EQUITAS ACADEMY #2 CHARTER SCHOOL
RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED TO THE
LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

SUBMITTED OCTOBER 25, 2011

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CrankyFlier.com

Vikram Ravinder
Analyst
Huron Consulting Group

Contact:
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tab Number</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Page within Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Title Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Letter of Intent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Charter Briefing Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Initial Screening Checklist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Completed Charter Petition: 16 Elements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 1—The Educational Program</td>
<td>8-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 2—Measurable Student Outcomes</td>
<td>55-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 3—Method by which Student Outcomes will be Measured</td>
<td>58-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 4—Governance</td>
<td>63-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 5—Employee Qualifications</td>
<td>70-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 6—Health and Safety</td>
<td>81-85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 7—Racial and Ethnic Balance</td>
<td>86-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 8—Admission Requirements</td>
<td>90-91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 9—Financial Audits</td>
<td>92-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 10—Student Expulsions</td>
<td>98-103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 11—Retirement Programs</td>
<td>104-106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 12—Attendance Alternatives</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 13—Employee Rights</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 14—Dispute Resolution</td>
<td>109-110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 15—Employer Status and Collective Bargaining</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Element 16—Procedures to be Used if the Charter School Closes</td>
<td>112-119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>120-142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By Laws</td>
<td>non-numbered, original insert</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Articles of Incorporation</td>
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<td>Proposed Charter School Budget and Cash Flow</td>
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<td>Original Signature Pages (Teachers)</td>
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<td>Lottery and Enrollment Form</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Resumes and Credentials for all meaningfully interested teachers</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Due Diligence Questionnaires</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Resumes and Questionnaires for Board Members</td>
<td>non-numbered, original insert</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Resolution from Board of Directors</td>
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<td>CD—Charter Petition with Appendix and Budget</td>
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LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Innovation and Charter Schools Division

Letter of Intent to Apply for a Charter School

Name of proposed charter school: Equitas Academy #2
General location of proposed charter: Pico Union neighborhood (zip code 90015)
Projected grade level – Year 1: 5-6
Projected enrollment – Year 1: 150 students
Projected grade level – Year 5: 5-8
Projected enrollment – Year 5: 300 students

Lead Petitioner Information:
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Address: 631 S. Commonwealth Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90005
Phone number(s) 213.201.044
Fax: 213.652.4444
E-mail address: mborrego@equitasacademy.org

Other members of the Charter Development team
1. Malka Borrego, Executive Director, Equitas Academy
2. Pilar Buelna, Associate Executive Director of Social Services, The Salvation Army Southern California Division
3. Brett Snyder, Founder, Crankyflier.com
4. Oliver Bajracharya, Lawyer, Christie, Parker, Hale, LLP
5. Carlos Cruz, Assistant Vice President, Client & Portfolio Management - National Banking, Union Bank
6. Carolina Hernandez-Malone, Director-College Awareness and Preparation Programs
7. Families In Schools
8. Claudia Lima, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Senior Program Officer
9. Sandra Salazar, MD, Attending Physician, Alta Med Health Services
10. Vikram Ravinder, Analyst, Huron Consulting Group
11. Zanita Gwin, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Certification:
I/we certify that we are interested in applying for a charter school within LAUSD boundaries.
I/we have participated in the Orientation Meeting given by the LAUSD Charter Schools Division.

PRINT NAME SIGNATURE DATE

Received by:

PRINT NAME SIGNATURE DATE
• Equitas Academy #2

• Projected Grades Served Year 1: 5-6/Grades Served Year 5: 5-8

• Projected Enrollment Year 1: 150 students/ Number of Students: Year 5: 300 students

• Target Neighborhood: Pico Union (zip code 90015)

• Location to be determined at a later date

• Prop. 39-Application Submitted? Yes.

• Does the location meet Board Policy? Yes.

• Board of Directors:
  
Pilar Buelna  
  *Associate Executive Director of Social Services, The Salvation Army Southern California Division*

Brett Snyder  
  *Founder, Crankyflier.com*

Oliver Bajracharya  
  *Lawyer, Christie, Parker, Hale, LLP*

Carlos Cruz  
  *Assistant Vice President, Client & Portfolio Management - National Banking, Union Bank*

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  *Director-College Awareness and Preparation Programs Families In Schools*

Claudia Lima  
  *Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Senior Program Officer*

Sandra Salazar  
  *Attending Physician, Alta Med Health Services*

Vikram Ravinder  
  *Analyst, Huron Consulting Group*

• Description of Mission

  Equitas Academy provides a structured, achievement-based community that prepares students to graduate from college-preparatory high schools, four-year colleges and universities.

• Description of Vision

  Equitas Academy believes students must have access to an achievement-oriented learning environment to ensure all students make a smooth transition to the demands of
college preparatory middle and high schools with the ultimate goal of college graduation. For the vision of Equitas Academy to become a reality, every decision regarding the educational program and philosophy centers on how to best drive student achievement by creating a small, safe and structured community enabling students the opportunity and support to reach high expectations. Therefore, our educational philosophy includes the following five core beliefs to fulfill our mission:

1. We hold high academic and behavioral expectations for every student.
2. We engage and grow competent and experienced school leadership and staff.
3. We offer a rigorous academic program with intentional student supports.
4. We provide clear standards, research-proven curriculum, and frequent assessments.
5. We are a mission-driven school community.

- Source/Core of Money
  - $300,000 Partners for Developing Futures

- 3 – 5 Top Leaders
  - Malka Borrego, Executive Director
  - Zanita Gwin, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
  - Monica Gonzalez, Dean of Students and Families
  - Karina DiGirolamo, Enrichment Director

- Our group has not applied to any other jurisdiction for approval.

- There is currently a sister charter-Equitas Academy serving K-5 students.

- What innovative elements of your charter could be considered “best practices” and replicated by other schools?

  Our most innovative elements, replicable by other schools, include: (1) college preparatory curriculum for a population with historical and continual under-representation in higher education; (2) slow growth model of growing two grade levels each year based on highest achieving urban charter schools serving a similar population; (3) laser focus on the core content areas of literacy, math, science and social studies, character education/ethics; (4) intentional use of data to drive instructional decisions; and (5) leadership team that allows the school to focus and meet our high academic standards of preparing students to graduate from college preparatory high schools and college.
Equitas Academy #2
Table of Contents
Charter Petition Elements 1-16

Affirmations and Assurances.................................................................8

Element 1 – The Educational Program.................................................9
  Mission and Vision............................................................................9
  Educational Philosophy..................................................................10
  Targeted Student Population.........................................................10
  College Preparatory Model.............................................................13
  Slow Growth Model.......................................................................14
  An "Educated Person" in the 21st Century.......................................15
  How Learning Best Occurs..............................................................28
  A Typical Day at Equitas Academy................................................24
  Educational Program and Curriculum..........................................24
  A Rigorous Standards-Based Curriculum.......................................33
  Textbooks and California State Standards.....................................34
  Evidence-Base for Instructional Program with Targeted Population ..35
  Recruiting Qualified Teachers.........................................................36
  Professional Development and Planning Time..............................37
  Sample Daily Schedule..................................................................39
  School Annual Calendar................................................................41
  Instructional Implementation Plan..................................................42
  Instructional Program: Targeted Student Groups.........................43

Element 2 – Measurable Student Outcomes...............................55
  Accountability Plan.........................................................................55
  Timeline for Assessment of Pupil Outcomes.................................57

Element 3 – Method by Which Student Outcomes will be Measured...58
  Assessment Method.........................................................................58

Element 4 –Governance.................................................................63
  Governance Structure....................................................................63
  Board Officers................................................................................65
  Board Committees..........................................................................65
  Organizational Structure and Leadership Team............................67
  Family and Community Involvement.............................................68
  Grievance Procedure for Parents and Students..............................71

Element 5 – Employee Qualifications..............................................70
  Staff Recruitment and Selection Process.......................................71
  Performance Evaluation..................................................................80
  Staffing Plan for Year One-Five.....................................................80

Element 6 – Health and Safety.........................................................81
  Facility.............................................................................................81

Element 7 – Racial & Ethnic Balance..............................................86
  Recruitment Methods.....................................................................87
Equitas Academy #2
Affirmations and Assurances

“LAUSD-Specific Language” for the language marked with an asterisk (*).

Equitas Academy #2 shall:

- Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations.
- Not charge tuition.
- Not discriminate against any student on the basis of disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code.
- Admit all pupils who wish to attend the school. EC 47605(d)(2)(A)
- Determine admission by a public random drawing, if the number of pupils who wish to attend the school exceeds the school capacity, and preference shall be extended to pupils who currently attend the Charter School and pupils who reside in the District. EC 47605(d)(2)(B)
- Not enroll pupils over nineteen (19) years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements.
- Not require any child to attend the Charter School nor any employee to work at the charter school.
- In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(3)], if a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduation or completing the school year for any reason, the charter school shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information.
Equitas Academy #2 Charter School ("Equitas Academy") provides an environment that maximizes the opportunity for academic and life success for every student. The Equitas Academy model upholds a rigorous academic program and serves the specific academic and developmental needs of students in grades 5-8.

Equitas is a Latin word for justice, equity, and fairness. Our name guides a founding principle of the school. Too often, students enter middle and high schools lacking the strong study skills and content knowledge necessary to graduate and advance onto four-year colleges and universities. Equitas Academy is a place to provide our students an equitable learning experience encouraging their development into persons capable of and determined to make meaningful contributions to society, and thereby fulfilling the educational goals to become self-motivated, competent and lifelong learners. Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(A).

Our most innovative elements, replicable by other schools include a:

1. college preparatory curriculum;
2. slow growth model of growing one grade level each year based on the model of the highest achieving urban charter schools serving a similar population;
3. laser focus on the core content areas of literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and character education/ethics;
4. intentional use of data to drive instructional decisions; and

Mission
Equitas Academy provides a structured, achievement-based community that prepares students to graduate from college-preparatory high schools, four-year colleges and universities.

Vision
Equitas Academy believes students must have access to an achievement-oriented learning environment, to ensure all students make a smooth transition to the demands of college preparatory high schools with the ultimate goal of college graduation. We envision a school with a college preparatory focus, so students are able to develop the skills necessary for entrance into high-performing secondary schools. We envision a school with a curriculum and educational program that will allow students, despite any obstacles, to learn to read, write, and compute on or above grade level, to develop the academic and character skills that will serve them through the many life challenges they may face in accessing higher education. We envision a school in which education enriches the lives of students and their families and where we work closely with families to do the hard work necessary to achieve excellence and college graduation.

For the vision of Equitas Academy to become a reality, every decision regarding the educational program and philosophy centers on how to best drive student achievement by creating a small,
safe and structured community enabling students the opportunity and support to reach the high expectations we hold for them.

Educational Philosophy
We will serve fifth through eighth grade students and draw a population from all areas within Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), with a particular focus on students residing in the Pico Union neighborhood (zip code 90015).

Targeted Student Population
The Pico Union community derives its name from the intersection of Pico Boulevard and Union Avenue, a neighborhood located outside of downtown Los Angeles. Community demographics include a mix of immigrant (50%), US born citizens (40%), and undocumented residents (10%). Of all residents, 80% of the population living in Pico Union is Latino with 20% African-American, Asian, and Caucasian.

Pico Union residents are under great economic pressure:

- per capita income is $9,273
- 45% of the residents live below the federal poverty line
- median household income is $18,533
- over 30% of the residents hold manufacturing employment
- home values in Pico Union increased almost 300% in the past five years, to a median home value of $516,498

The population growth pattern in Pico Union illustrates an extraordinarily high density with 33,708 persons living per square mile compared to 2,344 in Los Angeles County. Housing is problematic and 80% of the residents are living in rented dwellings. Expanded housing and employment opportunities are greatly needed. In addition to residing in an economically impoverished community, Pico Union residents lack educational attainment. 45% of adults have less than a ninth grade education and less than 14% hold a high school diploma. Most

---

1 Pico Union, a sub area of Los Angeles includes the following boundaries: Olympic Boulevard to the north, Hoover Street to the west, the Santa Monica freeway to the south, and the Harbor freeway to east.
2 All Pico Union demographic information provided through UCLA Center for Neighborhood Knowledge 2000 census data for zip code 90015. Website [http://nkca.ucla.edu/](http://nkca.ucla.edu/)
3 This is based on legal residents documented in the 2000 Census; actual numbers of undocumented residents are likely higher.
8 Website [http://nkca.ucla.edu/](http://nkca.ucla.edu/)
importantly for the purposes of this charter application, students from families with low levels of parental educational attainment are at a greater statistical risk of dropping out.9

Lack of employment, high population, and low educational attainment contribute to the high-crime rate and proliferation of gangs in Pico Union.10 While community demographics paint an impoverished neighborhood, the area is beginning the early stages of gentrification with residential development and revitalization efforts. Pico Union is adjacent to the new LA Live Development and is a neighbor to six city blocks of apartments, theatres, and high-end hotels such as the Ritz-Carlton. While Pico Union families face ongoing challenges, improvements in education allow residents the opportunity to be a part of the revitalization efforts. Without access to education, economic advancement is difficult and limits families’ ability to participate in the economic growth of their neighborhood.

Pico Union students attend the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and the population density perpetuates overcrowding in the public school system. In 2010-2011, LAUSD school enrollment was slightly under 700,000 students. The District serves a diverse student population with a majority of Latinos (73%), 11% African American, 9% Caucasian, and the remaining 7% Asian and Other.11 Over 30% of the District’s students are English Language Learners, with most students speaking Spanish as their native language. Of all LAUSD students, 75% qualify for free and reduced lunch through the National School Lunch Program and thus live below the federal poverty line. Approximately 70% of students live in households in which neither parent attended college.12 The academic achievement data in LAUSD indicates 58% of fourth grade students in LAUSD tested proficient or advanced in English Language Arts California Content Standards Test (CST) and by eighth grade 42% tested proficient or advanced.13

The Pico Union academic achievement data is detailed in Table 1. All but one District school hold program improvement status, or did not meet federal requirements under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. All District schools received the lowest state rank of 1-4 on the California State Academic Progress Indicator (API) ranking. Two schools, both Charter scored in the top 20% of schools in California as indicated in the API State Ranking (Gabriella and Camino Nuevo). On the California similar schools rank14, four schools demonstrate higher performance scores receiving an eight or nine on a possible ten point scale (i.e., Gabriella, Camino Nuevo, Downtown Value, and White). Three out of four of these higher performing schools are charter. The API scores range from 681 to 875 with all schools (except Gabriella and Camino Nuevo Charter School) scoring below the statewide target of 800. The Pico Union District school demographics include large elementary schools with student population ranging from 483 to 1484 students. Over 85% of the students are eligible for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program. All schools are single-track.

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10 High crime statistics reported by Rampart, the local police department and through http://lalife.com/Pico-Union_Historic_District, which states Pico Union crime statistics are 50% higher than the Los Angeles County average.
11 Student enrollment data for 2008-2009 obtained from the California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Unit
12 http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/board/secretary/entireyear6-06.pdf.
13 2010-2011 test score data obtained from California Department of Education http://star.cde.ca.gov/.
14 A similar schools rank show a school’s relative placement compared to 100 other schools with similar demographic characteristics like student mobility, student ethnicity, school socioeconomic status, average class size, school calendar (traditional, multi-track, year-round), grade span enrollment, students with disabilities, students in gifted and talented education, reclassified fluent English Proficient (RFEP) and students who participate in migrant education program.
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<th>Program Improvement?</th>
<th>Met School-wide Growth Target</th>
<th>Met all Subgroup Growth Targets</th>
<th>API Score</th>
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<th>Similar Schools Rank</th>
<th>Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch</th>
<th>Major Ethnicity #1</th>
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<td>838</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>African-American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Value (K-8)</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposed Equitas Academy Middle School is in response to the need for creating more education opportunities for the residents of Pico Union. Charter Schools can be designed to address the particular needs of a small, targeted population and provide solutions for addressing the many challenges in this area. With increased freedom, charter schools have the opportunity to do more by hiring staff committed to the school’s mission, selecting curriculum, and setting a schedule that fits the needs of the students in a smaller, more manageable school environment. In addition, charter schools provide more opportunities to access neighborhood schools and choices for parents and students.

Equitas Academy Elementary (K-5) has been able to demonstrate high academic achievement in its first year of testing (2010-2011). With demographics that mirror the Pico Union neighborhood schools, over 90% free/reduced lunch, 100% students of color, 80% English Language Learners, Equitas Academy Elementary has a API of 870. By providing a small school environment with individual attention, strong relationships between staff and students, and close communication between school and home, the existing Equitas Academy Elementary has demonstrated a strong choice for families. Providing families with the choice to enroll their child(ren) at Equitas Academy allows families opportunities to involve themselves in the educational success of their child(ren), the ability to access a strong academic program, and thus will aid in being part of the solution to increase educational attainment and opportunities in Pico Union.

To operationalize the mission and vision of Equitas Academy Middle School, it is imperative to implement best practices proven to lead to equitable opportunities for student learning. Our most innovative practices practiced in the elementary and to be used in the middle school include the college preparatory mission, our slow growth model, focus on core content areas of literacy, math, social studies and science, and intentional use of data to drive instructional decisions. Our model provides the blueprint for actualizing the mission and vision of Equitas Academy and supporting students’ strengths and needs. It lays the foundation for creating a school that personalizes the learning experience for each student, meets families’ needs, and allows teachers more time to address the needs of each student. The small school or individualized approach also best allows students with special needs or English Learners to progress academically within the regular education classroom.

**College Preparatory Model**

Serving a population that is not traditionally college-bound, and too often does not have the core foundation to successfully complete middle and secondary education and go on to pursue higher education, college preparation will be infused into every aspect of school life. The curriculum will focus on the core skills and content area knowledge that students need to excel in college preparatory high schools on their road to competitive colleges and universities. Students will be immersed in literacy, the gateway for all future learning, and in a school language and culture that reveres and celebrates academic achievement. Students will be explicitly taught the importance of attending and graduating from college. Every classroom will feature college and university signage and decorations. Students will be addressed individually as scholars and collectively as the year they will graduate from college. Additionally, every year, students will visit colleges and universities and will tour the campus and sit in on classes. By exposing students to the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in college and simultaneously stressing that every Equitas Academy scholar can and will attend and graduate from college we expect to dramatically improve the educational outcomes for the students of Pico Union.

We are proposing an unconventional model inspired and guided by pockets of public schools that are educating urban youth and reversing the achievement gap. Schools like KIPP are
providing students with access to a highly structured, character education, and college preparatory education delivered within a culture of high expectations for academic achievement. With the belief that all students can learn and achieve at high levels, schools within the KIPP family as well other elementary models around the country such as Elm City College Preparatory Elementary School (New Haven, CT), Excellence Charter School and Leadership Preparatory (Brooklyn, NY), North Star (Newark, NJ), Achievement First (New York, NY), and Milwaukee College Preparatory PreK-8 (Milwaukee, WI) have provided a road map for the design and implementation of the Equitas Academy model. Indeed, these schools’ combination of inspired leadership, dedicated staff, demanding curriculum, clear behavioral code, longer days, and use of assessment to drive instruction serve as a model for raising student achievement. It is upon these blueprints that Equitas Academy Charter School has been designed and we petition to bring to the families of Pico Union.

Because we want our students to strive academically in order to earn life choices, we will also expose them to as much of the wider world of art, music, recreation, and nature as possible. Such exposure is essential to helping students see the life that is possible for them (and for their communities) through their own perseverance and commitment.

The achievement gap begins in elementary school and its impact is long lasting. The achievement gaps evident among the elementary schools and middle schools in LAUSD are not unique to the District. This challenge has garnered national attention and much work is being done to find effective and innovative solutions to balance the educational playing field for all children. One example of success in LAUSD is classroom teacher, Rafe Esquith. He has proven that hard work, good teaching, and strong character development paves the road to college.

“Academic excellence is not the province of any one group; rather it is a standard, a level of achievement to which students can aspire regardless of race, ethnicity or social class. It is a common ground and therein lies the power.” – Rafe Esquith

Building on successful models, we believe that all children, regardless of background, can learn to read, write, speak and compute with the expertise needed to succeed and access an outstanding college education. The equal opportunity that a strong public education can provide, even to our most disadvantaged children, is at the core of our American dream. Yet schools often struggle with the multiple challenges students bring with them, and students can fall behind quickly. High performing urban schools that serve disadvantaged and otherwise underserved students do exist, and utilize structural, programmatic, and curricular elements that enable teachers to bridge their students’ academic gaps and demonstrate strong academic achievement at all grade levels - regardless of their socio-economic status or demographic profile. We use their models in the design of Equitas Academy.

**Slow Growth Model**

Building on the college preparatory structure, Equitas Academy proposes a second innovative strategy—the slow growth model. The slow growth model allows us to grow strategically, increasing complexity and size only after firmly establishing our demanding culture of academic achievement. Formalizing and growing two grade levels at a time allows us to address the specific needs of our students and families. We will add a new cohort each year, until the

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16 Several founders of high-performing charter schools believe the slow growth approach maximizes a new school’s ability to “get it right.” Successful school models and leaders of high performing charter schools that utilize this slow growth model include: Norman Atkins, founder of North Star Academy in Newark, NJ, Brett Peiser, founder of South Boston Harbor Academy (now Boston Collegiate) in Boston, MA, and Spencer Blasdale, founder of Academy of the Pacific Rim in Boston, MA.
An "Educated Person" in the 21st Century

Equitas Academy will ensure students who matriculate from eighth grade are prepared for the challenges of college preparatory high schools, to provide students access to college and choice in life-sustaining employment as they move into the 21st century. In the 21st century, changes in our global society call for a new definition of “an educated person.” Access to information is central as we become more interdependent and able to communicate more freely. This interdependency requires an understanding of the global diaspora with a respectful approach to communication and interaction. This interaction requires strong literacy and mathematical ability, significant problem-solving skills and a higher level of education than ever before – aligned to living and working in a globalized new millennium. 21st century adults must be lifelong learners, have a firm grasp of computer technology, work well in a multicultural society, and be prepared to handle various careers and professions over their lifetimes. The educated person will need to work cooperatively with others from diverse backgrounds, identify and solve problems, and be able to resolve conflicts in a constructive manner. “The good jobs of the future will increasingly be tied to the global economy and will require both high-tech skills and flexible, ‘soft’ skills – such as communication and teamwork skills – needed to compete in the 21st century economy.”\(^\text{17}\) Most importantly, in a highly competitive and ever-changing work place, an educated person needs to be able to succeed and graduate from college. By integrating the needs of the 21st century into schools, students will grow to reach their maximum potential, and foster a lifetime love of learning.

With knowledge and communication as key tools for the new millennium, an unrelenting focus on literacy will ensure successful futures for students. A strong foundation in literacy is an integral component to ensuring all students are prepared to handle the complexities of the 21st century and to take their place as an educated person within our democracy.

