charter school. Charter school closure procedures must also ensure appropriate disposal, in accordance with Charter School’s bylaws, fiscal procedures, and any other applicable laws and regulations, 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 Charter School is operated by a nonprofit corporation, and if the corporation does not have any functions other than operation of Charter School, the corporation shall be dissolved according to its bylaws.

Valor Academy shall retain sufficient staff, as deemed appropriate by the Valor Academy governing board to complete all necessary tasks and procedures required to close the school and
Valor Academy’s governing 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.

Charter School shall provide LAUSD within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action with written notice of any outstanding payments due to staff and the method by which the school will make the payments.

Prior to final close-out, Charter School shall complete all actions required by applicable law, including but not limited to the following:

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 a Federal Notice of Discontinuance with the Department of Treasury (Treasury Form 63).
c) Make final federal tax payments (employee taxes, etc.)
d) File its final withholding tax return (Treasury Form 165).
e) File its 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 Valor Academy’s right to operate as a charter school or cause Valor Academy to cease operation. Valor Academy and the District agree that, due to the nature of the property and activities that are the subject of this Charter, 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.

**FACILITY AND ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS**

**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 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:**
  a. (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
  b. (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.
  a. (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.

b. (ii) Sole Occupant: If Charter School is a sole occupant of LAUSD facilities, LAUSD shall allow 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.

i) • 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.

Non-District-Owned Facilities

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. Charter School shall implement any corrective actions, orders to comply, or notices issued by the authorized building and safety agency. 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. Charter School may not open without providing a copy of the Certificate of Occupancy for the designated use of the facility. If Charter School moves or expands to another facility during the term of this charter, 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.

**Pest Management:** Charter School shall 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:** Charter School shall 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.

### INSURANCE

**Insurance Requirements**

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

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

The following insurance policies are required:

1. **Commercial General Liability**, including Fire Legal Liability, coverage of $5,000,000 per 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 (“Board of Education”) 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 Charter School’s insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School's policy. Coverage shall be maintained with no Self-Insured Retention above $15,000 without the prior written approval of the Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services for the LAUSD.

2. **Workers’ Compensation Insurance** in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code adequate to protect 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.

coverage with limits of $1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence if Charter School does not operate a student bus service. If Charter School provides student bus services, the required coverage limit is $5,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.

4) Crime Insurance or Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by 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 Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School's policy.

**Evidence of Insurance**

Charter School shall furnish to the District’s Division 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 Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services. However, the District reserves the right to require certified copies of any required insurance policies.
Should 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 Charter School.

**Hold Harmless/Indemnification Provision**

To the fullest extent permitted by law, 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 attorneys’ fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever, arising out of, or relating to, this Charter agreement. 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 attorneys’ 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 by Charter School and/or its officers, directors, employees or volunteers. Moreover, Charter School agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers, for any contractual liability resulting from third party contracts with Charter School’s vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors.

**FISCAL MATTERS**

**District Oversight Costs**

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

**Cash Reserves**

Charter School acknowledges that the recommended cash reserve is 5% of expenditures, as provided in section 15450, Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

**Special Education Revenue Adjustment/Payment for Services**

In the event that 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 Charter School, Charter School authorizes the District to deduct any and all of the in lieu property taxes that Charter School otherwise would be eligible to receive under section 47635 of the Education Code to cover such owed amounts. Charter School further understands and agrees that the District shall make appropriate deductions from the in lieu property tax amounts otherwise owed to Charter School. Should this revenue stream be
insufficient in any fiscal year to cover any such costs, 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 its charter authorization:

9) Charter School is subject to District oversight.

10) The District’s statutory oversight responsibility continues throughout the life of the Charter and requires that the District, among other things, monitors the fiscal condition of Charter School.

11) The District is authorized to revoke this Charter for, among other reasons, the failure of Charter School to meet generally accepted accounting principles or if Charter School engages in fiscal mismanagement.

12) 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 Charter School’s financial information,
- Charter School’s debt structure,
- Governance policies, procedures and history,
- The recording and reporting of attendance data,
- Charter School’s enrollment process,
- Compliance with safety plans and procedures, and
- Compliance with applicable grant requirements. 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.

Internal Fiscal Controls
Valor Academy will develop and maintain sound internal fiscal control policies governing all financial activities.

**Apportionment Eligibility for Students Over 19 Years of Age**

Charter School acknowledges that, in order for a pupil over nineteen (19) years of age to remain eligible for generating charter school apportionment, the pupil shall be continuously enrolled in public school and make satisfactory progress toward award of a high school diploma. EC 47612(b)

**Local Control and Accountability Plan**

In accordance with California Education Code §§ 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall include in its annual update a “listing and description of the expenditures for the fiscal year implementing the specific actions included in the charter as a result of the reviews and assessment required by paragraph (1)” of EC § 47606.5(a). These expenditures shall be “classified using the California School Accounting Manual pursuant to Section 41010.” EC §47606.5(b)