Public schools must provide a strong academic literacy program and must hold and support the highest of expectations. Educational programs need to ensure all students succeed in learning at high levels. In *Good to Great*, Jim Collins\(^\text{18}\) identifies the main factor for achieving outstanding organizational results as a narrow focus of the company’s resources in its field of competence. As a school, we believe that strong literacy development is the key competency

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students must master to be successful, and thus the major focus of our educational program. Like all schools in the 21st century dedicated to the academic and life success of its students, Equitas Academy must ensure all students are educated for the demands and opportunities of the new century.

**How Learning Best Occurs**

To meet our students’ needs, we have researched, read and studied how learning best occurs. Foundational theorists for the instructional framework include directed learning (objectivist) and cognitive learning. In merging the two approaches, we designed a unique learning environment to meet the needs of our students. In directed instruction, behavioral theories concentrate on immediately observable changes in performance (e.g., tests) as indicators of learning. There is a focus on memory, how a student receives and stores memories and builds on previously learned material. Robert Gagne contributes to this area with his systematic approach to instructional design and training with the nine steps of instruction: (1) gain attention, (2) inform learner of objective, (3) stimulate recall of prior knowledge, (4) present the material, (5) provide guidance for learning, (6) elicit performance, (7) provide feedback, (8) assess performance, and (9) enhance retention and transfer. Directed methods have influenced our thinking for selecting and designing teaching methods, curriculum, and behavior modification techniques as well as how we assess and define learning. Directed instructional models focus on teaching sequence of skills beginning with lower level skills in order to build to higher level skills as well as clearly stating skill objectives with assessments to match.

In conjunction with the work of behavioral theorists, we have examined cognitive learning theories such as Vygotsky’s social development theory and Bandura’s social learning theory. Social development and learning theory involves attention, memory and motivation, and therefore can be viewed as a bridge between behaviorist and cognitive learning theories. Vygotsky wrote *Mind and Society,* in which he asserts social interaction plays a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development. He writes how speech and writing is used to mediate our social environments. Initially, children use these tools solely for social functions, but through the internalization of speech and writing, children are led to higher thinking skills. Vgotsky promotes students and teachers to take an active role in learning. Vygotsky’s theory of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), or the distance between a student’s ability to perform a task under guidance and/or collaboration and the student’s ability to solve problems independently, informs our teaching methodology. Originally ZPD was developed to argue against standardized tests as a means to gauge intelligence. ZPD has expanded since its original concept to include scaffolding. Scaffolding was developed by sociocultural theorists to include the process through which a teacher provides assistance until the child is able to accomplish the task or learning independently. Vgotsky maintains that learning occurs just above the students’ current level of competence. Therefore, students learn by having teachers scaffold the learning so students are successful at tasks that could not be accomplished independently. Teachers use language and shared experiences to scaffold or as a learning tool. Children learn by solving problems with the help of the teacher who models the process and in a classroom environment that is directed by the teacher. The teacher collaborates with students to provide support and direction for the learning. In addition, the curriculum needs to challenge and stretch the student’s competence.

Bandura’s social learning theory adds to Vgotsky’s work on ZPD. Bandura asserts that people learn from one another through observation, imitation, and modeling. Social learning theory explains human behavior in terms of interaction between cognitive, behavioral and

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environmental influences. There are four conditions necessary for effective modeling, attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. Bandura asserts that behavior and environment have a reciprocal relationship and affect each other.

The work of Vgotsky and Bandura both point to the importance of social interaction, language, and environment. Moreover, in designing an effective learning environment it is important to create a structure with measurable outcomes. While some may believe behavioral and cognitive theorists differ in defining learning and describing conditions required to make learning happen, we see both have meaningful contribution in conceptualizing, designing, and articulating the school model.

In addition, to educational theorists, we have also researched, read, and studied examples of educational success to inform how learning best occurs. In the book, No Excuses: Lessons from 21 High-Performing, High Poverty Schools, Carter examines high poverty schools that are successful across the country. One such local example is Bennett-Kew Elementary (K-5) in Inglewood, CA. The school began with a 95% illiteracy rate prior to the arrival of principal Nancy Ichinaga. The school demographics in 2000 included over 50% Latino, 30% English Language Learners, and 78% low income students. Ms. Ichinaga and her team created an environment of accountability and responsible learners in the earliest years. Kindergarten students were promoted according to clearly defined standards of achievement. Four years after Ms. Ichinaga’s arrival, school-wide reading performance rose from the 3rd to the 50th percentile and her school has been one of the highest performing schools in Los Angeles County. 21

Carter asserts that “rigorous and regular testing leads to continuous student achievement.” 22 Carter describes testing as a diagnostic tool used to enforce the school’s goals of academic achievement. There are many examples of high achieving schools that use comprehensive assessment systems to inform the effectiveness of their curriculum. Leadership Preparatory in Brooklyn, NY uses a trimester system where students are tested every six weeks using interim assessments based on state standards, standardized tests, and classroom curriculum. Leadership Prep has been able to meet students instructional needs by focusing on how to improve teaching and learning with systematic assessment.

In No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning, pockets of superb educational experiences are documented with Rafe Esquith, North Star Academy, and KIPP. 23 What research indicates is that these models have in common are strong academics with student supports. Hobart Elementary, a LAUSD school, has Rafe Esquith successfully teaching a classroom of fifth graders, whom he calls the Hobart Shakepearans. He provides a rigorous academic program with an extended day by opening his classroom doors at 6:30 am until 6:00 pm Monday through Friday and offering Saturday classes. Likewise, North Star Academy in Newark, NJ began as middle school and has expanded to high school and added an elementary. Kindergarten students begin school at 7:30 am and the school day extends until 4:00 pm with eleven months of instruction. The KIPP schools, which continue to view Esquith as a source of inspiration, also incorporate a strong foundation in reading and math with an extended school day and year. The KIPP schools all promote college preparation and awareness. Building on these models as well as other pockets of success, Equitas Academy has incorporated its beliefs based on researched best practices.

22 Ibid.
For organizational success, key stakeholders must come together around a shared mission and vision. Jim Collins writes about in his book, *Good to Great.*" Collins writes, “Greatness is not a function of circumstance. Greatness, it turns out, is largely a matter of conscious choice, and discipline.” We are working toward greatness for each student and for the school as an organization through the discipline of mission focus. Having a firm foundation on how learning best occurs has laid the framework for our school model.

**Program Framework**
Research and learning theory have informed our program framework as the Equitas Academy mission and vision provide a map for how learning best occurs and how to achieve the goals of an educated person in the new millennium. Our program goals include focusing on the needs of students for academic and life success realized through success in middle and high school and eventual college graduation. Our program goals are realized through providing a safe and structured environment where we are able to support students to meet academic standards articulated through California content standards proficiency, develop strong character values, and academic stamina in order to meet student’s own personal goals.

Our goals are informed through research and practices used at high achieving schools. Most specifically, Ms. Borrego, identified as the school’s founding Executive Director, has completed a residency at Leadership Preparatory Charter School — a charter school in Brooklyn, New York. Leadership Prep serves a high poverty, minority population. In 2006-2007, Leadership Prep students demonstrated significant progress in reading and math as measured by TerraNova, a nationally-normed assessment. The reading scores for kindergarten students at the beginning of the year resulted in 39% mastery but after one year at Leadership Prep, students performed at 93% mastery. In mathematics, students improved their scores from 19% in the beginning of the year to 86% by the end of the year. The school continues to demonstrate high academic results and Ms. Borrego has incorporated her residency learning at Leadership Prep to the design and innovative elements of Equitas Academy.

In addition to using best practices from successful charter schools and a strong research base, our program goals are informed by The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 through the focus of accountability, standard-based curriculum, and high expectations with measurable goals. We strive for strong academic outcomes for all students. Equitas Academy has specific beliefs based on best practices and research that inform our educational philosophy and how we intend to meet the rigorous standards we hold for the school and our students. Specifically:

1. **We hold high academic and behavioral expectations for every student.**
2. **We engage and grow competent and experienced school leadership and staff.**
3. **We offer a rigorous academic program with intentional student supports.**
4. **We provide clear standards, research-proven curriculum, and frequent assessments.**
5. **We are a mission-driven school community.**

1. **We hold high academic and behavioral expectations for every student.**
Equitas Academy will develop and maintain a school culture that is achievement oriented and is built on strong and universal values. The school’s core values of integrity, perseverance, dignity, pride, respect and compassion are explicitly taught and assist students to rise to the high academic and behavioral expectations we hold for them. Teachers will actively model and teach the values of the school throughout the day of instruction as well as during the weekly community circle.

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**Academic Expectations**

It is critical teachers communicate to students that they can learn to be smart and that effort is celebrated and rewarded in the classroom. A vast majority of characteristics that we have so often ascribed to “intelligence” are skills that can be taught and learned.\(^\text{25}\) Each and every adult at Equitas Academy will believe that all students are college-bound by holding students to high academic expectations at every grade level.

Teaching to mastery is critical. Classes will be structured to optimize learning, with common routines for all daily practices that minimize distraction and disruption from learning time, and with multiple formal and informal checks for understanding. Since all students are expected to meet or exceed grade level standards, if a student does not meet passing scores on assessments, multiple supports will be put in place to work with him or her until a student has mastered the material. Equitas Academy will formally recognize and celebrate students who evidence the academic and behavioral excellence that lie at the core of the school’s values and educational program.

Teachers will assign appropriate levels of homework at each grade level, and students will be held to high expectations through its completion every night in order to practice skills taught explicitly during the school day. Because we believe this daily reinforcement of skills and content taught during the school day is critical to students’ academic growth, we have structured supports within the day to aid its completion.

**Behavioral Expectations**

We seek to create confident, self-assured learners. We believe that confidence and self-assurance will come from our delivery of a structured learning environment that engages students in learning. We will be able to create and maintain this environment as evidenced through high student participation, and students challenging themselves to grow, to learn, to have fun, and to engage respectfully in their work with one another.

Equitas Academy has high standards for student conduct and communicates those with clarity and consistency. We will establish a positive, caring atmosphere where students feel safe and successful while being held to high standards of behavior at all times. A strong school culture will be the foundation of student discipline, utilizing student engagement strategies. Behavioral expectations will be consistent from classroom to classroom.

All students are expected to wear uniforms and practice common courtesies (please, thank you, and proper greetings), use good table manners at breakfast and lunch, and learn how to converse respectfully with their peers and with adults. In all classrooms, students will sit at their desks, listen and track the speaker. All the school’s high expectations will be explicitly taught, constantly modeled, and appropriately reinforced to our students, and poor behavior choices will be addressed quickly, effectively, and in developmentally appropriate ways.

The school day is structured and transparent so that students understand how to adhere to school routines. When necessary to redirect and correct student behavior, teachers will be trained in common student discipline techniques. Teachers will manage minor disruptions in their classrooms and teach the common routines and behaviors necessary for our students to be successful.

The entire school community will be guided by a clear Code of Conduct. Implementation of the Code of Conduct is designed to ensure students engage in positive interactions with teachers.

and with one another throughout the school day. It also provides the necessary tools to guide students’ internal decision making in order to assist them in choices that will lead them to success in college and life. The school’s Code of Conduct is based on preventing misbehavior with the appropriate incentives for following our Code of Conduct. Students will be recognized for their positive contributions and demonstrated commitment to learning and growing, thus modeling for all students what is expected and celebrated at Equitas Academy. Students will earn privileges for positive behaviors, which can translate into a variety of fun opportunities such as field trips while those who engage in negative behaviors and violate the school’s Code of Conduct will earn consequences such as loss of choices for students. The character education curriculum goal is to have students internalize and utilize the school’s core values of integrity, perseverance, dignity, pride, respect and compassion.

2. We engage and grow competent and experienced school leadership and staff.
For a school to be successful, effective leadership must be present. Equitas Academy will have a management structure with an experienced Executive Director and Director of Curriculum and Instruction. The most successful charter schools have learned that there must be dedicated and senior staff responsible for both the organizational and the academic success of the school. A school must have academic results to be counted as successful, and a school must maintain financial health and conduct long-term strategic planning to project its success into the future.

Leadership Team
An Executive Director, reporting to the Board of Directors, will be responsible for leadership and management of all aspects of the school’s strategic development and operations, execution of the mission and all external and non-academic functions, including Board relations, regulatory reporting, financial operations, and fundraising. Successful managerial experience and proven practice with our student population is integral to this position.

The Director of Curriculum and Instruction will focus on daily issues of teaching and learning. Having a Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI) solely devoted to improving instruction and supporting teachers and students allows us to remain focused on academic outcomes. This leadership structure also allows the DCI to conduct daily classroom observations to keep our focus on improving teaching and student learning.

Staff
Teachers at Equitas Academy will be recruited and retained because they are effective, professional, and dedicated educators. With our youngest students, teachers must be experts in literacy development, particularly with the needs of our target population. Teachers will be credentialed and highly qualified as required by No Child Left Behind. To develop and ensure teacher effectiveness, teachers will be observed daily and will be provided informal feedback once a week and formal feedback three times a year. Teachers will participate in three weeks of training prior to the opening of the school with additional professional development throughout the year based on the needs of the students/staff and directed by school leadership observations. Prior to the school year starting, teachers will practice the school-wide routines that underpin the daily work of learning, solidify their ability to implement the school’s Code of Conduct in clear and consistent ways, plan curriculum, write assessments, and analyze state standards and standardized tests to ensure curriculum alignment.

Teachers will participate in performance-based compensation determined by student academic progress and school leadership evaluations. Teachers will be given planning time to collaborate
and will be observed regularly by school leadership. Instruction and its improvement drive the school culture, and learning and its measurable results drive instruction.

3. We offer a rigorous academic program with intentional student supports.
Students need access to continuous and rigorous academic programming. Equitas Academy ensures a foundation of skills and a rigorous academic program sets students on the path for academic success.

Foundational Skills—Core Content Areas
Our academic program is centered on mastery of foundational skills in literacy and mathematics, along with mastery in the core content areas of social studies and science. Students will benefit from longer literacy and math instruction. Specific attention and longer instruction in literacy will ensure students have literacy success that supports them to higher levels of achievement.

College Readiness and Awareness
To ensure college graduation, a student’s educational career needs to begin with college readiness. There is a culture of exposure to college as students along with their families will take field trips to local universities. In addition, all courses and instruction are planned and implemented for students to gain the foundational skills, transcripts, and test scores - and the personal ambition - necessary to enter college preparatory high schools.

Extended Day and Year
More access to effective instructional time increases learning. Students will attend Equitas Academy for an extended school day and year. School opens at 7:30 am and dismissal is at 3:30 pm.

Culturally-Relevant Learning Environment
Our culturally-relevant learning environment will honor our diverse representation of students as an asset to the school community. Because of the large Latino population, all home communications will be accessible in English and Spanish. In addition, Spanish can be taught as an enrichment elective course. This will help to instill in our students that their bilingual capacities are attributes and gifts, as well as assets. We recognize our students have multiple identities whether as immigrants, Americans, and/or Angelinos, and we organize the learning environment to meet these needs and honor these identities.

4. We provide clear standards, research-proven curriculum, and frequent assessments.
Clear standards ensure learning is focused on the specific skills and content knowledge that students need to master in a logical and sequential manner and allow for effective planning of instruction and assessments. School curricula will be fully aligned with California Department of Education Content Standards which “are designed to encourage the highest achievement of every student, by defining the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire at each grade level.” The Director of Curriculum and Instruction will guide and support all classroom teachers as they organize and plan all daily lessons using the California Standards. All assessments and instruction are designed for mastery of the standards.

Research-Proven Curriculum
Equitas Academy will utilize curricula with a proven track record and research base. Using state adopted curricula that are standard-based will ensure students have access to standards-aligned, research-proven instruction. All curricula and educational strategies have been selected because there is a research base that supports their effectiveness.

27 California Department of Education Content Standards can be accessed at http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/.
Frequent Assessments
Teachers plan and deliver instruction informed though frequent assessment where school leadership and teachers analyze assessments and plan instruction for students to master the individual standards embedded within them. Daily, weekly, and trimester-based systems are put in place to monitor the effectiveness of instruction and student learning. Teacher-created and curriculum-generated assessments are used to inform the weekly lesson plans. On a more formal basis, Interim Assessments are administered frequently (every six weeks) to inform instruction and the scope and sequence of instruction is modified based on the student performance data on in Interim Assessments. For instance, if Interim Assessments data demonstrates that our students have not mastered a specific content standard, we will modify our lesson plans, re-teach and assess the content standards once again until we reach mastery. We expect students at Equitas Academy to perform competitively on state and nationally-normed assessment. We expect to reach the ambitious and measurable goals outlined in the school’s accountability plan (see Element 2 for further detail). For this to be possible, a thoughtful, sequential series of frequent assessments (see Element 3 for details on assessments) will continuously inform leadership and staff as to the efficacy of the instructional program and student supports, and guide all decisions in a time-effective and proactive manner for every student.

5. We are a mission-driven school community.
We must be united towards our mission if we are to succeed. We have designed a strategic plan to involve all members of the school community in the pursuit of our mission, and to continuously channel our collective energies towards our unrelenting goal of academic achievement and college readiness for every child. Within our achievement-oriented school community, we will engage all community stakeholders in the development of school’s core values—integrity, perseverance, dignity, pride, respect, and compassion.

Board of Directors
The Board of Directors is a group of dynamic, passionate, mission-driven professionals committed to the success of every student at Equitas Academy. The Board of Directors brings expertise, time, and commitment to excellence in governing the management of the charter school and is prepared to govern the school by enacting policies that promote the school’s ambitious academic goals.

Leaders
School leaders will implement the school’s mission. School leaders support the work of teachers to ensure the staff is able to successfully deliver the rigorous academic program, monitor, and adjust the program to meet the individual needs of the students. The leaders are experienced and trained to meet the ambitious goals set forth in the mission, and the school staffing plan allows them to ultimately follow the students past graduation to ensure we fulfill our mission.

Teachers
Teachers are hired because of their unwavering belief that students can learn and achieve at high levels and their demonstrated capacity that they can deliver on this belief. Teachers are committed to the planning and delivery of standards-based lessons daily, as well as providing daily, individualized academic support as needed. All students will be supported in meeting rigorous standards with one-on-one tutoring, during designated enrichment time, after school and during Saturday school (as needed).

Parents
A parent engaged in a child’s education directly supports a child’s academic success. To support parental engagement, Equitas Academy will provide family orientations, home visits, parent workshops, and frequent communications between school and home.

Prior to entering the school, parents will attend an informational session. After the school lottery, families will attend an orientation meeting in which school leaders will explain the school mission, philosophy, code of conduct and family responsibilities. School leaders and staff will visit student families in their homes to review the school contract and get to know the families. Before the first day of school, Equitas Academy leadership and staff will ensure families are knowledgeable about the school and understand their commitment to their child’s education by having families acknowledge and sign a contract.

Parents will be invited to attend four Family Workshops a year provided and facilitated by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction along with teachers. The workshops will be held at times conducive to various family schedules. Workshop topics will include the transition from elementary to middle school, preparation for college preparatory high schools, and college field trips and informational sessions. Families also will have an opportunity to inspire the workshop topics. In helping our students reach a high level of rigor, we will ensure we are meeting the needs of our families whether they speak a language other than English or have limited educational backgrounds.

Cafecitos (or coffee talks) will occur in the morning once a month with parents, school leadership and/or teachers, communicating curriculum, homework supports, and strategies to help each child succeed. Cafecitos are a time for parents and the school to communicate and build relationships all in support of the school’s ambitious and critical mission. Both the Executive Director and Director of Curriculum and Instruction will facilitate in English and Spanish (and/or other languages as needed).

**Students**

With supports, students will embrace the strong school community environment and demonstrate the school mission through their academic performance, internalization of the school’s core values and involvement in the community. Our students will manifest the academic behavioral and leadership goals of the school. Based upon the successful model and work of such schools as Milwaukee College Preparatory Charter School (formerly Marva Collins Academy), and as inspired by the work of educator Marva Collins, their educational outcomes will demonstrate how we will engage even our youngest students in the mission of Equitas Academy. As students are driven to push themselves through goal setting, from the first day of school, students will set academic and personal goals. Teachers will communicate with students on a daily, weekly, and on a trimester basis regarding goals. In addition, parent-teacher-student conferences will be a time that unifies all three constituencies as well as motivate the student and build the strong relationships needed to ensure students meet the high expectation placed on them and set by them.

We will pay particular attention with following our students after matriculation by developing an alumni network. Our attention with alumni exemplifies our college-driven focus. Alumni will be given opportunities to return to Equitas Academy to tutor students, participate in high school chats and mentor members of the current student body.

**Community**

Building strong ties with the local community is critical. Equitas Academy will partner with individuals and organizations in the Pico Union and Los Angeles community through outreach efforts to business, policy makers, community leaders, and key stakeholders that are dedicated
to helping students obtain academic success.

We will foster a supportive environment inside the classroom and throughout the school and community for the purpose of student pride in themselves, their school, their family, their heritage and their community. We will continue to reach out to a wide range of organizations and will enlist participation of several community organizations.

Our vision and how learning best occurs provide the blueprints for Equitas Academy. To gain a sense of the day-to-day operations of the school, a day in the life of a student is provided. The typical day narrative provides a snap shot of what a visitor would witness and experience when visiting Equitas Academy.

**A Typical Day at Equitas Academy**

A visitor at Equitas Academy would enter the school at 7:30am and observe students shaking hands with a school leader. The handshake sets the tone for the day and allows the school leader to do a uniform check. Each scholar at Equitas wears a complete uniform including a blazer and belt. The student enters the school, takes out a homework folder, shakes his/her teacher’s hand and begins breakfast. After the scholar finishes breakfast, he/she completes Life Work, or individual work folders designed to challenge scholars. The teacher reviews the scholars’ homework for completion.

At 7:58am, the teacher begins a transition and scholars attend advisory/life skills class. In advisory, the teacher discusses the importance of planning ahead. Students discuss the importance of setting goals. The school has planned a community service evening to celebrate scholars’ community service project (each scholar volunteers for 40 hours). Teachers help students set goals for the week to ensure they are able to get theirs school-work completed and enjoy the evening celebration. After Advisory, students move onto literacy. The scholars are reading Steinbeck’s, The Pearl and exploring its theme. Students explore the symbolism of the pearl and its power to deceive, to corrupt, and to destroy. Students connect the literacy discussion and begin essays on the book. Students move to snack and then math. Math work includes problem solving algebraic equations.

After working hard in literacy and math, there is a transition to PE and then lunch. Students leave lunch and return to homeroom for Independent Reading, where students read text that challenges them. Enrichment, social studies and science blocks occur in the afternoon. Students can choose enrichment courses that are offered with an elective approach (e.g., chess, dance, website blogging/technology, newspaper). Students end the afternoon with tutoring and/or high school prep course, where students learn about high performing high schools, financial aid, and ISEE prep. The classrooms are posted with admission letters of students that have been admitted to college preparatory high schools. After school opportunities are made available and include student government where students involve themselves in leadership and decision-making in the school.

**Educational Program and Curriculum**

The day in the life narrative portrays a typical day as observed by a visitor at Equitas Academy. We further detail the academic program and the teaching methodologies that inform the development of our educational program, which include:

- Extended Learning Time
- Uniform Instructional System
- Teaching for Mastery
- Strategies and Supports for Student Mastery of Instructional Materials
• Intensive Focus on Literacy and Mathematics
• A Rigorous Standards-Based Curriculum: Core content areas of language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science
• Life Skills/Ethics Curriculum

Extended Learning Time
A critical teaching methodology at Equitas Academy is to provide teachers more time to teach and support students, and to provide more time for students to learn and advance. Increased effective instructional time allows students more time to learn and more time used in a constructive manner will result in stronger student performance. Equitas Academy students attend school from 7:30 am until 3:30 pm. Homework Club is provided for students who do not adequately complete daily assignments and voluntary for students who would like a quiet space to complete their work or need tutoring support. The extended day takes on a variety of forms, with after school time and includes Saturday session. The extended day is designed to provide more time for learning in addition to opportunities for tutoring, enrichment, and support supports. Saturday school will be used to serve various goals: (1) student enrichment, (2) tutoring support, (3) parent workshops and/or (4) preparation for middle school exam preparations (i.e., ISEE).

The school day schedule allows for more time in school and a substantial amount of time over the California state required minutes of instruction.

Table 3: Increased Instructional Time

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equitas Weekly Instructional Minutes</td>
<td>1820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equitas Yearly Instructional Minutes</td>
<td>65,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Required Instructional Minutes</td>
<td>54,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Minutes Over State Requirement</td>
<td>11,120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We provide more instructional time than required by California Department of Education. Within our extended day and extended year program, Equitas Academy provides daily supports to ensure the additional learning time is handled in developmentally appropriate ways. In order to keep students focused, teachers will ensure the pacing of lessons is interactive and engaging. The use of chants, kinesthetic movements, and positive reinforcements will encourage student engagement.

Uniform Instructional System
To maximize learning, all teachers in all grades follow a Uniform Instructional System (UIS). Working within a model that provides for direct instruction, guided practice, and student mastery, teachers use an instructional approach often referred to as “I do,” “We do,” “You do.” Teachers begin by making a connection to the student’s prior learning and directing the teaching to the lesson’s objective (“I do”). Students then move to practicing content with the teacher’s guidance (“We do”). After the teacher feels confident in the students’ understanding as a group, the lesson moves into individual student practice (“You do”).

Teachers will also implement the use of a Unified Blackboard System (UBS) with elements that include: 1) Do Now, or lesson starter, 2) Aim or learning standard, 3) Agenda or steps for the lesson, 4) and Homework. Each teacher will begin instruction with a Do Now, a five minute

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28 USB is a successfully instructional practice used by high performing charter schools such as Excel Academy, Boston, Roxbury Preparatory, and Edward Brooke in Boston, MA, and described by Dr. Lorraine Monroe in her book, *Nothing’s Impossible: Leadership Lessons from the Inside and Outside the Classroom*. 1997. Random House, NY. Teachers will learn how to implement USB system during the four weeks of summer professional development and as needed during the school year.
quiet activity to get students engaged in the lesson. On the board, the teacher will write the Aim or learning standard and agenda for the day. The homework assignment will also be posted so students know and are able to write down their daily homework assignment.

Students receive a weekly syllabus to inform parents about the daily agenda, homework, and learning objectives.

**Teaching for Mastery**
Assessment is essential for measuring students’ academic needs and ensuring that all students are mastering the learning standards. At the beginning of every school year, incoming students are assessed with standardized assessment tools giving teachers assistance in the process of designing curriculum, lessons, and pacing, as these formative, benchmark assessments provide a clear understanding of current student mastery. These assessments also enable us to identify students who may need extra help to reach mastery on learning content standards. At the end of each year, we will administer these same assessments in order to measure individual and cohort longitudinal progress and the efficacy of the curriculum and instruction, designing refinements and changes where needed.

Standards-based interim assessments will be developed by school leadership and staff, and administered to students every six weeks. Teachers will use these periodic assessments to measure how well students are mastering the standards. Teachers will meet with the Director of Instruction and Curriculum after each assessment to discuss the results and to create an action plan when re-teaching is necessary. Student performance data drives whole class instruction, small group work, and one-on-one tutoring. Interim assessments will allow teachers to effectively assess students’ skill needs and target instruction and support to address specific deficiencies. By continuously using data to drive instruction, the academic needs of every student will be met. Parents are partners in assuring students are meeting the rigorous mastery standards, therefore, communication is vital. Equitas Academy provides multiple formats and structures to ensure parents are informed of the results of these assessments, such as weekly progress reports, and thus parents are knowledgeable and able to be proactive in helping their children meet learning standards.

**Strategies and Supports for Student Mastery of Instructional Material**
Students learn at varying rates. Schools that expect all students to meet high standards must be prepared to support students until they reach mastery, regardless of the pace or style by which they learn. We offer:

- Clear, engaging, high-quality lessons in the classroom
- Increased learning time relative to other district schools
- Pull-out and push-in instruction by teachers certified with a special education credential and related services such as counseling, speech, and occupational and physical therapy for students who require it
- Tutoring for students who require additional individual and small-group attention
- Intentional English Language Learner curriculum and supports for English Language Development

All of these strategies and supports ensure that all students (high achieving students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and/or students not maintaining academic standards) meet and/or exceed the high standards that we set at Equitas Academy.

**Intensive Focus on Literacy**
Literacy is the key academic skill on which all future skill and knowledge acquisition is based. One of the greatest barriers that hinder students’ academic success is a weak foundation in literacy. Studies confirm that success or failure in building a foundation of fundamental literacy in the primary grades is a compelling gauge of future academic success. According to the National Research Council, “academic success, as defined by high school graduation, can be predicted with reasonable accuracy by knowing someone’s reading skill at the end of 3rd grade. A person who is not at least a modestly skilled reader by that time is unlikely to graduate from high school.”

Read Alouds
In order to ensure all our readers are fluent, students will be encouraged to read aloud. Read alouds, direct reading instruction, and independent reading all work to increase student fluency. Fluency is taught through adult modeling and student practicing.

Read alouds are a core component of the Equitas Academy literacy program. The critical report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, written by a nationally recognized group of experts on the study of how children develop and learn language, has influenced the way educators and policy makers think about reading instruction today. Its primary findings include:

- “The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children” (23).
- “The commission found conclusive evidence to support reading aloud not only in the home but also in the classroom: It is a practice that should continue throughout the grades” (51).

Because of this research, read alouds occur during literacy blocks and are infused within curricula areas like Science, Social Studies, and Ethics. All read alouds are tied to standards learning and will have an explicit lesson plan with directed instruction, purpose, and objective for learning.

Vocabulary
Equitas Academy teachers will build the vocabulary skills of our students. Research indicates vocabulary is best built through a strong compliment of independent reading and structured instruction. Bill Honig, a respected early reading expert cites compelling research on the subject:

- Students who score in the top five percent on reading tests read 144 times more than students who score in the bottom five percent.
- By the fifth grade, if students want to make grade level progress, they should be reading more than 1.1 million words a year of outside-of-school reading (25 to 35 books or the equivalent) which should take 15 to 30 minutes a night; this is in addition to the 1.7 million words of school text. Instead of reading the necessary 2.8 million words, the average fifth grader reads only about 900,000.

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Although teaching vocabulary strategies (e.g. word families, scaffolding, etc.) helps retention rates, the vast majority of new words can be learned only through reading. To reach these levels, students need to read the recommended 25 to 35 books a year after the first grade.

**Independent Reading Time (IRT)**

Students will have an independent reading time (IRT). This time expands upon the more typically used “Silent Sustained Reading” (SSR) or “Drop Everything and Read” (DEAR) programs. The job of the teacher during IRT will be to get all of his or her students to be avid, active readers. It is the job of the reading teacher to find appropriate books, inspire students to read, and monitor their independent reading. During this time, teacher utilize standards based lesson planning to implement mini-lessons to strengthen student learning. In addition, we will utilize a leveled library system to ensure students are reading books at their appropriate reading levels. A leveled library is a system for coding books by reading level. The leveling system is based on text analysis and language characteristics. Using this system, teachers will assess students’ reading ability and help students choose appropriate books at “their just right reading level.”

Teachers will model comprehension strategies at the start of IRT in a mini-lesson and students will utilize these strategies during their independent reading time. For example, the teacher may ask the students to further their understanding of their IRT book by making a text to text connection to the class read aloud book earlier that day. At the end of IRT, students will volunteer the connection made during their reading. Teacher will also actively coach students to ensure students are utilizing comprehension strategies, choosing appropriate books, and constructing meaning during their independent learning time.

**Comprehension**

Equitas Academy teachers will build student comprehension skills in two different ways. First, through the study of literature (each grade level reads both fiction and non-fiction), teachers will develop students’ comprehension skills that meet the California Content Standards using these texts. A standards-based novel unit creation tool aids teachers in developing standards-based questions for novels, and teachers share this base of top-quality units with each other as part of weekly professional development and common planning time.

In addition to building comprehension through literature, students will learn to deeply analyze text. Using shorter pieces of primarily poetry and non-fiction, students will learn to identify question types and go back to the text to find the answers to those questions. Students will be asked to prove their answers, and rich discussions about question types and text proofs will build the analysis skills of students. Students will present both written and oral presentations to demonstrate comprehension.

**Writing**

We will offer a rigorous writing curriculum that is designed to have students produce writing with excellent organization, elaboration, and flow in multiple genres. The curriculum will have a heavy focus on sentence structure, basic grammar, and paragraph formation. Students will be expected to complete daily oral language activities that supports the development of grammar skills. Teachers will use a variety of grammar materials in daily mini-lessons. Moreover, students will learn step-by-step how to develop excellent sentences structures, paragraphs, and essays. Extensive prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing will take place on all pieces of

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33 Reading comprehension strategies are informed through Mosaics of Thought written by Susan Zimmermann and Ellin Oliver Keene, who outline eight cognitive processes identified in comprehension research and used by successful readers.
writing. Equitas Academy students will be able to produce top-quality narratives, expository and persuasive essays, research papers, and literary analysis essays. A strong foundation in phonics ensures students are fluent readers able to analyze text using explicit comprehension strategies. The Equitas Academy writing program will prepare students to think critically and communicate clearly with regards to their ideas, both a fundamental skill for life and for success in higher education.

A foundation of strong literacy skills developed in the primary years through the instruction of a balanced literacy program will allow the literacy instruction in the upper graders to focus powerfully on deep comprehension of a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts. We recognize that reading proficiency is essential to the mastery of all other academic subjects; therefore, students must graduate from Equitas Academy reading at or above grade level in order to be successful in high school and college. We will provide over 140 minutes per day of English language arts instruction in grades five through eight.

The language arts program is based on California State Standards, utilizes state adopted textbooks and teacher-created curriculum using a variety of resources to enhance student learning. Supplemental materials include the use of McDougal Littell’s Language of Literature anthology, leveled libraries and guided reading (based on Fountas and Pinnel’s Guided Reading), daily test preparation, Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage, and Thinking Maps. Teachers also use trade books, primary historical documents, and non-fiction texts, i.e. Time Magazine for Kids and The Los Angeles Times).

Literacy instruction in grades five to six will make the transition from emphasizing phonics and phonemic awareness to intermediate grammar and novel reading. Students will begin dissecting sentences and classifying various parts of speech, and they will read books with higher-level vocabulary and complex novel plots.

Students in grades seven and eight will begin reading high school-level books, diagramming complex sentences, and reading various prose and poetry (novels, plays, sonnets, poetry, speeches). Students will read classical texts from a wide-range of authors in fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. All students are expected to complete their eighth grade year above grade level in reading proficiency. Students will also develop their literacy skills through the reading, analysis and production of Shakespeare. Modeled after Rafe Equith’s Hobart Shakespeareans program, at Hobart Elementary in LAUSD, students will have an opportunity to live the life one Shakespeare play each year. Teachers will teach Shakespeare during one literacy block and after students have analyzed and comprehended the text, will participate in producing a play during after school enrichment time.

Finally, there will be a focus on literacy in all subjects for all grades. Classes in social studies and science will be able to serve both as an opportunity to develop students’ core reading skills to a greater degree, as well as to increase their content knowledge in these subjects. Character education in the younger grades and ethics courses in the upper grades will utilize literature-based lessons. Increasing reading fluency across subject areas will allow students to access content in all of their classes to a greater degree.

**Intensive Focus on Mathematics**

In fifth and six grades, math classes include mathematics operations (focusing on math computation) and mathematics problem solving (focusing on math application). The math program also will give the school an opportunity to provide remediation as needed as well as provide advanced and expansive mathematics instruction.
The curriculum recognizes that students need both basic fact knowledge and “automaticity” with procedural computation as well as deep understanding of conceptual concepts and the ability to solve complex mathematical problems. Teachers will require students to apply this strong basic skills knowledge in challenging problem-solving situations. Specifically, students will be expected to: use basic symbols to solve simple and complex problems; gather and interpret data using graphs and charts, predict outcomes of probability experiments; and solve problems involving proportional relationships. Beginning in fifth grade, we will use a problem-solving supplement that provides daily demonstration of problem-solving skills.

Math lessons will follow a structured lesson plan designed for maximum success. The first 25 minutes of class and all homework assignments will include cumulative review. There will also be daily sections for basic facts review and problem solving. Concepts will be introduced in a set sequence, emphasizing both step-by-step approaches and explanations for all mathematical processes. Math classes will also make use of the rap, rhythm, and rhyme techniques pioneered by Harriett Ball\textsuperscript{34} and as used successfully by many of the highest performing public schools serving urban students. The Equitas Academy mathematics curriculum will produce students who have mastered Algebra I by the end of their 8th grade year.

**A Rigorous Standards-Based Curriculum**

The core curriculum at Equitas Academy includes literacy, mathematics, social studies, and science.

**Social Studies**

Research has shown that one major reason that urban students score lower on reading tests is that they lack sufficient background knowledge to comprehend more complex text. When one reads a text, he or she must know how to decode the words and how to analyze the text. To truly understand the text, however, one must also know the basic vocabulary and contextual information the author assumes his or her readers understand. For this reason – and the importance of our students understanding the world around them – it is essential that students receive a rich and rigorous education in social studies.

Our social studies curriculum will follow the comprehensive and challenging California State Standards. Teachers will use the state adopted California Vistas textbook program to present curriculum in an engaging and challenging format. Teachers will expect students to master the key concepts and vocabulary, and they will also teach them to analyze primary sources, debate different points of view, and make cause-and-effect connections. Social studies classes will be fast-paced and teachers will work with students to hone their non-fiction reading skills, learn important content, and apply and retain it in written essays and oral presentations.

**Science**

Science instruction will combine student mastery of core vocabulary and conceptual knowledge with the application of scientific principals in laboratory settings. Using both the hands-on FOSS science curriculum with the Harcourt Science textbook will ensure students have access to an engaging and challenging curriculum. Science assessments, for example, will include sections that focus on the key terms and ideas of a unit as well as a performance task component that will require students to synthesize and analyze data from laboratory experiments. Science teachers will also actively work to reinforce key mathematical concepts, especially graphing and measurement skills.

\textsuperscript{34} Harriett Ball has developed “multi-sensory teaching” techniques that simultaneously address audio, visual and tactile-kinesthetic (A-V-T/K) learners. More information on Harriet Ball can be found at \url{http://www.harriettball.com}.
**Ethics Curriculum**

The Equitas Academy curriculum incorporates a rigorous and developmentally appropriate program of values and character education to prepare students to thrive in high school, college and the world. This curriculum will guide all students with the life skills necessary to create self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.

The ethics program is designed to infuse the life skills necessary for self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learning. As part of this program, all students will become familiar with and practice the school's core values of integrity, perseverance, dignity, pride, respect, and compassion. These values are the basis of a school culture that provides a safe and productive environment necessary for the academic, social, and emotional growth of every student. This character education/ethics curriculum reflects how we expect to prepare students to: (1) be able to graduate from high school and (2) fulfill our work towards ensuring students graduate from college.

**Respect for Self and Learning Perseverance**

We believe that ethics is important in creating civic individuals, ethics combined with perseverance will help students to successfully confront the challenges they will face as they grow and mature, and to avoid self-destructive behaviors and situations they may face as adolescents and young adults.

The development of perseverance is particularly key to our students’ success. Therefore, we will focus on this value and drill the mantra that you must work hard. We are charged with creating students who, when faced with difficult decisions and situations, will feel compelled to make educated decisions, and will not languish in the existence of a hard decision; students who will not run from difficult situations but will have learned to deal with them early on with a strategy so that the problem is mitigated, rather than delaying and exacerbating the issue. This will be a part of our development with staff to ensure that these lessons are reinforced as part of our way of dealing with such school matters as positively dealing with academic errors on tests or mistakes made in homework. We will create learners that feel confident about learning and confident that when they need to concentrate and try to do something new, they are not overwhelmed by the need for focused concentration time, but know or have the skills sets to understand how to sit still, how to focus, how to be quiet to listen well, and how to organize themselves for successful learning.

Our goal is to translate these skills into how students will deal with the lifetime situations they will face, and most importantly, the decision to either drop out or stay in high school and move onto college. It is here that a strong sense of character will most help a student after their matriculation from Equitas Academy. It is here, therefore, that we must focus on creating students who have the comfort and confidence to become self-motivated, lifelong learners.

**Advisory/Life Skills**

Advisory is a time to set the academic tone of the school by providing scholars a forum for learning how to problem solve, communicate and listen to fellow students. Teachers will implement curriculum and structures to allow students time to learn how to tackle issues affecting them, whether these are neighborhood pressures, or concerns with school, family, or friends. In addition, a Violence Prevention program for the whole school for one week in the beginning of each trimester will stave-off physical manifestations of violence and we will talk about how we handle anger as a school. Building on the school Violence Prevention program, advisory will be another intentional support and specific time for students where they can learn about drug prevention, or dealing with situations where they will be confronted with choices, and includes role-plays for how to handle these situations. Advisory is also a place for students to
connect and deals with any demands placed on them because of the rigorous academic program and/or with their life choices and/or situations.

**Academic and Respectful Community: Respect for Others and the World Around Us**
Justice, fairness, and equity name the school and are important values to infuse through school culture and rituals. Equitas Academy will teach about nonviolent social movements for justice, and how to problem solve with one another without using violence, and instead with respect for self, perseverance, and respect for others.

To create this school culture and infuse the ethics curriculum on a school-wide level, every Friday, all students will come together to participate in a Community Meeting, where teachers and school leadership exemplify and celebrate the school’s core values. Explicitly teaching values will help students achieve and succeed in our rigorous, college preparatory academic program, and will grow students into young adults that embody the values that build self and community beyond the school house doors. The school leadership and teachers will celebrate student progress, prepare lessons to illustrate the core values and bring a global perspective of justice, equity and fairness through presentations and activities.

Students in the upper grades will have an opportunity to explore multicultural literature in the pursuit of ethics—or the study of what it means to be a good person. Students will read a collection of materials to explore the philosophy of what is right and what is wrong.

In addition to these core elements, there are several additional elements that support our mission and inform our school design. These are outlined below.

**Mission-Driven Enrichment Program**
For students to become competitive and college bound, they must be well rounded and have access to as many enrichment opportunities as possible. Therefore, we intend to develop students’ talents and interests in an enrichment curriculum that is an integral part of our daily educational program. Students in the early grades will attend enrichment classes that include music, movement, yoga, baseball, foreign language, technology and drama. The curriculum will rotate by trimester to ensure students receive 12 weeks of enrichment in fine arts, foreign language, music, technology, and drama. The enrichment curriculum ensures students have access to a comprehensive education that enables them to be well-rounded individuals as well as competitive candidates to selective college preparatory high schools.

**Physical Education**
Equitas Academy’s physical education curriculum will reflect California State Standards and teach students about a fit and healthy lifestyle. American children are becoming more and more obese and fitness levels are decreasing. All children will have physical education classes each day with planned instruction to develop motor skills, and an understanding of common sports like baseball, basketball, soccer, and volleyball. The curriculum will prepare students for the California Physical Education test, and they will also teach students how to play different sports and games as well as reinforces messages about nutrition, teamwork, and fair play.

**Foreign Language**
As part of the enrichment program, all Equitas Academy students will receive foreign language courses in a second language. Foreign language will be taught one trimester a year during the enrichment block. The foreign language study will build from the foundations to a more rigorous language learning program in the upper grades.
Music
All Equitas Academy students will participate in the school music program. Students will begin with learning how to read music and play an instrument (instrument will depend on fundraising). Whether students play a recorder, guitar, or piano, students will have a strong foundation in music. After four years, our school will move toward creating a music program based on the highly successful model of the classroom teacher Rafe Esquith, Los Angeles Unified School District teacher at Hobart Elementary. Students will have an opportunity to participate in an orchestra during the after school period and on Saturdays. The orchestra program goals include students being able to play an instrument, tune their own instrument, and play music at a competitive level.

Technology
Students in the 21st century need to be technologically literate; that is, they need to know how to use the computer in the ways that professionals use it daily. All students will receive explicit instruction in basic typing skills, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and email. By the time they enter high school, students will be able to proficient with these programs, and have the necessary technological literacy to further their education and interests. Students will use computer-based learning programs to master foundational literacy skills. Then students will use computers for research and fact-finding to complete assigned projects and homework. Technology instruction is integrated into the core curriculum.

A Rigorous Standards-Based Curriculum
The curriculum for Equitas Academy is outlined in Table 4: Core Academic Scope and Sequence 5-8 for five years of study and details the core subject areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, History/Social Science and Science. The curriculum is based on the California State Standards and the scope and sequence used by the CA state adopted textbooks, which Equitas Academy will implement. The Equitas Academy curriculum addresses all grade-level appropriate California Content Standards.

Table 4: Core Academic Scope and Sequence 5-8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>English Language Arts</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>History Social Science</th>
<th>Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Reading &amp; Writing</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>U.S. History and Geography: Making a New Nation</td>
<td>Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Reading &amp; Writing</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations</td>
<td>Earth Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>English &amp; Writing</td>
<td>Pre-Algebra</td>
<td>World History and Geography: Medieval and Early Modern Times</td>
<td>Life Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>English &amp; Writing</td>
<td>Algebra I</td>
<td>U.S. History and Geography: Growth and Conflict</td>
<td>Physical Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Reading &amp; Writing</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>U.S. History and Geography: Making a</td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rafe Esquith has published two books, There are No Short Cuts and Teach Like Your Hair is On Fire detailing his music program and teaching philosophy. In addition, classroom observations and correspondence has informed the school design and the music program. Mr. Esquith has mentored the founding school leader, Malka Borrego as they taught at Hobart Elementary. Mr. Esquith has provided guidance and advice to Ms. Borrego in many areas, and particularly in this component of the school’s design.
Textbooks and California State Standards
The academic program at Equitas Academy begins with the rigorous California Content Standards. Teachers will use standards-based, research proven curricula for the core academic subjects. The identified curricula have been proven to produce exceptional results in urban schools and were adopted by the California Department of Education. The selected textbooks for the Equitas Academy are research-proven curricula and are aligned to the California State Content Standards. Content Area Textbooks are outlined in Table 5. We intend to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of our curriculum and the leadership team will decide on modification as necessary.

Table 5: Content Area Textbooks for Grades 5-8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>English Language Arts</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>History Social Science</th>
<th>Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Reading Mastery (SRA/McGraw Hill)</td>
<td>CA Saxon Math (Saxon)</td>
<td>CA Vistas (MacMillian/ McGraw-Hill)</td>
<td>Full Option Science System FOSS (Delta Education) CA Science (Harcourt)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accelerated Reader (Renaissance Learning)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>Literature and Language Arts (Holt, Rinehart and Winston)</td>
<td>CA Saxon Math (Saxon)</td>
<td>History Alive-CA Series (Teachers’ Curriculum Institute)</td>
<td>Holt CA Science: Earth, Life and Physical Science (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston) CA Science (Harcourt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accelerated Reader (Renaissance Learning)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Accelerated Reader (Renaissance Learning)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The scope and sequence for fifth-eighth grade are based on the California content standards and lessons presented in textbooks to be used at Equitas Academy. The core curriculum at Equitas Academy includes literacy, mathematics, social studies, and science.

Social Studies
Research has shown that one major reason that urban students score lower on reading tests is that they lack sufficient background knowledge to comprehend more complex text. When one
reads a text, he or she must know how to decode the words and how to analyze the text. To truly understand the text, however, one must also know the basic vocabulary and contextual information the author assumes his or her readers understand. For this reason – and the importance of our students understanding the world around them – it is essential that students receive a rich and rigorous education in social studies.

Our social studies curriculum will follow the comprehensive and challenging California State Standards. Teachers will use the state adopted California Vistas textbook program to present curriculum in an engaging and challenging format. Teachers will expect students to master the key concepts and vocabulary, and they will also teach them to analyze primary sources, debate different points of view, and make cause-and-effect connections. Social studies classes will be fast-paced and teachers will work with students to hone their non-fiction reading skills, learn important content, and apply and retain it in written essays and oral presentations.

Science
Science instruction will combine student mastery of core vocabulary and conceptual knowledge with the application of scientific principals in laboratory settings. Using both the hands-on FOSS science curriculum with the Harcourt Science textbook will ensure students have access to an engaging and challenging curriculum. Science assessments, for example, will include sections that focus on the key terms and ideas of a unit as well as a performance task component that will require students to synthesize and analyze data from laboratory experiments. Science teachers will also actively work to reinforce key mathematical concepts, especially graphing and measurement skills.

Evidence-Base for Instructional Program with Targeted Population
The Equitas Academy mission and vision are based on best practices studied at high-achieving charter schools that serve a similar population and hold a similar college preparatory mission. Our lead petitioner, Malka Borrego, was selected among a highly competitive national pool of applicants to work as part of the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship, a national training program committed to supporting charter school leaders in the design, start-up, and operation of highly effective urban schools that deliver on the promise of strong educational outcomes for urban students. During the design of Equitas Academy, members of the founding team visited and/or learned from the following schools:

- Academy of the Pacific Rim—Boston, MA
- Accelerated School—Los Angeles, CA
- Achievement First Crown Heights—New York, NY
- Amistad Academy—New Haven, CT
- Boston Collegiate Charter School—Boston, MA
- Boston Preparatory Charter School—Boston, MA
- Camino Nuevo Charter School—Los Angeles, CA
- Edward Brooke Charter School—Boston, MA
- Elm City College Prep Elementary—New Haven, CT
- Excel Academy Charter School—Boston, MA
- Excellence Charter School—Brooklyn, NY
- Fenton Avenue Charter School—Los Angeles, California
- Gabriella Charter School—Los Angeles, CA
- KIPP Academy Bronx—Bronx, NY
- KIPP Academy Fresno—Fresno, CA
- KIPP Academy Lynn—Lynn, MA
- KIPP Academy of Opportunity—Los Angeles, CA
- KIPP Los Angeles Preparatory Charter School—Los Angeles, CA
• Leadership Preparatory Charter School—Brooklyn, NY
• Los Angeles Leadership Academy—Los Angeles, CA
• Milwaukee College Preparatory—Milwaukee, WI
• Milwaukee Renaissance Academy—Milwaukee, WI
• North Star Academy—Newark, NJ
• Rochester Preparatory—Rochester, NY
• Roxbury Preparatory Charter School—Boston, MA
• Synergy Charter School—Los Angeles, CA
• Vaughn Learning Center—Pacoima, CA

Many of the schools listed above were selected and visited in conjunction with Building Excellent Schools on the basis of academic performance, as measured by standardized test scores, among populations of traditionally underserved students. Many of the practices can be described as sharing a set of core characteristics that have also critically informed the educational program of our educational model.

Table 6: Shared Characteristics of High Performing Charter Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Firm belief that all students can learn and achieve at high levels.</th>
<th>Frequent internal assessments with data to drive instruction.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear, outcome-focused mission, understood by all, and evidenced throughout the school.</td>
<td>Strong discipline code enforced by all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader(s) highly visible ensuring all are focused on mission.</td>
<td>Clear and frequent communications with parents regarding student performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly-structured learning environment and organization.</td>
<td>Strong curriculum focus on skill mastery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom practices promote continuity (and predictability) from one classroom to another.</td>
<td>Extended school day and school year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recruiting Qualified Teachers

In order to deliver on our rigorous academic program, Equitas Academy will recruit and select outstanding educators with passion, subject mastery, extensive experience with urban youth, and the commitment to do whatever is necessary to ensure the uncompromising academic performance of our students. Equitas Academy will develop partnerships with Teach For America, Building Excellent Schools, and Schools of Education (USC, UCLA, Cal State University System, Stanford University, Loyola Marymount, etc). In addition to outreach efforts, teacher retention is essential and best practices are drawn from charter schools with proven success in attracting and supporting the best educators, such as North Star Academy in Newark, NJ.

• Equitas Academy expects to attract applications from exceptional teachers who reflect the background and experience of its students as well as and have the subject mastery and teaching skill to achieve outstanding academic outcomes.

• The school will implement a comprehensive hiring process to select teachers ready to commit to the demands of educating all students at the highest level without excuse.
• All teachers are highly qualified as required by the No Child Left Behind Act.

• Equitas Academy supports its faculty with professional development specific to their individual needs as educators.

• Teachers are closely supervised through frequent observation and assessment in the areas of content delivery, effective classroom management, and appropriate use of student achievement data to individualize or modify instruction.

• Teachers are regarded as respected professionals. They receive competitive compensation packages and have regular access to computer technology, telephones, voicemail, email, and other necessary instructional resources. Teachers will be eligible for bonuses based on exceptional student performance, measured by both internal and external evaluative measures.36

• Teachers benefit from common planning periods to ensure ongoing collaboration. Teachers in the early grades will plan together to link instruction to state standards and use student achievement data to constantly adapt curriculum. Teachers who teach the same students meet together to review each student’s academic progress individually and collaborate with parents to provide students with the most appropriate, rigorous, and data-driven individualized attention.

In order to sustain this high-level teaching, Equitas Academy must support its teachers through the program structures, school culture, and school design.

Professional Development and Planning Time
To ensure that we are able to hold students to a clear promotion policy that expects our students will meet rigorous academic standards, Equitas Academy will provide extended professional development time to develop our staff and to support our educational program. Annually, teachers will receive 25 days of professional development. Additionally, students are dismissed one day per week at 1:45 pm37 to allow for two hours of weekly professional development for teachers.

Professional Development is central to ensuring curriculum and teaching is delivered effectively. Upon hiring, all teachers will participate in three weeks of summer professional development training. This training will: (a) lay the foundation for a consistent and structured school culture; (b) ensure common classroom management strategies and class procedures; (c) establish school-wide expectations for behavior; and (d) establish common lesson planning formats, standardized curriculum and assessments, and effective instructional delivery.

Weekly Professional Development
Early dismissal provides a time for weekly professional development. The Executive Director and Director of Curriculum and Instruction will lead professional development for the purpose of improving teaching and student learning. Below describes the weekly meeting format/agenda.

36 Each year, compensation packages are based on budget availability. Teachers that exceed their performance evaluations are eligible for a 2-5% annual raise as well as an additional compensation bonus. Actual amount will depend on performance through observation, student assessments, and overall effectiveness in the classroom.
Table 7: Weekly Professional Development Meeting Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Learning:</th>
<th>Each week, professional development objectives are planned and documented in a written agenda.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus:</td>
<td>Provides for intention and reflection of teaching and weekly activities. Can be an inspirational quote, topic, or video.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check In:</td>
<td>Weekly check ins allow staff to leave the day to day stress and focus on the content and activities of the meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Job (OTJ):</td>
<td>OTJ is a format that allows teachers a space to provide &quot;shout outs,&quot; praise and thanks toward colleagues, &quot;call outs&quot; address issues/complaints and hold staff accountable, and/or have the group provide solutions to work issues both instructional and non instructional or address areas of concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development:</td>
<td>Each week, staff will receive professional development based on the sequence of topics in Table 12 and based on the needs to teachers and students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Business:</td>
<td>Staff will revisit any old business or unresolved business issues/projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Business:</td>
<td>New business topics are presented and actions items are developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing:</td>
<td>Review of agenda, business tabled for next meeting, and action items that need to be reviewed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Monthly professional development staff trainings in curriculum and assessment will ensure delivery of effective teaching. In addition, weekly professional development will include lesson plan review and instructional delivery study. Teachers’ lessons will be video-taped and used for review and study. This format will ensure a feedback system used for instructional quality improvement.

Two-Year Professional Development Sequence

Table 8: Two-Year Professional Development Sequence above outlines the professional development topics for the first two years of the school. During the summer, prior to opening the school, School Culture, Curriculum & Instructional, Assessments & Standards, English Language Arts, Mathematics, the other content areas, character education and Special Education/Student Supports will be covered. These topics will be revisited throughout the first two years with the addition of school visits.

With the Executive Director, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction will be responsible for implementing professional development, monitoring quality instruction and lesson planning. Our leadership model will ensure one school leader is devoted fully to supporting daily strong teaching in every classroom, lesson planning and instructional delivery, and close monitoring of student assessments and supports. The Director of Curriculum and Instruction will visit classrooms daily and provide ongoing feedback, an important tool of ongoing professional development. He or she will be responsible for teacher development, provide valuable feedback on a daily and weekly basis, and will provide valuable information to the Executive Director when evaluating staff and making hiring and re-hiring decisions. This model ensures teachers have the skills and support to deliver the proposed instructional program effectively.
### Table 8: Two-Year Professional Development Sequence

| School Culture | Professional Values  
|                | Code of Conduct  
|                | Terrific Transitions  
|                | Proactive measures for your most challenging students  
|                | Classroom Management System  
| Curriculum & Instructional | Lesson Plan Components  
|                | Direct Instruction (I Do, We Do, You Do)  
|                | Homework System  
|                | Teaching Taxonomy—how to utilize instructional practices  
| Assessments & Standards | Assessments to inform instruction  
|                | Internal Standards  
|                | Scope and Sequence  
|                | Alignment of Curriculum, Standards, Assessments  
|                | Progress Reports and Report Cards  
|                | Assessments (teacher created, publisher, and national normed)  
| Reading | Reading Program (Overview, Reading Lesson Plan, Video Observation)  
|                | Independent Reading Time Block  
|                | Reading Comprehension Strategies  
|                | Read Alouds  
| Fluency/Vocabulary | Vocabulary and Fluency  
| Writing | Writing Program (Overview, Writing Lesson Plan, Video Observation)  
|                | Genre Study  
|                | Grammar (Editing and Revising)  
| Math | Math Program (Intro, Overview, Math Lesson Plan, Video Observation)  
|                | Saxon Math, Parts 1 and 2  
| History/Science | FOSS, California Vistas, Harcourt Science  
| Character Education/Ethics | Community Meeting  
|                | Character Curriculum/Ethics  
| Full-day or Half-day School Visits | Rafe Esquith  
|                | Synergy Charter School  
|                | KIPP Los Angeles  
|                | North Star Academy  
|                | Leadership Prep  
|                | Milwaukee College Prep  
|                | Gabriella Charter School  
|                | Camino Nuevo  
|                | KIPP  
| Differentiation/Special Education/Student Supports | Modifications  
|                | Techniques for Differentiation  
|                | Tutoring that Works  
|                | English Language Learners  
|                | Special Education  

#### Sample Daily Schedule

To further describe the program at Equitas Academy, sample school day schedules are provided. School opens at 7:30 am with breakfast with dismissal at 3:30 pm.\(^{38}\)

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\(^{38}\) If needed and determined by teachers and families, students will attend tutoring, detention and/or homework club after dismissal.
There is 140 minutes of English Language Arts (as indicated in green highlighted areas, including a 20-minute independent reading block). Students will have an independent reading time (IRT). This time expands upon the more typically used “Silent Sustained Reading” (SSR) or “Drop Everything and Read” (DEAR) programs. The job of the teacher during IRT will be to get all of his or her students to be avid, active readers. It is the job of the reading teacher to find appropriate books, inspire students to read, and monitor their independent reading. During this time, teacher utilize standards-based lesson planning to implement mini-lessons to strengthen student learning. In addition, we will utilize a leveled library system to ensure students are reading books at their appropriate reading levels. A leveled library is a system for coding books by reading level, e.g., levels S, T, U are fifth grade reading books. The leveling system is based on text analysis and language characteristics. Using this system, teachers will assess students’ reading ability and help students choose appropriate books at “their just right reading level.”

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**Regular Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Begin</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Time (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast &amp; Life Work</td>
<td>7:30 AM</td>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(not included in instructional minutes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics/Advisory</td>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>8:20 AM</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Arts</td>
<td>8:20 AM</td>
<td>10:20 AM</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ELD for 40 minutes two times a week)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>10:20 AM</td>
<td>10:35 AM</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>10:40 AM</td>
<td>11:40 AM</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>11:40 AM</td>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>12:40 PM</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition to Classroom</td>
<td>12:40 PM</td>
<td>12:45 PM</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Reading</td>
<td>12:45 PM</td>
<td>1:05 PM</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrichment</td>
<td>1:05 PM</td>
<td>1:45 PM</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>1:45 PM</td>
<td>2:25 PM</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>2:25 PM</td>
<td>3:05 PM</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring</td>
<td>3:05 PM</td>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td></td>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After School (not included in instructional minutes)</td>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td>1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Dismissal (not included in instructional minutes)</td>
<td></td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>385^39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Shortened Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Begin</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Time (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast &amp; Life Work</td>
<td>7:30 AM</td>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(not included in instructional minutes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics/Advisory</td>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>8:20 AM</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Arts</td>
<td>8:20 AM</td>
<td>10:20 AM</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break</td>
<td>10:20 AM</td>
<td>10:35 AM</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>10:40 AM</td>
<td>11:40 AM</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>11:40 AM</td>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>12:40 PM</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition to Classroom</td>
<td>12:40 PM</td>
<td>12:45 PM</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Reading</td>
<td>12:45 PM</td>
<td>1:05 PM</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Meeting</td>
<td>1:05 PM</td>
<td>1:45 PM</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:45 PM</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

^39 Instructional minutes do not include breakfast, break, lunch, recess, transition times, and after school.

Teachers will model comprehension strategies\textsuperscript{41} at the start of IRT in a mini-lesson and students will utilize these strategies during their independent reading time. For example, the teacher may ask the students to further their understanding of their IRT book by making a text to text connection to the class read aloud book earlier that day. At the end of IRT, students will discuss the connection made during their reading. Teacher will also actively coach students during their independent reading time to ensure students are utilizing comprehension strategies, choosing appropriate books, and constructing meaning during their independent learning time.

Listed below are three tables that highlight the instructional minutes devoted to each content area. Content areas like social studies and science have instructional time almost doubled to meet the demanding content standards and to ensure students are prepared for demanding middle school curriculum.

\textbf{Table 9: Yearly Instructional Minutes By Grade Level}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELA</td>
<td>25,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>10,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>6,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>6,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>3,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrichment</td>
<td>6,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>3,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Circle</td>
<td>1,440</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{School Annual Calendar}

Equitas Academy begins after Labor day runs through the end of June. The school calendar shares nearly all vacations and holidays with the Los Angeles Unified School District (except for Winter Break) and includes 180 days of school instruction. The school begins at 7:30 am and ends at 3:30 pm. The design of the academic year supports the mission of the school. To begin planning for the year, teachers report in August for professional development. In total, we provide 25 paid professional development days before, during, and after the school year to ensure our teachers receive training and development necessary to create the excellent instructional practice on which our success depends. In addition, our year is divided into three trimesters; parents receive progress reports mid-way through each trimester, or every six weeks of instruction. Report cards will be sent out at the conclusion of each trimester, to ensure effective communication regarding each student’s progress. See sample school calendar for more details.

\textsuperscript{41} Reading comprehension strategies are informed through \textit{Mosaics of Thought} written by Susan Zimmermann and Ellin Oliver Keene, who outline eight cognitive processes identified in comprehension research and used by successful readers.
**JULY '12**

3 Labor Day  
4 First Day of School  
27 Open House  

# of instructional days - 19

**SEPTEMBER '12**

3 Saturday Academy  
12 Veterans Day  
22-23 Thanksgiving Break  
26 Teacher PD  

# of instructional days - 18

**OCTOBER '12**

6-7 Parent Conferences  
7 No School  
20-31 Winter Holiday  

# of instructional days - 12

**NOVEMBER '12**

1 New Years Day  
2 Teacher PD  
21 Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday  
24 Family Night  

# of instructional days - 20

**DECEMBER '12**

6-17 CST Testing Window  
3-7 Stanford Testing Window  
15 Culminating Activity  
21 Last Day of School  

# of instructional days - 15

**APRIL '13**

8-12 Spring Break  
15 Teacher PD  

# of instructional days - 16

**MAY '13**

6-17 CST Testing Window  
23 - Family Night  
27 Memorial Day  

# of instructional days - 22

**JUNE '13**

3-7 Stanford Testing Window  
15 Culminating Activity  
21 Last Day of School  

# of instructional days - 15
Instructional Implementation Plan
The Instructional Implementation Work Plan for Equitas Academy is included in Table 10. The instructional program, assessment, curriculum, and school culture components will be finalized in the month prior the school opening.

Table 10: Instructional Implementation Plan 2012-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructional Program</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April-June 2012</td>
<td>Hire Instructional Leader and Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April-June 2012</td>
<td>Site visits and analyses of &quot;best practice&quot; charter/public schools models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June-July 2012</td>
<td>Finalize curriculum plans and timelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July-August 2012</td>
<td>Finalize benchmarks aligned with state standards and curriculum frameworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Refine scope and sequence for each department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July-August 2012</td>
<td>Purchase materials and textbooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July-August 2012</td>
<td>Purchase standardized testing materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July-August 2012</td>
<td>Refine assessment strategy and timeline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Create baseline assessments and excel for data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2012</td>
<td>Conduct baseline testing of all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 2012</td>
<td>Enter data from baseline tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Refine curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Refine Scope and sequence for all subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Refine Standards/mission for subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Preliminary in-house benchmarks - all subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July-August 2012</td>
<td>Deadlines for in-house benchmark production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July-August 2012</td>
<td>Create Trimester Tests - Literacy, Math Social Studies and Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Refine student handbook, code of conduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Finalize school calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Develop class configuration - classroom model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July-August 2012</td>
<td>Organize tutoring workshops and after school tutoring schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Culture</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Finalize daily schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Finalize school calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Finalize discipline policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
<td>Develop special rituals/routines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2012</td>
<td>Establish PD pre-student enrollment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instructional Program: Targeted Student Groups**
In order for Equitas Academy students to meet the high expectations of preparedness for entrance into college preparatory, prestigious, top performing and competitive schools, there must be supportive services in place throughout the school. Content mastery is crucial to academic success; therefore intentional supports are organized to ensure all students meet academic expectations. Student supports are designed to meet individual students’ needs and in addition specifically address the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs), socio-economically disadvantaged students, high achieving students, students achieving below grade
level, and special education students. Student supports are also designed as a means for prevention, intervention, and acceleration of learning.

The teaching methodologies as well as components of our instructional program outlined have all been shown to be highly successful with our target student population. As a charter school, we have the ability to use innovative ways to meet students’ academic needs. English language acquisition, the development of a college preparatory focus, more time to learn, and daily student supports are all key to our students’ success in the earliest grades.

Extending the learning day will help advance the learning of all students, including students who need academic supports or opportunities for accelerated learning. For example, students who need additional literacy development will get specific time during the extended day for support. For high-achieving students, acceleration can also occur during this time.

Within our educational model, students are further supported through the following key elements.

**Differentiated Instruction and Flexible Ability Reading Groups**
As part of our literacy program, and to meet the needs of individual students, flexible ability reading groups allow focused instruction at the appropriate skill level. In order to differentiate instruction for students at different academic levels, classes will present the same content but the instruction will vary according to the ability levels of the group. All students will be placed into a flexible ability reading group based on the baseline data generated from testing during the first few weeks of school. As students’ reading ability develops, they will be able to transfer to different ability level reading groups throughout the year.

**Highly-Structured Learning Environment**
Effective learning cannot occur in an atmosphere of chaos and disorder. Creating a structured environment allows teachers to focus on teaching and allows students to learn. This is essential to the delivery of the school mission. Expectations will be outlined in the student code of conduct which will be presented and re-presented: during a meeting at the student’s home before their first day of school; on a family contract that must be signed by families and students; and in classrooms during the first days of school.

**Common School-Wide Procedures**
Specific behaviors will be taught through common school-wide procedures which infuse our daily rituals and routines. The school’s Code of Conduct is clear and detailed and includes both positive and negative consequences for behavioral choices. Students who exemplify school values and positive behavioral choices will earn rewards such as the opportunity to go on extra field trips while students who violate the Code will lose privileges such as choice time, field trips, and fun activities. Families will be notified of their child’s behavior on a daily basis and on a weekly basis (or more frequently as needed), so that parents can be involved in helping students to reach all academic and behavioral expectations. Significant and repeated violations of the Code of Conduct will result in families being called into school to create a solution and, if sufficiently disruptive can eventually result in more serious disciplinary action. By focusing seriously and in developmentally appropriate ways on rules and behavioral standards, an environment conducive to effective learning will be maintained.

Emphasis on our daily, weekly, and annual rituals, in addition to uniformity in practice across classrooms will allow students to understand and live up to school expectations. We will provide professional development time before school begins to ensure all teachers use similar
behavioral systems (i.e., school wide systems for distribution of papers, materials, behavioral systems, and homework distribution/collection).

**Individual Work Folders**
As students enter in the morning, they will have Life Work folders that contain academic assignments to practice learning. The Life Work folders include practice work for students which can be remediation or acceleration depending on the needs of the students.

**After School Supports**
After school supports is an additional support. Students will have access to enrichment activities such as sports, playing a musical instrument, dance, and art. If students need remediation, they are required to attend tutoring support during this time. If students are not completing daily homework, students are required to attend Homework Club and complete their work during this time. This part of the extended day will provide a quiet and structured environment where students can receive assistance as needed.

**Homework Systems**
Homework will be a review of instruction and will help students’ master skills and content learning. This helps students develop study skills and habits necessary for academic success. Students will read for 30 minutes each night and will be required to complete an average of one hour of homework. Parents will be notified and counseled if students do not complete their homework.

**Tutoring**
Tutoring is a key component of Equitas Academy. Tutoring will take place during and after school. During enrichment/choice time in the school day, after school time, and Saturday School, students will be able to access additional tutoring with teachers. Students who demonstrate weakness in a core content area will attend tutoring for a six week period, until those students demonstrate on an interim assessment that they are now successfully mastering the class material. During the six-week tutoring sessions, teachers will review the content from the previous six weeks. At the end of the six-week tutoring session, students will be re-tested. If a student again scores 70 or below, he/she will attend tutoring for an additional six weeks.

**Saturday School**
Saturday School will be offered every other month or four times a year and facilitated by the Director of Instruction and Curriculum. Both students and parents are invited to attend. Saturday School will be from 9:00 am-11:00 am and students/parents will receive breakfast. Enrichment activities for students will be planned and include drama, sports, arts, music, and dance. The curriculum will be an extension of the enrichment curriculum.

**Parent Communication**
Communication is integral to parent participation and student success. We will inform parents of student progress through daily, weekly and monthly systems in the families’ home language. These systems include immediate phone calls, regular correspondence, trimester report cards and meetings, and three formal parent-teacher conferences. Weekly homework syllabi, behavior and reading logs, and quarterly newsletters will keep parents informed about their child’s progress at school. Parents can also access teachers through voicemail and email to get immediate daily concerns addressed. All communications will be accessible to families who speak a language other than English. Equitas Academy will utilize technologies such as Teleparent -a voicemail system able to call parents to notify them their student is absent, communicate the homework and make announcements to entire community if needed.
Parents will be informed of their child’s academic and behavioral progress at regular intervals every six weeks. The assessment system is set up as three trimesters with progress reports and benchmark assessments every six weeks. Parents will receive progress reports to inform them of their child’s grades, academic strengths and weaknesses and any concerns about promotion to the next grade. Teachers will call parents at home every two weeks. Also, a weekly syllabus will inform parents about key learning, homework, and standards to be met that week. Parents will also sign homework and quizzes to acknowledge receipt of information.

Students at Equitas Academy are held to rigorous standards and expected and supported to meet grade level standards mastery. Students at risk for retention will be identified in conjunction with the student, his/her family, teacher, and school site personnel. If students are unable to meet grade level standards as documented by grades, assessments, or comprehensive exams, supports will be put into place to assist students to meet grade level standards.

**Student Supports: Prevention, Intervention and Acceleration**
In addition to the highly effective structures offered at Equitas Academy to support and challenge students, additional strategies will target students who may have additional needs—students performing far below or above grade level, students with low socioeconomic status, English Language Learners, and Special Education students.

School-wide structures will be the first step in meeting the needs of students performing below or above grade level, but additional supports will be introduced for any student who:

- is performing more than one level below or more than one level above his/her actual grade level
- is not on track to make at least one grade level of growth in reading, writing, and math
- does meet the two criteria above but has persistent challenges with the school’s academic or behavioral expectations

A Student Success Team (SST) will be the process by which students are identified for additional supports and individualized plans are created for each student based on their educational needs. The SST will include additional instructional supports, a timeline for implementation, goals for the student, and means for assessment. All SSTs will be communicated with parents, students, teacher(s) and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

**Student Success Team**
The SST is a systematic, individual, solution-oriented approach to assist students with factors that are interfering with academic 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. 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 issues that might hinder their academic success at school.

**Identification**
Anyone who has a concern for a student can refer that student for an SST for consideration. Students are referred to an SST by teachers, parents, counselors, doctors, administration, social workers and law enforcement representatives. The meeting is designed to bring out the best in the people involved.

**SST Form**
The SST can be an initial, review or termination meeting. SST meetings are set for twelve weeks of intervention with every six weeks until termination of SST. Student information, such as student strengths, parental/teacher concerns, assessment and evaluation results and any other information pertinent to service needs and provisions are recorded on the SST. A description of the individualized instructional program which will meet the needs of the student, including specific strategies that will be used with the student are documented. The current performance level is documented using assessments and/or other measurable data. Goals are articulated with a method of measurement. At least an 80% mastery rate is required on each objective for the goal to be met. A projected completion timeline for each goal is articulated with an objective, evaluation criteria and projected completion date.

**SST Meeting**
The Equitas Academy SST meetings shall include the following steps:

- Team members introduce themselves and their roles, the lead is designated
- Purpose and process of the meeting are stated
- Timekeeper is appointed
- Strengths are identified
- Concerns are discussed, clarified and listed
- Pertinent information and modifications are listed
- Concerns are synthesized with one or two chosen for focus
- Strategies to deal with are chosen; concerns are brainstormed
- Team chooses best strategies to carry into actions
- Individuals make commitments to actions
- Person responsible and timelines for actions are recorded
- Follow-up date is set

**Students Achieving Below Grade Level**
While we anticipate that most students' needs will be met by the wide variety of school-wide supports already in place, Equitas Academy is committed to working with students who are achieving below grade level to help them achieve at high levels.

Low-achieving students are referred for an SST and defined as low-achieving, if they meet the following criteria:

1. performing more than one level below his/her actual grade level
2. earning below 70% in one or more core subjects and therefore in danger of failing the grade
3. earning below 2 on rubrics of core content learning standards
4. not on track to make at least one grade level of growth in English Language Arts, and Mathematics

**Strategies**
The SST meeting will identify strengths, areas of concern, goals, objectives, evaluation and timeline for addressing the needs of low-achieving students. Student progress will be monitored and documented every three weeks. The SST meeting will be held before, during and/or after school depending on the needs and schedules of members of the SST team. Strategies include utilizing our comprehensive support services such as placing the student in differentiated instruction or appropriate flexible ability group, customizing student’s individual work folder with assignments and materials particular to the goals and objectives in the SST, providing additional tutoring during, before and after school, and on Saturdays, pulling students in for additional
tutoring during enrichment periods, customizing homework to meet student SST objectives, and communicating progress with students, teachers, and parents.

After implementation of an SST 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.

**Students Achieving Above Grade Level/Gifted Students**

While we anticipate that most students’ needs will be met by the wide variety of school-wide supports already in place, Equitas Academy is committed to working with students who are performing above grade level to help them achieve at expected levels.

High-achieving students will be referred for an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) if they meet the following criteria:

1. performing more than one level above his/her actual grade level
2. earning 4 on rubrics of content learning standards in core content learning standards

It is important to continually strive to push our students toward success. For students achieving above grade level, an ILP format will be used to document goals and objectives to accelerate our gifted and high achieving students. While the ILP process for student achieving above grade level will be similar to students receiving remediation support, the strategies will be specific to the needs of high achieving/gifted students.

**Strategies**

Our student supports allow us to customize instruction for the needs of individual students by placing high achieving students in a differentiated instruction or appropriate flexible ability group which will accelerate the pace and amount of instruction the student receives. In addition, we will customize a student’s individual work folder with assignments and materials that accelerate their learning and address the goals and objectives in the ILP. In addition, during, before and after school, and on Saturdays, an individual program will be assembled for high achieving students to accelerate their learning, as well as customizing homework to meet student ILP objectives, and communicating progress with students, teachers, and parents.

**English Language Learners**

Students must achieve literacy skills to reach academic success and develop a strong sense of personal and ethnic pride if they are to continuously work hard in school and beyond. Based upon the data from the surrounding neighborhood schools, we expect approximately 25% of students to be English Language Learners (ELLs). We have structured the curriculum and instructional program to meet the needs of ELLs with respect to language development. ELL students respond well to a plan of instruction in which each aspect of the language builds on another, with plenty of opportunities for practice. The goal is for ELL students to gain fluency in English as quickly as possible in a non-threatening setting. Our ELL program addresses the process for student identification, curriculum, assessments, reporting, and redesignation as well as professional development and teacher qualifications for working with our ELL students.

Supporting our ELL students, the vast majority of whom we expect will be Spanish speaking, requires that we take an approach that will ensure the quickest acquisition of English. It also requires that we respect the culture and home language of our students. In order to reach the goal of strong English fluency and respect for the mother language of our native speakers, we will provide a developmentally appropriate and highly structured approach to teaching English in
our core academic classes. Equitas Academy will help students identify that their bilingual
capacity will be an asset, an admirable and necessary skill. Equitas Academy teachers and
leadership will communicate to parents in Spanish as needed—but will use English instruction
for the content areas in the classroom. In addition, Spanish is taught at Equitas Academy as an
enrichment course.

**Student Identification**

Equitas Academy will serve its ELL students in accordance with all applicable state and
Federal laws and regulations. We will adhere to the following plan with ELL students:

- Upon enrollment into the school, all students will complete a home-language
  survey of languages spoken in the home.
- Students whose dominant language may not be English will be assessed on
  English proficiency using instruments and techniques approved by LAUSD
  such as the CELDT.
- Educational programs will be responsive to these specific needs and in
  compliance with all state and federal guidelines.
- The School will report the number of ELL students attending the school to the
district and the state.

In compliance with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in the U.S. Department of Education, upon
enrollment at the Equitas Academy, parents will complete a home language questionnaire
(written in languages spoken by the parent). If a parent affirms that the child learned to first
speak a language other than English, that the child currently speaks a language other than
English, or that a language other than English is spoken in the home, the child will be classified
as having a primary home language other than English.

**Implementation of Structured English Immersion**

All ELL students will learn with all other students in the classroom during instructional time. Our
direct-instruction program is geared to all literacy learners, especially ELL students. In addition,
ELL students will have English language tutoring time in small groups.

In order for the school mission to be accessible and achievable for all students, Equitas
Academy intends to adopt an English program that provides the structures and supports for ELL
students to achieve English proficiency. This curriculum and program will be designed to ensure
acquisition and fluency of English. We are looking at Into English as a possible curriculum and
will infuse the curriculum into our English language arts program. Within our English Language
Arts program, eighty minutes each week will be used for explicit oral language development
using an English Language Development curriculum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Classification</th>
<th>Redesignated Fluent-English Proficient (RFEP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall CELDT Proficiency Level = 1 – 3 OR CELDT Proficiency Level = 4 – 5</td>
<td>Overall CELDT Proficiency Level = 4 – 5 AND Listening/Speaking = 3 + Reading = 3 + Writing = 3 +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Overall CELDT Proficiency Level = 1 – 3 OR CELDT Proficiency Level = 4 – 5 | Overall CELDT Proficiency Level = 4 – 5 AND Listening/Speaking = 3 + Reading = 3 + Writing = 3 + |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limited English Proficient (LEP)</th>
<th>Redesignated Fluent-English Proficient (RFEP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening/Speaking = 1 or 2 Reading = 1 or 2 Writing = 1 or 2</td>
<td>Overall CELDT Proficiency Level = 4 – 5 AND Listening/Speaking = 3 + Reading = 3 + Writing = 3 +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment, Monitoring, and Exit or Redesignation Criteria for Students

Students who have been identified ELL will be assessed annually to determine improvement in English proficiency. Students will also take the CELDT assessment to measure English Language Development. Students who score above the established scores of 4-5 on CELDT will be deemed no longer ELL, or RFEP Redesignated Fluent English Proficient while those who score below 3 on the CELDT will continue to be classified as ELL. Appropriate assessments, instruction and interventions will be conducted to ensure students are redesignated early and appropriately.

Regular assessment of ELL progress will be assessed in the following way:

- CELDT (California English Language Development Test)
- ELL students are making strong academic progress as measured by instructor-developed assessments
- ELL students are proficient in English in three years or less
- ELL students are proficient in English Language Arts as evidenced by proficiency on state and standardized exams
- ELL students are advancing from grade level to grade level, evidencing mastery of core subjects on par with native speaking students

If students are not making sufficient academic progress as indicated through CELDT data, we will modify our ELL program as needed.

Meeting the Needs of English Language Learner Population

Equitas Academy will ensure that teachers are qualified and supported to meet the needs of ELLs. We will hire teachers that are CLAD/BLAD certified, and will place a priority on hiring teacher(s) that speak Spanish and English and can provide strong instruction within a structured immersion classroom. We also support teachers by providing professional development on structured immersion instruction, specially designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE) teaching strategies, language development, monitoring, and assessment of ELLs.

Professional Development

We have a strong commitment to ensuring we are meeting the needs of our English Language Learners. We commit to monthly professional development specifically addressing the instructional effectiveness, reviewing assessment data and revising curriculum to meet our ELL students’ needs.

Parent Involvement and Notification

Parents will be notified regarding their child’s English Language Development along with CELDT scores every progress report or every trimester and/or as often as needed.

Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students

The design of Equitas Academy is geared specifically towards the needs of socioeconomically disadvantaged students. We will provide the structural, programmatic, and curricular elements that enable teachers to bridge their students’ academic gaps and demonstrate strong academic growth.

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42 CELDT redesignation scores and table found at http://notebook.lausd.net/pls/pt/docs/PAGE/CA_LAUSD/FLDR_ORGANIZATIONS/FLDR_PLCY_RES_DEV/PAR_DVISION_MAIN/SISB/ESIS/PUBLICATIONS/MEMO%25202590%25202006%2520-%2520%2520%2520%2520%2520%2520ON%2520LINE%2520CELDT%2520CALCULATOR%2520FINAL.PDF.
achievement at all grade levels - regardless of socio-economic status. Instructional methods and educational components at Equitas Academy are designed to address the needs of this population.

Socio-economically disadvantaged students are identified through their participation in the Free and Reduced Lunch program. Equitas Academy will maintain and analyze assessments records to ensure we are meeting the needs of this targeted population. For individual students needing additional support, we will conduct an Individual Learning Plan following the procedures documented above. If we are not meeting the instructional needs of the group as a whole, as indicated by cohort analysis of assessment data, we will revise our curriculum as necessary to address our students’ needs.

In addition to ensuring socioeconomically disadvantaged students are academically prepared, we will also assist with families in need of uniforms or school supplies. We will fundraise money to provide families that need assistance with purchasing uniforms or other school supplies like paper, pencils, backpacks, etc. In addition, we will connect with local non profit agencies for referrals for social services if needed by our families.

**Special Education**
All elements of Equitas Academy are designed to serve the needs of all students, including those with disabilities.

**Identification**
When necessary to screen a student to determine whether a child’s academic, behavioral, or other difficulties may be related to a disability, the student shall first be referred to the SST and parents shall be notified. If the Student Success Team (SST) process determines that general education services are not sufficient for meeting the needs of the child, the team shall make a referral for special education evaluation.43

**Implementation**
If the evaluation confirms the student is eligible for special education services, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be created (with parental input and, when appropriate, student input) to identify the needs, annual goals, objectives, accommodations, modifications, and services to maximize student learning. These services will then be provided by qualified school staff or a service provider in accordance with the student’s IEP, with every effort made to engage students in grade-level standards within the general education classroom or alternative environment, as specified by the IEP. Instructional materials and methods will be selected based on each student’s specific learning needs.

**Assessment and Monitoring**
IEPs and student progress shall be reviewed annually, or more often, as necessary. All students IEPs will be reassessed every three years.

**Professional Development**
Professional development for teachers will include annual special education compliance training, as well as additional trainings to maximize teacher effectiveness in working with special needs students.

**Meeting the Needs of Special Education Students**

43 These evaluations, as well as many special education services, will likely be contracted to the District or another qualified service provider.
We offer a high quality education and maintain high standards for all students including those with identified special needs. For our Special Education program, we will hire staff with the appropriate Special Education credential and experience to oversee our program. In the first year, we anticipate a small number of students will have existing Individualized Therefore, during our first year, we will hire a Director or Curriculum and Instruction and/or teacher with a Special Education credential to oversee the program. As we grow, we expect to serve a population similar to neighborhood public schools and will then hire a full time Special Education Coordinator to implement our Special Education Program. The designated staff member (DCI, teacher or Special Education Coordinator) will be responsible for IEPs, 504s and implementing or coordinating the service needs for special education students. We will employ both push in and pull out services depending on the needs of students and/or contract with outside agencies to provide the services required by the Individualized Education Plan.

*Parent Involvement and Notification*
Parents will be notified regarding their child’s IEP progress every trimester and/or as often as needed. We also administer yearly family surveys for families with Special Education Students to assess the quality of our program and assist with receiving feedback from families.

**Special Education Program**
All charter schools must adhere to all terms and conditions of the Chanda Smith Modified Consent Decree (MCD) and any other court orders and/or consent decrees imposed upon the LAUSD as they pertain to special education. Charter schools must 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 Los Angeles Unified School District (“LAUSD” or “District”) Governing Board approval, Equitas Academy will either execute a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) by and between LAUSD and Equitas Academy 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 or provide approved legal verification of membership in another state-approved SELPA with agreement to adhere to the LAUSD’s Modified Consent Decree (“MCD”) requirements (see MOU execution requirements below). Charter schools who are considering joining another SELPA shall provide the required notification of intent to leave the SELPA at least one year and one day prior to the anticipated exit date (Education Code § 56195.3 [b]).

District-authorized charter schools permitted to participate in an out-of-District SELPA will be required to execute a MOU by and between the LAUSD and the charter school (if considered a Local Educational Agency (“LEA”) regarding the provision of special education services. The receiving out-of-District SELPA Local Plan must be provided to the District for review and must contain a commitment to ensure that the District-authorized charter schools assume all responsibility for the students with disabilities that enroll in the charter schools and that the receiving SELPA is accountable for oversight, monitoring, and implementing the Chanda Smith MCD requirements. A material amendment to the petition and Board approval will be required unless the issue is addressed at the time of charter petition renewal.

**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 will now create two school sections (District
operated Programs and Charter-operated Programs) under the administration of one single Administrative Unit. The Charter-operated schools will not have a LEA status but will function in a similar role in that each charter school will be responsible for all special education issues including services, placement, due process, related services, special education classes, and special education supports. Charter schools will 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.

District-operated schools will continue to receive the supports and services that they currently receive from the Division of Special Education. Charter schools not meeting the criteria for admission to the Charter-operated Program section of the SELPA will remain under the District operated Program section of the SELPA and will have two options for membership. These schools may act as a District-operated school for the purposes of special education or may chose to provide their own programs and services and be reimbursed for these services for these services based on a percentage of their general education fund contribution.

The reorganization of the SELPA will retain a central Administrative Unit to include Due Process, Fiscal/Program Accountability, Compliance and Nonpublic Schools and Agencies. The reorganization would not create a new administrative branch of the Division of Special Education but would utilize existing resources. An Advisory Board consisting of five members appointed by the Board of Education (three recommended by the District-operated Programs; and two recommended by the Charter-operated Programs) provides charter-operated schools with a voice in the governance of special education in LAUSD. This Advisory Board will provide input, guidance and support to the SELPA Administrator in the Administrative Unit in coordinating programs and services across both District and charter schools. The Advisory Board will also inform the Superintendent and Board of Education regarding special education issues. The Advisory Board will operate by a set of by-laws approved by the Board of Education.

*Modified Consent Decree Requirements*

All charter schools chartered by LAUSD Board of Education are bound by and must adhere to the terms, conditions and requirements of the Chanda Smith Modified Consent Decree (“MCD”) and other court orders imposed upon 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 eighteen statically measureable outcomes and facilities obligations that the District has to achieve to disengage from the MCD and federal court oversight. All charter schools are required to use the District’s Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual and Welligent, the District-wide web-based software system used for online Individualized Education Programs (“IEPs”) and tracking of related services provided to students during the course of their education.

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

- The Independent Charter School Suspension/Expulsion Report, due monthly throughout the school year.
- Paper SESAC Report and Welligent Student Listing Verification, due monthly throughout the school year.
CBEDS, which is due at the end of October of Each School Year.

All Students Enrolled December 1 of Each School Year, due at the end of December every school year.

Graduation Status of 12th Grade Students Enrolled on December 1, due at the end of June every school year.

The District is currently in the process of developing an Integrated Student Information System ("ISIS") as required by the MCD. Although most charter schools are not currently utilizing the District’s current SIS, the MCD requires all charter schools to implement the use of ISIS once it is developed.

The address of Equitas Academy is to be determined.

The phone number of the school is (213) 201-0440.

The contact person for the school is Malka Borrego.

The term of this charter shall be from 2012-2017.

The grade configuration is 5-8th grade.

The number of students in the first year will be 150.

The grade level(s) of the students in the first year will be fifth and sixth grade students.

The opening date of the charter school is September 4.

The admission requirements include: See Element Eight.

The operational capacity will be 300 students.

The instructional calendar will be 180 days.

The bell schedule for the charter school: Please see Element One.

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

**Term and Renewal of the Charter**

In accordance with California Education Code §47607(a)(1), upon approval, this charter petition will be effective as of the date of approval and we petition for a period of five (5) fiscal years starting with the first fiscal year in which the school opens and ending on June 30, 2017.

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

Equitas Academy 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.
Element 2 – Measurable Student Outcomes

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.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(B)

Accountability Plan

Equitas Academy #2 Middle Charter School (“Equitas Academy”) accepts greater accountability by being held to high standards for achievement, financial management, and parent satisfaction. Equitas Academy will be held to the following accountability standards.

Accountability Standards

Equitas Academy holds itself to additional standards for achievement, financial management, organizational goals, character education and parent satisfaction as outlined in Table 12: Accountability Standards.

- Goals 1-4 articulate academic standards in the areas of English Language Arts, mathematics, science and social science to meet our rigorous grade level and content standards proficiency.\(^{44}\)
- Goal 5 articulates accountability for the English Language Learners population because of the anticipated large enrollment of this subgroup.\(^{45}\)
- Goals 6 through 8 address organizational goals in terms of fiduciary responsibility, attendance/enrollment goals, and parent satisfaction.
- Goal 9 addresses the character education skills and measures attainment of school core values.
- Goal 10 and 11 address meeting State and Federal targets for AYP and API score.

\(^{44}\) Nationally normed-assessments chosen for the accountability plan will be administered at the beginning of the year when students first enter the school and at the end of each school year to measure growth. Once students have been in the school for more than one year, assessments will be administered only at the end of the year.

\(^{45}\) Ibid.
Table 12: Accountability Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 1</th>
<th>Students will demonstrate proficiency in English reading and writing.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average increase of percentiles per grade level cohort among Equitas Academy students on the CST and Stanford 10 Reading Test will average 5 percentiles per year until the average percentile score reaches 70.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 2</th>
<th>Students will demonstrate proficiency in skills and content knowledge in mathematics.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average increase of percentiles per grade level cohort among Equitas Academy students on the CST and Stanford 10 Mathematics Test will average 5 percentiles per year until the average percentile score reaches 70.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 3</th>
<th>Students will demonstrate proficiency in skills and content knowledge in science.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures: In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average increase of percentiles per grade level cohort among Equitas Academy students on the CST and Stanford 10 Science Test will average 5 percentiles per year until the average percentile score reaches 70.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Goal 4</th>
<th>Students will demonstrate proficiency in skills and content knowledge in social studies.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure: 75% of all students on each grade level will score 80% or higher overall on History-Social Science standards assessments, such as quizzes, end of the unit assessments, quarterly assessments and the end of the year assessments.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 5</th>
<th>English Language Learners will progress academically in the school.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure: At least 70% of English Language Learners will increase by at least one ELD level as demonstrated by CELDT scores, redesignation data, and teacher assessments.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Goal 6</th>
<th>Equitas Academy will maintain organizational strength by demonstrating fiduciary and financial responsibility.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure: Budgets for each school year will demonstrate effective allocation of financial resources to ensure effective delivery of the school mission as measured by yearly balanced budget submitted to LAUSD.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 7</th>
<th>Equitas Academy will demonstrate strong annual attendance and enrollment.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure: Student daily attendance will average 93% in each school year. Equitas Academy Charter School provides over 65,000 yearly instructional minutes, which exceeds the number of instructional minutes required by CA.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 8</th>
<th>Parents will demonstrate high satisfaction with the academic program.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure: Parent satisfaction with the academic program as measured by an annual survey of at least 80% of parents that complete the survey at the conclusion of the school year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 9</th>
<th>Students will develop and improve their character skills each year though embodying and exemplifying the core school values.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure: Improvements in character skills as measured through rubrics specific to character strengths.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 10</th>
<th>Meet NCLB Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) targets as set by the State and Federal Government.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure: Annual Yearly Progress targets set by State and Federal Government.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 11</th>
<th>Exceed an API score of 700 after second year of operation and grow 30 points each year thereafter and meet growth targets each year for each subgroup.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure: State API scores and growth targets for each subgroup set by State and Federal Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Timeline for Assessment of Pupil Outcomes**

Prior to the start of the school year, we will conduct a diagnostic assessment of each student using age- and grade-appropriate standardized assessment tools. The results from such diagnostics will allow us to have a clear picture of current student mastery, and inform student academic action plans and overall grade curriculum. These diagnostics will also allow a benchmark against which all future academic growth can be measured.

For all grades we will administer the state mandated assessments as required under the California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) pursuant to the Education Code 60602.5. The California Standards Test (CST) in English Language Arts and Mathematics will be administered to students in grades five through eighth in the spring of each year to measure annual progress in meeting AYP goals. In addition, for our students, we will use a nationally-normed assessment, the Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition (Stanford 10) as an additional measure to determine longitudinal growth for individual students and cohorts of students. The Stanford 10 also allows a comparative measure, allowing us to see our students’ performance and gains against a national cohort. Each student will take the Stanford 10 when entering the school, and each June thereafter. As a 5-8 school we will not be administering the CAHSEE.

**School Accountability Plan**

The Equitas Academy Board of Directors will approve a school accountability plan that sets goals and measures for student achievement, in order to measure the extent to which students demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified in this charter petition. The school accountability plan will also take into account No Child Left Behind accountability standards. The Board Academic Accountability Committee will work closely with the Executive Director and Director of Curriculum and Instruction to ensure that students are making progress toward all goals and will hold the Executive Director accountable for student achievement.

The Executive Director and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction will consult with the Academic Accountability Committee and teachers to select effective curricula, materials, and instructional strategies. This process will use student achievement results and research-proven best practices as the basis for changes in the school’s educational program.

We may modify academic outcome goals annually based on changes to State and/or Federal accountability goals. Such changes will be approved by the Schools’ Board of Directors. All stakeholders will be notified of accountability measures and performance through newsletters, the school website, and Annual Report.
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)

Equitas Academy understands the importance of data collection and analysis in measuring and improving student learning. We will use both external and internal standards-based assessments to measure student performance, analyze data closely, and convert results into specific measurable action plans that support strong academic achievement for every student. All core components, language arts, mathematics, science, and social science along with English language development are assessed in a comprehensive and dynamic system.

Assessment Method
Prior to the start of the school year, we will conduct a diagnostic assessment of each student using age- and grade-appropriate standardized assessment tools. For English language arts, we will use literacy assessments as the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS), the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and timed writing assessment. The results from such diagnostics will allow us to have a clear picture of current student mastery, and inform ongoing lesson plan development and individual student academic action plans. These diagnostics will also allow a benchmark against which all future academic growth can be measured.

For all grades we will administer the state mandated assessments as required under the California Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) pursuant to the Education Code 60602.5. The California Standards Test (CST) in English Language Arts and Mathematics will be administered to students to measure annual progress in meeting AYP goals. In addition, we will use a nationally-normed assessment, the Stanford Achievement Test, Tenth Edition (Stanford 10) as an additional measure to provide annual, longitudinal, and comparative measures of our students’ learning growth. Using the Stanford 10 allows us the opportunity to measure academic gains as each student will take the Stanford 10 when entering the school. This testing system will allow us to conduct an individual and cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, a comparative measure with a national cohort, and to determine the average increase of percentiles per grade level cohort among Equitas Academy students.

“In house” Benchmark Assessments
To augment the data provided by these annual assessments, and under the school leadership, we will develop and implement internally created standards-based assessments to ensure that students are meeting or exceeding California standards and adjusting elements of the school program and student supports when they are not. The results of our interim assessment, administered every six weeks, will allow us to make the necessary adjustments as immediately as possible to ensure that our students are acquiring the skills outlined in the California Content Standards.

Data Analysis System
We use intentional systems around data analysis to inform and improve teaching and student learning. In order to ensure students have met statewide performance content standards, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction will oversee the collection and analysis of state assessment data using programs such as a Student Information System, FOCUS and/or, Zoom, or other approved data management systems. Our data analysis begins with interim assessments (IAs) developed prior to the school year by school leadership and teachers. IAs cover test content from the California content standards and Stanford 10 assessment. Teachers
administer IAs three times a year and student performance results inform the modification of the scope and sequence and lessons plans as needed.

Interim assessments will be scored and analyzed using EduSoft (or a similar software program). Teachers score the exams and input the data. Using the IAs, teachers are able to re-teach standards to prepare students for content mastery. School leadership collects and compiles the data. Analysis of individual students, flexible ability groupings—high, middle, and low—and individual classrooms is conducted using a comprehensive template. Teachers conduct reflection on the IA scores to facilitate assessment analysis and conduct action plans. Teachers then meet with the Executive Director and Director of Curriculum and Instruction during the weekly two hour professional development, and/or teacher preparatory time, after interim assessments to closely analyze the data and create an action plan divided by class, homogenous reading groups and individual students based on the results. Professional development days are facilitated by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction to implement an action plan and create opportunities for teachers to reflect upon their own teaching and student learning.

The Interim Assessment teacher analysis consist of three parts: (1) teacher reflection on student performance expectations, teaching priorities, student strengths and weaknesses; (2) detailed analysis of standards mastery through analysis of whole class mastery, small group, and individual mastery and analysis of errors and with instructional plan to address areas of concern; and (3) details for 6 week instructional plan for re-teaching.

Table 13: Sample Interim Assessment Teacher Analysis by Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>%Correct</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Instructional Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author’s Purpose Question</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>Students having trouble distinguishing between details and purpose in multiple choice format</td>
<td>Students need practice with distinguishing between story detail and purpose. Step: (1) mini-lessons for whole class; (2) checks for understanding in class and in HW; (3) re-teach in small groups as needed; (4) re-assessment for whole class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

California adopted curricula such as Saxon Math, History Alive, and Harcourt Science have embedded within them frequent assessments that will provide a clear picture of students’ academic growth and academic needs. We will review these results by grade level cohort, individual class, and individual student, as well as by each test item as an ongoing part of our weekly staff meetings. This comprehensive approach to data analysis will allow: teachers to know which standards need to be effectively re-taught or reinforced; school leaders to know the most appropriate professional development supports needed for teachers as a whole and teachers as individuals; and most importantly, the entire staff to develop and execute a data-driven action plan to ensure that every child learns.

These action plans will identify:

- Skills/concepts to be retaught to the entire class
- Skills/concepts to be retaught to small groups during class
- Skills/concepts to be retaught to individual students with one-on-one teacher instruction or with the assistance of a peer or volunteer tutor
- Students in need of intense remediation and/or tutoring
• Adjustments to existing small groups
• Weaknesses in the curriculum to be revised for subsequent years
• Support and professional development for the teacher to strengthen areas of instructional weakness

Action plans will be revisited frequently in weekly professional development meetings, grade-level and content-area team meetings to ensure that students are making adequate progress toward mastery.

Assessment Data and Professional Development
As indicated, assessment data will be used to inform curricular decisions, teacher supports, and professional development needs. Assessment data also will be used to identify those standards that need to be re-taught, which require small group intervention, and which require individualized student supports. Finally assessment data will be used to evaluate the efficacy of our educational program over time. We are confident our approach is realistic and efficient because we have built in 25 days of professional development as well as two hour weekly meeting to analyze data and inform our program using data.

Table 14: Assessment, Purpose, Grade Levels and Administration Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Administration Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>English Language Arts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internally-Created Tests</td>
<td>Measure standards mastery</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Daily and/or weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim Assessments (IA)</td>
<td>Measure standards mastery</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Beginning of the year, end of the unit, each trimester, and/or the end of the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher-Designed Reading Assessment</td>
<td>Assess developmental range of decoding skills, reading strategies, vocabulary knowledge, comprehension and high-frequency word recognition</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Beginning of the year, end of the unit, each trimester, and/or the end of the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS) Fluency Passages</td>
<td>Measure students' ability to decode grade level text</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Upon enrollment and each trimester and/or as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Reading Assessment (DRA)</td>
<td>Assess reading level, decoding, and comprehension</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Upon enrollment and twice year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Timed Writing Assignment with rubric scoring</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Upon enrollment and every trimester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Standards Test (CST)</td>
<td>State Criterion-Based Assessment</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Once a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford 10 Reading Test</td>
<td>National Normed-Referenced</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Upon enrollment and each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internally-Created Test</td>
<td>Measure standards mastery</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Daily and/or weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim Assessments (IA)</td>
<td>Measure standards mastery</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Beginning of the year, end of the unit, each trimester, and/or the end of the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher-Designed Assessment</td>
<td>Measure standards mastery</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Upon enrollment and every trimester and/or as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Standards Test (CST)</td>
<td>State Criterion-Based Assessment</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Once a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Description</td>
<td>Measurement Type</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford 10 Mathematics</td>
<td>National Normed-Referenced Assessment</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Upon enrollment and each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internally-Created Test</td>
<td>Measure standards mastery</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Daily, and/or weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim Assessments (IA)</td>
<td>Measure standards mastery</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Beginning of the year, end of the unit, each trimester, and/or the end of the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher-Designed Test</td>
<td>Measure standards mastery</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Daily, weekly, and each trimester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Standards Test (CST)</td>
<td>State Criterion-Based Assessment</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Once a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford 10 Science</td>
<td>National Normed-Referenced Assessment</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Upon enrollment and each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internally-Created Test</td>
<td>Measure standards mastery</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Daily and /or weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim Assessments (IA) Standards-Based</td>
<td>Measure standards mastery</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Beginning of the year, end of the unit, each trimester, and/or the end of the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publisher-Designed Test</td>
<td>Measure standards mastery</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Daily, weekly, and each trimester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Development</td>
<td>Measure language acquisition</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Every Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Language Development</td>
<td>Measure oral language development</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>Every six weeks and as often as needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Testing*

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

**Communication with Students and Families**

Equitas Academy will involve students and their parents in the analysis of student work, student progress, areas of strength, and plans to address areas that need growth. After each round of interim assessments, teachers will share results with students and parents in progress reports and conference meetings. Teachers will work with each student to set goals for the upcoming assessment.

Teachers also will use interim assessment results to create and maintain records on each student that demonstrates progress toward mastery for each content standard. The standards-based assessments will be shared with students and families after each trimester and reviewed with parents at each report card conference. All assessment works, interim assessment results, weekly chapter and unit tests, and trimester exams will be sent home for parents to review and sign.

State testing results will also be sent to families and Equitas Academy will host an annual parent meeting each summer to share the school’s progress toward school-wide goals and also explain individual score reports to students and their families. In addition, Equitas Academy annually will
prepare the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) to provide the public with important information about our school’s progress toward achieving its goals.

**Grading Policy**
Grading Policy is based on 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 15 indicates the letter grade, percentage, and rubric score that will be used to define a student’s level of mastery of the State Content Standards. Students will be assessed using a rubric and/or will receive a letter grade.

**Table 15: Grading Policy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Rubric Score</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98-100%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A student earning an A or 4 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 or 3 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 or a 2 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>NI</td>
<td>Below 70%</td>
<td>0 or 1</td>
<td>A student earning less than 70% in a course needs to demonstrate improvement and has not demonstrated a basic level of mastery with the content standards. Mastery of the standards needs to occur 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 Director of Curriculum and Instruction to ensure that grades are calibrated and assigned in a fair and consistent manner that corresponds with student mastery of State Content Standards.
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)

Independent and Non Profit Assurance
The Equitas Academy will be an independent charter school and will be operated by a nonprofit benefit corporation.

*Equitas Academy and/or its non-profit corporation will be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of the charter school.

Governance Structure
The Equitas Academy Board of Directors is a policy-making board and supervises the leadership of the school. The Board will delegate all school management decisions such as hiring teachers and school staff, day-to-day school management and adherence to school policy to the Executive Director.

The Governing Board: Meetings, Notices and Selection Process
The Board of Directors (the "Board") will consist of at least seven and no more than thirteen members. All Directors shall have identical rights.

*Equitas Academy will comply with the Brown Act.

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

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

The Equitas Academy nominating committee, known as the Governance Committee, will present potential Board members and officers for election by the Board of Directors. This list will be presented at the annual meeting of the Board, although additional members may also be added between annual meetings, if deemed necessary by the Governance Committee and approved by a vote of the Board.

Directors will serve a term of three (3) years from the date of their appointments, or until their successors are seated. A full three-year term will be considered to have been served after three annual meetings. No director shall serve more than two (2) consecutive, three-year terms. Directors will serve staggered terms to balance continuity with new perspective. Any vacancy occurring on the Board of Directors and any position to be filled by reason of an increase in the number of Directors may be filled, upon recommendation of a qualified candidate by the Governance Committee, by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the seated Directors. A Director elected to fill the vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of his/her predecessor in office. A Director may resign at any time by filing a written resignation with the Chair of the Board.

The Board may remove any Officer or Director with or without cause by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Board of Directors at any regular or special meeting of the Board, provided that a statement of the reason or reasons shall have been mailed by registered mail to the Officer or Director proposed for removal at least thirty (30) days before any final action is taken by the
Board. This statement will be accompanied by a notice of the time when, and the place where, the Board is to take action on the removal. The Officer or Director shall be given an opportunity to be heard and the matter considered by the Board at the time and place mentioned in the notice.

Members of the Board:

(a) Shall receive no payment of honoraria, excepting reimbursement for expenses incurred in performance of voluntary Equitas Academy activities in accordance with School policies.

(b) Shall serve Equitas Academy with the highest degree of undivided duty, loyalty, and care and shall undertake no enterprise to profit personally from their position with the School.

(c) Are bound by the Equitas Academy Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality policy statements.

(d) Shall have no direct or indirect financial interest in the assets or leases of Equitas Academy; any Director who individually or as part of a business or professional firm is involved in the business transactions or current professional services of Equitas Academy shall disclose this relationship and shall not participate in any vote taken with respect to such transactions or services.

Board Members are elected by the Board and meet once a month for at least ten months out of the year. Board agendas are mailed to Board Member prior to each monthly meeting so they arrive prepared for the monthly meeting. All meetings of the Board of Directors and Board committees shall be called, noticed, and held in compliance with the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act ("Brown Act"), Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 54950) of Division 2 of Title 5 of the California Government Code). Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of all meetings of Equitas Academy. Board meeting notices, agendas, and records of governing board actions shall be posted in a open and accessible public areas of the school such as in front of the school office. Equitas Academy shall keep adequate and correct records of account and minutes of the proceedings of its Board and committees of the Board.

Although the Equitas Academy Board of Directors delegates management of the school to the Executive Director, the Board is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the school meets its mission of preparing students to excel in high school and college and serve their communities as leaders. Therefore, the primary qualifications for serving on the Board are: an unwavering commitment to seeing our students superbly prepared for high school, college, and leadership. All board members bring a set of personal and professional skills which include but are not limited to:

- A commitment to improving access to quality education for all children regardless of race or economic status
- An understanding of the Board’s obligation to act as an effective and vigilant steward of public funds
- The ability to be a good judge of information regarding the Executive Director's educational and fiscal management of the school and a willingness to replace the Executive Director if results are less than satisfactory
• A willingness to focus on the academic achievement of children in the school

• An ability to fairly and accurately assess the needs of the community, and to represent the school to the community and others

• Attainment of at least 18 years of age

• Financial, legal, business, fundraising, marketing, non-profit, community, management, governance, real estate development, and/or educational experience

• Board members also bring: a willingness to accept and support decisions made in accordance with our By-laws; ability and willingness to give time and energy to the school; to provide access to resources, both financial and other, in order to support and strengthen the school.

**Board Officers**
The Board of Director is organized through the Officer positions of Board Chair, Vice Chair, Board Secretary, and Board Treasurer and a committee structure detailed next.

*Board Chair*
The Board Chair presides at all meetings, guides the Board in the enforcement of all policies and regulations relating to the Equitas Academy and performs all other duties normally incumbent upon such an officer.

*Board Vice-Chair*
The Board Vice-Chair fulfills responsibilities of Board Chair in his or her absence. The Board Vice-Chair chairs or co-chairs a committee according to interest and expertise, or serves on a committee.

*Board Secretary*
The Board Secretary provides written agendas of the sessions of the full Board and the meetings of the standing committees in advance. The Board Secretary distributes to Board Members appropriate background information on subjects to be discussed 72 hours in advance of board meeting, prepares and provides written minutes to Board Members, files approved minutes, and maintains the official list of Board Members in accordance with procedure.

*Board Treasurer*
The Board Treasurer has knowledge and understanding of financial accounting for nonprofit organizations. Responsibilities include serving as a financial officer of the organization and as chair of the Finance Committee. The Board Treasurer manages, with the Finance Committee, the Board's review of and action related to the Board's financial responsibilities. The Board Treasurer works with the Executive Director to ensure that appropriate financial reports are made available to the Board on a timely basis and assists the Executive Director in preparing the annual budget and presenting the budget to the board for approval.

**Board Committees**
The Board of Directors will consist of four initial committees which include the Governance, Finance, Academic Accountability, and Resource Development Committees.

*Governance Committee*
The primary responsibilities of the Governance Committee are to identify, recruit, and nominate persons to serve as Members and officers of the Board of Directors and to provide development
opportunities for Board membership. Identification of well-qualified candidates will result from a carefully planned process designed to obtain influential, knowledgeable, and representative leadership for the organization. The major steps in this process are:

- Determining what is needed to strengthen the Board
- Putting together a list of prospective nominees
- Developing a tentative slate of nominees
- Recruiting strong candidates
- Developing a final slate of nominees
- Providing ongoing orientation to Members
- Overseeing Member assessment process to ensure optimum performance

For a variety of reasons, at-large vacancies may occur on the Board during the period between elections. When these occur, it is the responsibility of the Governance Committee to recommend a suitable candidate for appointment by the Board to fill the vacancy. The Governance Committee reports to the full Board and maintains lines of communication with management.

**Finance Committee**
The Finance Committee coordinates the Board’s financial oversight responsibilities by recommending policy to the Board, interpreting it for the staff, and monitoring its implementation. The committee also provides Board oversight of the organization’s financial audit. The committee monitors the organization’s financial records, reviews and oversees the creation of accurate, timely, and meaningful financial statements to be presented to the Board, reviews the annual budget and recommends it to the full Board for approval, monitors budget implementation and financial procedures; monitors budget assets, monitors compliance with federal, state, and other reporting requirements, and helps the full Board understand the organization’s finances. The committee also recommends the auditor for full Board approval and reviews the audit. The Finance Committee:

- Reviews the adequacy of the organization’s internal control structure
- Reviews the activities, organizational structure, and qualifications of the internal audit function (if applicable)
- Reviews the policies and procedures in effect for the review of executive compensation and benefits
- If necessary, institutes special investigations and, if appropriate, hires special counsel or experts to assist
- Performs other oversight functions as requested by the full Board

The Board Treasurer will chair this committee. Committee members should have a strong background in accounting, finance, or business. The Finance Committee reports to the full Board and maintains lines of communication with management.

**Academic Accountability Committee**
The Accountability Committee monitors the school’s progress towards all goals as established in the accountability plan, and ensures that there are sufficient controls, measures, and supports to reach those goals. The Accountability Committee:

- Examines the school’s education program and its effectiveness
- Reviews and analyzes the standardized scores of Equitas Academy students
The Accountability Committee reports to the full Board and maintains lines of communication with management. Teachers may attend Board or committee meetings to inform the work of the Accountability Committee.

**Resource Development Committee**

The Development Committee leads the Board’s participation in resource development and fundraising. The committee works with the staff to develop the corporation’s fundraising plan. The Development Committee:

- Drafts development plans and procedures, and schedules for Board involvement in fundraising.
- Educate members about the organization’s program plans and the resources needed to realize those plans.
- Familiarizes members with fundraising skills and techniques so that they are comfortable raising money.

The committee is the Board’s central source of information about the fundraising climate in general, and about the status of the organization’s fundraising activities in particular. The committee sets minimum guidelines for members’ contributions and then solicits those contributions. It also plays a strong role in identifying, cultivating, and approaching major donors. Prior fundraising skills and experience or a desire to develop such are important qualifications. The Development Committee reports to the full Board and maintains lines of communication with management.

**Chart 1: Organizational Chart**

- **Board of Directors**
- **Executive Director**
- **Director of Curriculum & Instruction**
- **Business and Operations Manager**
- **Instructional Staff**
- **Office Manager**

**Executive Director**: Effectively implements mission, reports to Board of Directors, hires, fundraises, manages leadership team, oversees all aspects of the school’s financial, operational, and educational operations, leads all strategic planning

**Director of Curriculum & Instruction**: Supervises and provides leadership of faculty, implementation of curriculum, upholds/maintains quality of instruction and assessment system and supervise and coordinates the Special Education program
Family and Community Involvement
Along with our strong committed Board, Equitas Academy believes families play a key role in the education of their children. Equitas Academy will utilize family involvement to forge parent partnerships with the school through the creation of a Family Leadership Committee (FLC). The FLC will be informed through key work streams based on the daily, weekly, and monthly needs of the school determined by school leadership, families, and students. The key work streams are strategic, dynamic and informed through data. For instance, if key stakeholders notice the art program is suffering because of a lack of funding, the FLC will implement a fundraising work stream to support the school. Other work streams can include areas such as community service, nutrition and field trips.

Meaningful participation for FLC occurs through meetings. These meetings are facilitated through parent volunteers. Parents are encouraged to volunteer forty hours over the course of the year. The FLC meetings are lead by volunteer parent liaisons who receive leadership training on decision making, facilitation, how to track data and gauge impact of decisions. The leadership training will be provided by forming partnerships with community-based organizations that provide such training or in house by appropriate staff members. As all parents are volunteering time, the parents become a workforce the school can utilize to move the mission forward.

Involving Parent, Teachers and Students in the Academic Program
The organizational structures at Equitas Academy are clear. The Board is the governing body and the school leadership and staff bring professional expertise to the academic program. We encourage teachers, families, and students input and feedback on the school. We encourage teachers’ attendance at board meetings and to serve in an ex officio role in committee work as appropriate. As we grow, we will encourage student leadership by having students attend and provide reports to the Board. In developing partnership with parents, a key message of the school is to involve families in the academic success of their children. The FLC meetings are a way to involve families and connect parents to the schools. This relationship building is an extension of the work of increased student learning. Equitas Academy will find meaningful ways to engage teachers and build relationships with families.

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

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

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

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

*Responding to Inquiries
Equitas Academy shall promptly respond to all inquiries, including but not limited to, inquiries regarding financial records, from the District and shall consult with the District regarding any inquiries. Equitas Academy acknowledges that it is subject to audit by LAUSD including, without limitation, audit by the District Office of the Inspector General.

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

*Notifications
Notification is to be made to the Innovation and Charter Schools Division in writing of any notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside regulatory agencies, lawsuits, or other formal complaints, within one week of receipt of such notices by Equitas Academy.
Equitas Academy consists of committed professionals who provide all children an excellent educational program. All staff members will be committed to the mission and vision of Equitas Academy and will work diligently to assure they are accomplished. All staff members will be actively involved in the planning, performance, administration, and evaluation of the instructional program and the operation of the school.

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

Leadership Qualifications
Management at Equitas Academy should possess leadership abilities, a comprehensive educational vision that is consistent with the mission of the school, skill in hiring and supervising excellent teachers, a familiarity with charter schools and the target population, technological facility, and management experience.

The minimum criteria for administration candidates include:
- Bachelor's degree (M.A. or Doctorate preferred)
- Minimum of three years in a position of educational leadership
- Positive references and good reputation
- Administrative credentials preferred

Teacher Qualifications
Pursuant to Education Code section 47605 (l) all teachers at Equitas Academy will be required to 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. Flexibility will be granted only in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(l) for teachers in non-core courses.

A teacher of core academic subjects must have:
- Bachelor's degree
- CA teaching credential or have an Preliminary Certificate/Credential for no more than three years while actively working toward completion of CA credential, highly qualified according to NCLB, and demonstrated expertise
- Demonstrated classroom and subject matter competence
- Background Clearance from FBI/DOJ
- TB clearance

Staff Qualifications
The Equitas Academy staff will ideally have a wide range of skills and leadership qualities, teaching and administrative experience, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and be as reflective of the Los Angeles community and the student body as possible. It is equally important that staff
members are committed to the mission of the school and will contribute positively. General qualifications will include:

- Ability to work with others in a team
- Flexibility
- Experience with technology
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Administrative skills
- Interest in seeking out productive collegial interaction and professional growth
- Exemplification and embodiment of the school’s core values of integrity, perseverance, dignity, pride, respect and compassion
- Ability to successfully work with target population

Hiring Protocol:
- The Board of Directors will hire the Executive Director.
- All other staffing decisions will be made by Executive Director in consultation with Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the teaching positions.

Staff Recruitment and Selection Process
To ensure selection of the highest quality staff, we will implement the following staff selection process:

- Posting of job openings (online, newspaper, through referrals, and email)
- Use of teacher recruitment programs and career fairs
- Request of a resume, cover letter, and short essay responses
- Short introductory interview (in-person or by phone)
- Sample teaching lesson followed by debrief with Executive Director and Director of Curriculum and Instruction
- Extensive interview with multiple members of the school’s existing staff
- Verification of credential and previous employment, State and Federal background checks, and professional and personal reference checks of strong candidates
- The Executive Director will make the offer of employment to the strongest candidates

Job Descriptions
The following job descriptions outline the key positions at the school, including their qualifications and responsibilities. Job descriptions will be revised as necessary to reflect the needs of the school.

- Executive Director
- Director of Curriculum and Instruction
- Teachers and Enrichment
- Office Manager
Executive Director
The Executive Director’s responsibilities include management of all areas of the school from academic achievement to personnel management and financial oversight.

Leadership Skills and Characteristics
- Embody, advocate and operationalize the mission, vision and strategic direction of Equitas Academy
- Create, monitor and sustain a school culture of academic rigor through clear expectations of students, families, faculty, and leadership team
- Demonstrate a strong passion for education by developing mission driven programs and policies
- Advocate on behalf of the students, families, and faculty in a way that is consistent with the mission of the school
- Achieve dramatic and consistent improvement in student academic performance
- Provide the essential data, relevant reports, and information necessary to govern the school in a timely manner
- Recruit, appoint, support, manage, and evaluate the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dean of Student Life
- Knowledge of budgetary planning and accounting principles
- Proven understanding of statistical data and analysis
- Proven effectiveness in community relationships and acquiring sponsorship from private sectors
- Knowledge of educational and regulatory compliance at all governmental levels
- Support the professional development and growth of faculty and administrative staff
- Communicate as the primary spokesperson for the school and advocate to all external audiences including investors, media, community partners, government, organizations, and local leaders
- Comply with the charter, accountability requirements, and all relevant law

In addition to the leadership responsibilities, the Executive Director will have key administrative duties.

Administrative Duties
- Provide day–to-day leadership of the school
- Recruit, hire, evaluate, and terminate all staff members
- Manage leadership team
- Recruit and enroll students, including public lottery
- Along with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, lead community meetings, faculty meetings, and school leadership meetings
- Administer, teach and lead professional development when appropriate
- Use data driven analysis to evaluate teacher performance and student academic achievement
- Provide all necessary resources, training, and materials for the staff to effectively raise student academic achievement
- Sets goals and objectives, evaluate performance and develop growth/skill strengthening plans for the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and staff.
- Recommend staffing levels and budgetary priorities to the Board of Directors
- Provide leadership and empower Director of Curriculum and Instruction and staff to achieve both measurable and intangible academic deliverables
- Document and disseminate the school’s academic and operational processes
• Develop and implement fundraising initiatives that contribute to student and staff development and meet school’s financial commitments
• Mediate and manage school-related conflicts
• Handle employment and dismissal of personnel, salaries and contracts, job assignments and performance evaluation, and orientation and training.
• Establish budgets and plans to ensure that school meets its financial commitments to its students, staff, and community
• Lead and resource the application process for governmental funding, including grants
• Interface with community and business leaders to achieve academic, marketing, and financial goals for the school and to share best practices
• Work to ensure the school’s commitment to diversity and visibility within the urban community
• Manage and allocate the finances of the school (budget, cash flow, development, grants, contracts, bonuses, etc.) prudently and efficiently to maximize student achievement
• Work with the Board and its Committees and with the Development Director to marshal resources for capital improvements and a permanent facility, for extracurricular curricular opportunities, and supplemental academic programs
• Ensure the accuracy of all financial documents in conjunction with the operation of the school including budgets, cash flow statements, expenditures, revenues, payroll, benefits, taxes, etc.
• Perform and execute any other tasks as assigned by the Board of Directors

Qualifications and Experience
• Strong commitment to the mission and vision of the school
• Experience in education, strategic planning, staff development, board relations, financial management, and operations
• Motivational and energetic leader who is committed to excellence
• Solutions-oriented strategic thinker who has overcome complex organizational challenges
• Unwavering in pursuit of excellence even in the face of difficult opposition and challenges
• Results-driven educational leader with a commitment to standards-based curriculum and the use of data and assessments to drive instructional decisions
• Teaching experience in urban areas with marked and measurable success
• Fundraising experience with a history of cultivating and securing financial support from individuals, foundations, and corporations
• Experienced public speaker
• Well-developed technical and persuasive writer
• Masters level degree preferred
Director of Curriculum and Instruction
The Director of Curriculum and Instruction provides instructional leadership for the ultimate academic success of the school.

Leadership Skills and Characteristics
- Embody, advocate and operationalize the mission, vision and strategic direction of the Academy
- Create, monitor and sustain a school culture of academic rigor through clear expectations of students, families, faculty, and administrators
- Advocate on behalf of the students, families, and faculty in a way that is consistent with the mission of the school
- Achieve dramatic and consistent improvement in student academic performance
- With the Executive Director, recruit, interview, select, evaluate, and retain outstanding instructional staff
- Support the professional development and growth of faculty
- Administer, teach and lead professional development when appropriate
- Design and implement a coherent research-based curriculum in the core subjects
- Along with the Executive Director, lead community meetings, faculty meetings, and administrative meetings
- Comply with the charter, accountability requirements, and all relevant law
- Provide all relevant data, reports and information to the administrative team
- Attend and advise the Board of Directors regarding Accountability Committee on a monthly basis
- Create, monitor, and sustain a disciplined culture of high academic and behavioral standards
- Support the needs of the faculty and the Director of Student Life in reaching the goal of all children learning
- Work collaboratively with the Executive Director
- Observe teachers on a regular basis and provide detailed feedback both written and oral, formal and informal

In addition the leadership expectations, there are also specific administrative responsibilities that the Director of Curriculum and Instruction must uphold. These include but are not limited to:

Administrative Duties
- Develop school systems and structures that will maximize student learning
- Evaluate academic achievement through detailed data analysis and present that information to faculty and administrators in an easily accessible format
- Provide all necessary resources, training, and materials to the teaching staff to effectively raise student academic achievement
- Assist in student recruitment and family outreach
- Set and monitor grading policies and practices, classroom structures, and teaching methodologies to ensure school wide consistency
- Design the school’s academic standards, benchmarks, assessments, and curriculum to align with state and national standards
- Assist in the planning and implementation of the teacher summer professional development
- Coordinate administration to students of all standardized evaluations including six-week assessments, CST tests, CELDT and national norm-referenced exams
- Document and disseminate the schools’ curriculum units and academic processes
• Mediate and manage conflicting demands of the teaching staff
• Establish personnel policies and standards of conduct in conjunction with the administrative team
• Set and monitor the teaching schedule for the core faculty
• Prepare and submit timely reports and evaluations to all external agencies and funding sources as required
• Teach as needed
• Serve as the primary substitute teacher
• Perform other tasks as assigned by the Executive Director

Qualifications and Experience
• Strong commitment to the mission and vision of the school
• Experienced in education, strategic planning, and staff development
• Motivational and energetic leader who is committed to excellence
• Unwavering in pursuit of excellence even in the face of difficult opposition and challenges
• Results-driven educational leader with a commitment to standards-based curriculum and the use of data and assessments to drive instructional decisions
• Teaching experience in urban areas with marked success and quantifiable and objective student performance gains that surpass state averages
• Proven ability to work collaboratively with a diverse team of teachers
• Analytical problem-solver and solutions-oriented strategic thinker who overcomes difficult organizational challenges
• Three to five years of urban teaching and educational leadership experience is preferred
• Special Education Credential emphasis preferred
• Masters level or advanced degree preferred
Teachers and Enrichment Teachers
The Equitas Academy teachers (including the enrichment teachers) are relentless in their aim to see student growth and work to hone their skills as effective teachers in the classroom.

Leadership Skills and Characteristics
- Embody and advocate the mission, vision, and strategic direction of the school
- Work closely with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction to develop and implement strategies for all students to reach success
- Reinforce school-wide rules and expectations in the classroom and lesson plans
- Communicate effectively and maintain strong relationships with students, families and colleagues
- Assist in the design and implementation of research-based curriculum
- Maintain the school culture of high academic and behavioral expectations through continuous reflection
- Use the detailed data analysis of student performance to inform best practices
- Complete tasks as assigned by the Executive Director or Director of Curriculum and Instruction
- Be able to work cooperatively with colleagues
- Knowledge of how to integrate and plan CA Standards-Based lessons and curriculum

Administrative Duties:
- Assist in student he arrival and departure, transitions between class periods, and lunch periods
- Complete lesson plans and submit to Director of Curriculum and Instruction in a timely manner
- Providing supervision before- and after-school and at lunch and/or recess as assigned in order to maintain student safety
- Planning and delivering thorough, challenging, standards-based lesson that ensure all students master required content
- Assessing students daily through informal measures and at least one formal test or quiz each week
- Creating comprehensive chapter and/or unit tests, as well as cumulative final exams
- Reinforcing school-wide rules and expectations in classrooms and elsewhere on campus
- Reflecting continually in order to ensure a culture of high academic and behavioral standards
- Communicating effectively with students, parents, and colleagues
- Using detailed data analysis of student performance to inform best practices
- Identifying students who are academically at risk and initiating effective intervention strategies
- Complete any other tasks given by Director of Curriculum and Instruction or Executive Director

Qualifications and Experience
- California Teaching Credential
- Successful manager of an urban classroom who has used structure and high expectations to drive student success
- Experienced classroom teacher with demonstrated quantifiable and objective student performance gains
- Ability to work with a variety of learning abilities, including those with special needs and low skill level in a heterogeneously grouped classroom setting
• Demonstrated ability to work well in a team, especially with parents and community members
• Analytical problem solver
• Basic understanding of data analysis
• Minimum three years of urban teaching preferred
Office Manager/Administrative Assistant
The administrative assistant is responsible for the daily operations of the front office

Leadership Skills and Characteristics
- Believe in the school mission that all students should be prepared to graduate college
- Exhibit strong reception skills and interpersonal skills
- Independently, or in accordance with general instructions, compose correspondence concerning a wide range of subjects requiring a thorough knowledge of policies, regulations, and operational procedures
- Be organized
- Able to communicate effectively with various stakeholders (Board members, parents, students, teachers, school leadership)

Administrative Duties
- Collect and enter data into administrative databases
- Serve as a general office manager by ordering, managing, and maintaining inventory of school supplies
- Take notes in meetings and conferences and prepare accurate summaries
- Coordinate special events
- Collect and enter student attendance and make follow-up calls with families
- Coordinate school mailings
- Coordinate daily distribution of homework and detentions
- Develop and edit school newsletters
- Serve and coordinate breakfast, lunch and snack
- Review and edit documents to ensure consistency with policies, regulations, operational procedures, formatting, grammatical construction and punctuation
- Maintain school calendar
- Contact parents and emergency assistance agencies in the case of serious illness or injury
- Create systems to file all important school documents
- Complete other responsibilities as the Executive Director and Director of Curriculum and Instruction may request

Qualifications and Experience
- Bilingual in Spanish and English Oral and Written Proficiency Required
- College degree preferred
- Previous experience as an administrative assistant
- Proficiency in all Microsoft applications
- Prior experience in urban communities preferred
Procedures for Background Checks
Employees and contractors of Equitas Academy will be required to submit to a criminal background check and finish a criminal record summary as required by Ed. Code 44237 and 45125.1. New employees not possessing a valid California Teaching Credential must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Executive Director of the school shall monitor compliance with this policy and report to the Equitas Academy Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. The Equitas Academy Board Chair shall monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the Executive Director. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

Teacher Credential Assurance
Equitas Academy agrees to comply with the provisions of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) as they apply to certificated and paraprofessional employees of charter schools. It will conform to the legal requirement that all Equitas Academy 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.

Equitas Academy will not discriminate against any employee on the basis of race, religious belief, color, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, or any other protected classification, in accordance with applicable law.

Equitas Academy shall comply with Education Code Section 44237 and 45125.1 regarding the requirement to fingerprint and obtain background clearance before employment of staff. Prior to employment, each employee must furnish an up-to-date Mantoux Tuberculosis (TB) test result, and documents establishing legal employment status.

Recordkeeping and Minimization of Use of Emergency Credentialed Teachers
Equitas Academy will maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and ensure that they are readily available for inspection. Equitas Academy will take all steps necessary to minimize the use of teachers holding emergency credentials, including active recruitment of duly credentialed teachers through EdJoin, the California Charter School Association, the Charter School Development Center, and local newspapers. Equitas Academy will seek to maintain a potential list of credentialed teachers from which to draw in the case of a teacher vacancy during the school year.

The Equitas Academy Executive Director or designee will ensure that credentials are processed and maintained in accordance with requirements as set forth by the Commission for Teacher Credentialing and the State’s interpretation of Highly Qualified for the purposes of compliance with No Child Left Behind. Credentials will be reviewed during the hiring process for new staff and reviewed on an annual basis for all staff. All credential materials will be kept at the school.

Staff Compensation and Benefits
The Executive Director in consultation with the Board of Directors will develop a salary schedule for the school. This salary schedule will be based on, but not be limited to, the salary scale of the Los Angeles Unified School District, the salaries of leading private and charter schools in Los Angeles and surrounding communities, and best practices in salary schedules among national charter schools. Administrative and staff salaries will be set at
the discretion of the Executive Director, based on the candidate’s experience and responsibilities. The salary of the Executive Director will be set by the Board of Directors.

A comprehensive benefits package (medical, dental, and retirement) will be included as part of each full-time employee’s compensation.

Performance Evaluation
All Equitas Academy staff will be evaluated by their supervisors once a year. Annual goals and objectives will be developed jointly by each staff member and the supervisor in accordance with the mission and vision of Equitas Academy. Staff evaluations will be based on the degree to which goals and objectives have been achieved. If a staff member is having difficulties achieving his/her goals, the supervisor will provide appropriate support and training.

Staffing Plan for Year One-Five
The projected staffing plan is detailed in Table 16 for year one through five.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th># of teachers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Year One: Equitas will open with 150 students, two fifth and two six grades classes. Six teachers will be hired. The leadership team includes a Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dean and an office clerk will be hired.

Year Two: A new cohort of seventy-five students will be added. Nine teachers will be employed. The leadership team will remain the same.

Year Three-Year Five: Another cohort of seventy-five students enters Equitas Academy. Nine teachers are employed, two Directors of Curriculum and Instruction, Dean, Business Operations Manager and office manager.
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 with a criminal record summary as described in § 44237.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(F)

Facility
The Pico Union neighborhood, zip code 90015, has been selected as the geographic area for Equitas Academy. The Equitas Academy’s facility will comply with all applicable State, Federal and local regulations and maintain readily accessible records for such regulations.

School Safety Plan Assurance
Equitas Academy assures that a school safety plan will be developed and kept on file for review, and that school staff will be trained annually on the safety procedures outlined in the plan. If LAUSD facilities are used during the term of this charter, Equitas Academy shall abide by all LAUSD policies relating to Maintenance and Operations Services.

Facility Safety
Equitas Academy shall comply with Education Code Section 47610 by either utilizing facilities that are compliant with the Field Act or facilities that are compliant with the State Building Code. Equitas Academy agrees to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times.

Fire, Earthquake, and Evacuation Drills
Students and staff will participate in earthquake drills every other month, fire drills monthly, and at least one lock-down drill annually. The school will develop a school safety plan which will be kept on file for review. School staff will be trained annually on the safety procedures outlined in the plan.

Health and Safety Procedures
In order to provide safety for all students and staff, Equitas Academy will adopt and implement full health and safety procedures and risk management policies at our school site in consultation with its insurance carriers and risk management experts. The health and safety policy will be annually updated and reviewed, in consultation with staff and parents. This policy will be distributed to all staff and parents.

A full draft will be provided to the District for review at least 30 days prior to operation. The following is a summary of the health and safety policies of Equitas Academy:

Procedures for Background Checks
The school will follow clear procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in §44237. Ed. Code §47605 9b)(5)(F). The Executive Director of the school shall monitor compliance with this policy. The Equitas Academy Board Chair shall monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the Executive Director. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.
Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters
All Equitas Academy non-certificated and certificated staff will be mandated child abuse reporters and will follow all applicable reporting laws, the same policies and procedures used by the District.

TB Testing
The Equitas Academy faculty, staff and volunteers working with students will be tested for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment and working with students as required by Education Code Section 49406.

Immunizations
All students enrolled and Equitas Academy staff will be required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Section 6000-6075.

Medication in School
Equitas Academy will adhere to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school.

Vision, Hearing/Scoliosis
Students will be screened for vision, hearing and scoliosis. Equitas Academy will adhere to Education Code Section 49450, et seq., as applicable to the grade levels served by the school.

Food Service and Other Auxiliary Services Safety
Equitas Academy will contract with an outside agency for its food service needs. Equitas Academy will be responsible and accountable for filing all documents necessary for operating the food service program, as well as for reimbursement from the State. Equitas Academy will ensure that its auxiliary services such as food services, transportation, custodial services are safe and free from hazardous materials.

Emergency Preparedness
Equitas Academy shall adhere to an Emergency Preparedness Handbook drafted specifically to the needs of the school site in conjunction with law enforcement and the Fire Marshall. This handbook shall include, but not be limited to, the following responses: fire, flood, earthquake, terrorist threats, gang activity, and hostage situations. If assuming a facility used prior as a school site, any existing emergency preparedness plan for the school site shall be used as a starting basis for updating the handbook for Equitas Academy. All Equitas Academy staff will be trained on emergency preparedness procedures.

CPR Training
All instructional staff and school leadership will be CPR and first aid certified.

Blood Borne Pathogens
Equitas Academy shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with blood borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the work place. The Equitas Academy Board shall establish a written infectious control plan designed to protect employees and students from possible infection due to contact with blood borne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus (“HIV”) and hepatitis B virus (“HBV”).

Whenever exposed to blood or other bodily fluids through injury or accident, staff and students shall follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.
Drug Free/Alcohol Free/Smoke Free Environment
Equitas Academy shall function as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.

Comprehensive Sexual Harassment Policies and Procedures
Equitas Academy is committed to providing a school that is free from sexual harassment, as well as any harassment based upon such factors as race, religion, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. Equitas Academy will develop a comprehensive policy to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about sexual discrimination or harassment at Equitas Academy (including employee to employee, employee to student, and student to employee misconduct). Misconduct of this nature is very serious and will be addressed in a sexual misconduct policy that will be developed.

Food Service Program
Equitas Academy will maintain its own Child Nutrition Program and obtain its own LEA status from the State and Federal Child Nutrition Program. Eligible students will be provided meals for free or at a reduced rate in accordance with the Federal Lunch Act.

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

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

The following insurance policies are required:

1. Commercial General Liability, 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 insured and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and the Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in the Charter School's policy. Coverage shall be maintained with no SelfInsured Retention above $15,000 without the prior written approval of the Office of Risk Management for the LAUSD.

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

3. Commercial Auto Liability, including Owned, Leased, Hired, and Non-owned, coverage with limits of $1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence if the Charter School does not operate a student bus service. If the Charter School provides student bus services, the required coverage limit is $5,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.
4. Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by the Charter School to cover all Charter School employees who handle, process or otherwise have responsibility for Charter School funds, supplies, equipment or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be $50,000 per occurrence, with no self-insured retention.

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

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

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

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

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

*Evidence of Insurance

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

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

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

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

*Hold Harmless/Indemnification Provision

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

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

Equitas Academy, its employees and officers will comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) at all times. Charter School shall require all employees of the Charter School, and all volunteers who will be performing services that are not under the direct supervision of a Charter School employee, and any onsite vendors having unsupervised contact with students to submit to criminal background checks and fingerprinting. The Charter School will maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that the Charter School has performed criminal background checks for all employees and documentation that vendors have conducted required criminal background checks for their employees prior to any unsupervised contact with students. The Charter School shall also ensure that it receives subsequent arrest notifications from the Department of Justice to ensure the ongoing safety of its students,
Element 7 – Racial & 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)

*Court-ordered Integration*

The 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 Office of Student Integration Services (collectively the “Court-ordered Integration Program”). The Court-ordered Integration Program applies to all schools within or chartered through LAUSD. The School will provide a written plan in the charter petition and upon further request by the District outlining how it would achieve and maintain the LAUSD’s ethnic goal of 70:30 or 30:70 ratio.

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 Equitas 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. Public School Choice (“NCLB-PSC”) placement with charter schools is an alternative strongly encouraged by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (“NCLB”). The Equitas 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 school.

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

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

Determination of student eligibility for this NCLB-PSC option, including the grade level of eligibility, will be made solely by the District, based on the District’s NCLB-PSC process, guidelines, policies and the requirements of NCLB. In the event demand for places at Equitas Academy under the NCLB-PSC program increases in subsequent years, Equitas Academy agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of increasing the number of NCLB-PSC places available at the Charter School.
Federal Compliance

As a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, Equitas 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. Equitas Academy understands that it is a local educational agency [LEA] for purposes of federal compliance and reporting purposes. Equitas 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 status, if applicable; otherwise, identify and maintain roster of eligible students for the Title I Targeted Assistance School Program

☐ Maintain inventory of equipment purchased with categorical funds, where applicable; and

☐ Maintain appropriate time-reporting documentation, including semi-annual certification and personnel activity report, for staff funded with categorical resources, where applicable. Equitas Academy also understands that as part of its oversight of the Charter School, the District may conduct program review of federal and state compliance issues.

Recruitment Methods

Recruitment materials will be bilingual English/Spanish to communicate the mission and educational program of Equitas Academy. In addition, an outreach plan including marketing materials will be delivered to homes in the targeted community, and presentations and flyer distribution will be conducted at community meetings and events. The bilingual marketing materials will have information on the school website and phone number for additional information.
In addition, information sessions at local community centers, day cares, and after school programs will ensure parents residing in the targeted neighborhood are informed about the opening of the proposed Equitas Academy. We will also recruit using the newspaper and radio ads, website and mailings. Specific student recruitment efforts include:

Table 17: Recruitment Efforts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Efforts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pico Union Housing Corporation</td>
<td>Information session, flyer distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Cruz Day Care</td>
<td>Information session, flyer distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Shield-The Salvation Army</td>
<td>Information session, flyer distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alegría Day Care</td>
<td>Information session, flyer distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA Day Care</td>
<td>Information session and flyer distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pico Union Library</td>
<td>Flyer distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markets</td>
<td>Flyer distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toberman Park Recreation Center</td>
<td>Information session, flyer distribution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Targeted Outreach**

In order to maintain the enrollment goals, the leadership team will recruit students residing in the targeted Pico Union neighborhood. Because of the high population of the Spanish speakers in this area, outreach efforts will be conducted in both English and Spanish. Our budget in the first year for outreach efforts includes $2000.

**Public School Choice Traveling Students**

The District and Equitas 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. Public School Choice ("PSC") placement with charter schools is an alternative strongly encouraged by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 ("NCLB"). Equitas Academy agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of accepting for enrollment District students participating in the District’s PSC program. The parties agree to separately memorialize any agreed-to number of PSC placements of District students at the school.

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

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

Determination of student eligibility for this PSC option, including the grade level of eligibility, will be made solely by the District, based on the District’s PSC process, guidelines, policies and the requirements of NCLB. In the event demand for places at Equitas Academy under the PSC program increases in subsequent years, Equitas Academy agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of increasing the number of PSC places available at the school.

**Federal Compliance**

To the extent that Equitas Academy is a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, Equitas Academy has agreed to meet all of the programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act and other applicable federal grant
Equitas Academy agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act and other applicable federal programs, including, but not limited to, documentation related to 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 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.

Equitas Academy also understands that as part of its oversight of the school, the Charter School Office may conduct program review of federal and state compliance issues.

**Court-Ordered Integration**
The Charter School is subject to the requirements of the Crawford Court Order. The school will provide a written plan to achieve and maintain the District’s ethnic balance goal which is within a 70:30 or 30:70 ratio.
Element 8 – Admission Requirements

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

Admission Policy
Equitas Academy will admit all pupils who wish to attend the school as outline in Education Code, section 47605(d)(2)(A).

Admissions Requirements and Assurances
There are no specific admission requirements for Equitas Academy. The school will not admit students based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, or disability. Equitas Academy will be non-sectarian in its programs, curriculum, and operations and will not charge tuition. Equitas Academy will adhere to all state and federal laws regarding the minimum age of students.

Recruitment of academically low-achieving and economically disadvantaged students
Equitas Academy be open to all students residing in California but will continue to focus student recruitment in the immediate and surrounding neighborhoods of Pico Union and the boundaries within Los Angeles Unified in order to help alleviate over-crowding in neighboring LAUSD schools. School recruitment will occur in the surrounding neighborhood to ensure recruitment of low-achieving and economically disadvantaged students.

Public Random Lottery
Should the number of students who wish to attend Equitas Academy exceed the enrollment limit, a public random lottery will take place to determine the school enrollment per Education Code, section 47605(d)(2)(B). Preference will be given to pupils that reside within the LAUSD attendance area and students currently attending the school and their siblings.

The lottery will be conducted by a non-interested volunteer that will draw the pupil names and verify lottery procedures are fairly executed. The lottery will be held at the location of the school. The open enrollment timeline period will commence January 15th of the preceding school year, with interested families notified to submit an enrollment form by April 15th. Families have three month to submit enrollment forms. Lottery will occur the first week of May. The waiting list priorities will follow the same preferences. The school will contact the parents/guardians of student who have been promoted off the waiting list by mail and telephone. Once contacted, parents/guardians have one week to respond to enrollment. If there is no response, school staff will contact the next pupil on the waiting list. All lottery procedures and waiting list priorities will be posted in the school to ensure all interested parties are informed of procedures. Equitas Academy will keep a file documenting the fair execution of lottery procedures.

Lottery Process Communication
The school will designate an application deadline and only applications received prior to the deadline will be considered for the public random drawing. Public notice will be posted in public location and the school website regarding the date and time of the public drawing once the deadline date has passed. Lottery will be conducted in the evening so interested parties will be able to attend. A waiting list will be developed from the new applications that do not receive admission each year and will be considered should a vacancy occur during the year. During the enrollment period, parents/guardians will indicate if child is a sibling. Sibling names will be color coded, so when and if their name is pulled, the announcer knows a sibling is called and sibling priority is applied.
**Fair Lottery Procedures**
Equitas Academy will use a neutral proctor to ensure the lottery procedures are fairly executed.

**Timelines for Enrollment Period and Lottery**
The open enrollment will be from January 15\textsuperscript{th} with interested families able to submit an enrollment form by April 15\textsuperscript{th}. Families have three months to submit enrollment forms. Lottery will occur the first week in May.

**Lottery Location**
The lottery will take place on school grounds in the evening and will be open to the public. The lottery will be held in the evening to ensure parent and interested parties are able to attend.

**Preferences**
Preference is granted to siblings of existing students and students residing in the LAUSD boundaries.

**Waiting List Communication**
Equitas Academy will contact the parents/guardians by phone and in writing of students who have been promoted off the waiting list and inform parents/guardians of timeline in which they must respond by mail. Parents will have one month to enroll their child.

**Lottery Procedures Record Keeping**
Equitas Academy will document and keep on file the lottery procedures and fair execution of lottery procedures for review at all times.

***McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**
Equitas Academy will adhere to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.

Equitas Academy will include specific information in their outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings notifying parents that the school is open to enroll and provide services for all students which shall include a District standard contact number to access additional information regarding enrollment. A student’s IEP will never be required prior to participation in any attendance lottery or as a condition for enrollment.
**Element 9 – Financial Audits**

“The manner in which annual, independent, financial audits 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 § 47605 (b)(5)(l)

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**Planning Budget**

The Equitas Academy budget is provided as an attachment. Included are worksheets for Start-Up, Planning Budget, and Cash flow for five years. Student enrollment is projected at 150 students for the first year with 75 additional students added each year. Revenue is generated for the first year with Partners for Developing Futures start-up funding.

**Budget**

The following Equitas Academy business plan was designed to identify the costs associated with the operation of a charter school serving a population of students in grades 5-8. ExED completed this budget based on published information on the state direct funding model and a school design that maximizes the revenue that is generated.

**Start-Up Assumptions**

- $300,000 Partners for Developing Futures

The following statistics were used in determining the budget. The first year enrollment projections are based on 150 students with 95% ADA, 25% ELL, 90% Free & Reduced Lunch student enrollment. These figures are based on similar schools in the targeted area. Equitas Academy will open August 2012 with an average teacher/student ratio of 25:1. Each year thereafter, the school will enroll 75 students. At full enrollment, Equitas Academy is a 5-8 school with 300 students. Year one, the projected enrollment is 150 with 95% ADA and 25% ELL and 90% Free & Reduced Lunch students, year two has 225 students, year three with 300 students in 5-7, and year four with 300 students 5-8.

**Table 18: Student Characteristics for Budget Assumptions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Characteristics</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment:</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student ADA:</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades:</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>5-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Free &amp; Reduced Students:</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of ELL/LEP Students:</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenditures and Revenue Narrative**

Equitas Academy places great value in being fiscally responsible. The five-year budget summary below details the expenditures and revenue for the first five years of the organization. The annual budget includes estimated revenues and expenditures with ample reserves to accommodate cash flow. An additional reserve is projected for each year. Equitas Academy projections include revenue that exceeds expenditures during the first five years of the organization.
Table 19: Expenditures and Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue Limits</td>
<td>757,066</td>
<td>1,178,949</td>
<td>1,627,024</td>
<td>1,679,089</td>
<td>1,729,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Revenue</td>
<td>452,540</td>
<td>414,310</td>
<td>231,642</td>
<td>260,424</td>
<td>262,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other State Revenue</td>
<td>236,657</td>
<td>390,274</td>
<td>506,671</td>
<td>741,835</td>
<td>748,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Local Revenue</td>
<td>4,751</td>
<td>8,110</td>
<td>10,919</td>
<td>11,035</td>
<td>11,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants/Fundraising</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTL Revenue:</td>
<td>1,551,013</td>
<td>1,991,643</td>
<td>2,376,256</td>
<td>2,692,383</td>
<td>2,751,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTL Expense:</td>
<td>1,012,670</td>
<td>1,536,411</td>
<td>2,238,190</td>
<td>2,336,702</td>
<td>2,372,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTL Reserve:</td>
<td>50,633</td>
<td>76,821</td>
<td>111,909</td>
<td>116,835</td>
<td>118,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET CUMULATIVE CASH:</td>
<td>538,343</td>
<td>455,232</td>
<td>138,066</td>
<td>355,681</td>
<td>379,193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Budget

In the spring of each year, Equitas Academy’s Board of Directors will approve the annual budget and monthly cash flow. The Executive Director will prepare the budget in conjunction with Finance Committee. The final budget will be approved after the CA Governor’s May revisions of the state budget. Each month, the Executive Director and the Finance Committee will review monthly cash flow statements and present monthly budget updates to the entire Board. The Finance Committee and the Executive Director will make any necessary recommendation for budget revisions to the entire Board for discussion and approval. Equitas Academy will contract with a back office support provider to provide Business and Operations Management services, like ExED. These services include payroll, accounting, budgeting, fiscal management reporting and human resources. The back office provider to manage budgeting, fiscal planning, vendor services, personnel and payroll, accounts payable, attendance tracking systems, completion and submission of compliance reports, and monitoring adherence to the charter process and laws. We are currently working with ExED, who prepared our budget and are in discussion for them to provide the following services.

Infrastructure Set-up

We will begin with a back office provider as soon as the fall of 2012 to begin infrastructure set up. ExED will help with the following services prior to summer of 2012, collect all required documentation to submit to Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), documentation for charter and employer tax status, drafting fiscal Board resolutions, and completing authorization forms, apply to the federal and state tax-reporting agency to request Employer Tax Numbers, work with LACOE to set up the school as a district and set up the school’s general ledger according to the State Standard Account Code Structure and gather employment data from the school for each employee and create payroll data in ExED’s MIP integrated accounting and payroll system. In addition, ExED will: prepare the data applications required by the state to obtain a charter school number and County-District-School Code; prepare the Charter School Funding Survey and submit it by the required deadline; prepare Part 1 of the Consolidated Application for funding under Title I, II, IV, and V and submit it by the required deadline; prepare the Revolving Loan application for submission including identifying the expenditures to be spent from the loan; reviewing the school’s financials for incorporation into the loan application; drafting the budget narrative and board resolution for approval, and completing the application, prepare Child Nutrition Application and provide technical assistance with regard to recommendations on issues that may impact the fiscal soundness of the school, such as growth, matriculation and crafting policies and procedures for the school.
**Accounting/Finance**
After infrastructure set up, ExED will assist with budgeting and forecasting to assist Equitas Academy leadership in the development of the annual budget for the subsequent fiscal year beginning in March of each year for Board approval no later than June 30, including a monthly cash flow for the year. They will assist in making any revisions to the budget to reflect legislation adopted, building multi-year budget projections based on the annual budget and perform forecasting for the school based on actual year-to-date revenue and expenditures through October, and again in January, to highlight possible budget outliers. Another forecast will be performed in March at the time of budget preparations for the following year.

**Accounting Services**
ExED will also establish and maintain the school’s general ledger per the State Standardized Account Code Structure, monitor and edit revenue and expenditure account code structure, add program and location codes when needed, and perform all other regular maintenance, perform monthly reconciliation of all Balance Sheet Items. Annually, ExED will perform depreciation and valuation analysis and update asset values for items such as property, equipment, and furniture. For accounts payable, they will process vendor invoices/bills for payments: verifying approval of payment; determining cash flow availability; verifying non-duplication of payment; logging appropriate accounting entries; producing checks; verifying check security; and sending checks to vendors or school if applicable. In accounts receivable, they will review prior year accounts receivable and monitor receipt of revenue ensuring that revenue is coded appropriately, perform collection activities to receive funding past due and perform quarterly analysis of outstanding revenue balances for the year, and perform mid-year compliance check of auditable items and notify school of any potential problems and/or recommendations.

**Financial Management Reporting**
ExED will prepare and email Standard Financial Reports to school administrator monthly, specifically Balance Sheet, Income Statement that compares actual vs. budget, general ledger year-to-date and a check register for the month. They will perform ongoing analysis of actual versus budget and prepare written review of financial activity on a monthly basis. They will prepare and present school financial health to school board on a quarterly basis, monitor cash flow for school and notify school of unfavorable trends.

**Technical Assistance**
ExED will provide support and training for Equitas Academy school leadership on coding expenditures according to the State Standardized Account Code Structure, provide workshop designated to outline school finance and budget development for school administrators, staff, and stakeholders, provide support and training for school staff to establish Accounts Payable process in line with school fiscal policy and training on Accounts Receivable process in line with school fiscal policy.

**Human Resources and Payroll Processing**
ExED will maintain employee files and database, process any status updates, new hires, termination, and or informational change in the ExED MIP database. They will reconcile payroll checks, calculate federal and state payroll tax payment, perform monthly reconciliation of vendor payments for each health plan option, process status updates and information changes, and prepare payment authorization forms, perform monthly reconciliation of vendor payments for each TSA plan option and process status updates and information changes and perform monthly reconciliation of vendor payments for each retirement plan option and process status updates and information changes.
Personnel
ExED will prepare, review, and distribute W-2s and 1099s as required by law, monitor and review all submissions of State Disability, Worker’s Compensation, and Unemployment claims. They will assist in completing claim forms and work with the county and state in tracking claim results, maintain copies of pre-determined employment records for the school at ExED, retain copies of employment records for all employees and consultants in a secured setting.

Funding/Reporting
For attendance reporting, ExED will summarize daily attendance reports into monthly summary reports, prepare state attendance reports (P-1, P-2, and Annual P-3) and submit by posted deadline and perform quarterly enrollment and ADA projections so that school administrators can assess trends and how it will affect funding.

ExED will complete Categorical Funding Applications, the consolidated application, class size reduction, SB740, Erate and ELAP application, when applicable, prepare monthly child nutrition claims processing. ExED will prepare state required budget reports in format requested by chartering agency, prepare Interim Financial Reports and prepare the Unaudited Actuals Report and prepare state and federal payroll tax filing reports quarterly and prepare the annual payroll tax filing report.

Technical Assistance
In addition, ExED will provide technical assistance with new funding research, review the Governor’s budget and notify the school of any significant changes in legislation or funding, provide recommendation for attendance systems, and provide assistance in compliance issues for funding.

Reporting Requirements
Equitas Academy will submit the following reports to LAUSD:

- Provisional Budget – May 15 prior to operating budget
- Final Budget - July 1 of the budget fiscal year
- First Interim Projections - December 15 of Operating Fiscal Year
- Second Interim Projections - March 15 of Operating Fiscal Year
- Unaudited Actual - July 15 following the end of the Fiscal Year
- Classification Report – monthly the Monday after close of the last day of the school month
- Statistical Report - monthly the Friday after the last day of the school month.
- In addition:
  - P1, first week of January
  - P2, the first week of May
  - Audited Financial Statements- December 15 (also to State Controller, State Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools)
- Other reports requested by the District

Equitas Academy will promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries from the District, including but not limited to, inquiries regarding financial records, and will consult with the District regarding any inquiries.

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

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

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

*Audit and Inspection of Records
Equitas Academy Charter School agrees to observe and abide by the following terms and
conditions as a requirement for receiving and maintaining their charter authorization:

Equitas Academy Charter School is subject to District oversight.

The District’s statutory oversight responsibility continues throughout the life of the Charter
and requires that it, among other things, monitors the fiscal condition of the Charter School.

The District is authorized to revoke this Charter for, among other reasons, the failure of
Equitas Academy Charter School to meet generally accepted accounting principles or if it
engages in fiscal mismanagement.

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

Compliance with terms and conditions prescribed in the Charter agreement,

Internal controls, both financial and operational in nature,

The accuracy, recording and/or reporting of the Charter School’s financial information,

The Charter School’s debt structure,

Governance policies, procedures and history,

The recording and reporting of attendance data,
The Charter School’s enrollment process,

Compliance with safety plans and procedures, and

Compliance with applicable grant requirements.

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

Equitas Academy will develop and maintain internal fiscal control policies governing all financial activities.
Element 10– Student Expulsions

“The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(J)

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

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

Equitas Academy Charter School shall ensure the appropriate interim placement of students during and pending the completion of the Equitas Academy Charter School’s student expulsion process.

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

Equitas Academy Charter School shall utilize alternatives to suspension and expulsion with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from compulsory school activities. If a student is expelled from the Equitas Academy Charter School, Equitas Academy Charter School shall forward student records upon request of the receiving school district in a timely fashion. Equitas Academy Charter School shall also submit an expulsion packet to the Innovation and Charter Schools Division immediately or as soon as practically possible, containing:

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

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

Rehabilitation Plans
Pupils who are expelled from the Equitas Academy Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Equitas Academy Charter School's governing board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to the Equitas Academy Charter School for readmission.

Readmission
The Equitas Academy Charter School's governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for the filing and processing of requests for readmission and the process for the required review of all expelled pupils for readmission. Upon completion of the readmission process, the Charter School's governing board shall readmit the pupil, unless Equitas Academy 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. The Charter School is responsible for reinstating the student upon the conclusion of the expulsion period.

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

B) Was the misconduct a direct result of Equitas Academy Charter School's failure to implement 504?

Gun Free Schools Act
Equitas Academy Charter School shall comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act

Discipline Plan
Equitas Academy is a productive place of learning. The discipline system is designed to create a culture of learning and the Code of Conduct is created to be preventative. Teachers will use a range of lower-level consequences (non-verbal cues, conferencing with student, loss of privileges, etc.) before resorting to more serious consequences. However, we will have clear policies governing suspension and expulsion. Certain offenses will result in in-school
suspension while other more serious violations will result in out-of-school suspensions. Only the most egregious violations – those that put students and/or the school in grave physical danger – will be considered grounds for expulsion. Suspended students will also be responsible for making up all missed work within an agreed upon timetable.

In case of severe or repeated violations, the school leadership may recommend that a student be expelled. The Executive Director has the right to expel any student whom the Executive Director has cause to believe has engaged in conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity which endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or violates a publicized policy.

Suspension and Expulsion
The suspension and expulsion policy is developed through consultation of CA Educational Code and researching other schools’ policies. We will present the discipline policy to parents, students and staff for feedback and the Board of Directors approves the policy. A student may be recommended for suspension or expulsion for any of the following reasons, as specified in the Education Code Section 48900:

- Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person
- Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred by the Executive Director or the designee of the Executive Director
- Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind
- Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant
- Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion
- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property (includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases)
- Stolen or attempted to steal school property or private property (includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases)
- Possessed or used tobacco, or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel (exception made for use or possession by a student of his or her own prescription products)
- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity
- Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code
- Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties
- Knowingly received stolen school property or private property (includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases)
• Possessed an imitation firearm
• Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Section 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a, or 289 of the Penal Code or committed a sexual battery as defined in Section 243.4 of the Penal Code
• Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or a witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of either preventing that student from being a witness or retaliating against that student for being a witness, or both
• Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing as defined in Section 32050
• Aided or abetted, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person (suspension only)
• Committed sexual harassment (grades 4-12)
• Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in the act of hate violence (grades 4-12)
• Engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation directed against school District personnel or students (grades 4-12), that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of either school personnel or students by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment
• Made terrorist threats against school officials school property or both

Students may be expelled for any of the following reasons, as specified in the Education Code Section 48915:
• Causing serious physical injury to another person
• Possession of any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object
• Unlawful possession of any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind
• Robbery or extortion
• Assault or battery upon any school employee
• Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery as defined Section 48900 of the Education Code

Students are subject to mandatory expulsion from Equitas Academy for any of the reasons as specified in the Education Code Section 48915(c) and the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994. It is a federal mandate that a school expel, for a period of not less than one year (except on a case-by-case basis), any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school.

Procedures for Suspension and/or Expulsion
To protect student rights, we have established fair and thorough procedures to ensure a comprehensive and consistent process for suspension and expulsion including clear guidelines for due process.

1. Family Conference
Suspension shall be preceded by a conference conducted by the Executive Director with the student and his/her parent. The conference may be omitted if the Executive Director determines that an emergency situation exists. An “emergency situation” involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If the student is suspended without conference, the parent/guardian shall be notified of the suspension and a conference will be requested by Equitas Academy as soon as possible.

2. Notice to Parents/Guardians
At the time of suspension, a school employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person to be followed up with a written notification. This notice will state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time the student may return to school. If the school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may note that the parents are required to respond to this request without delay, and violations of school rules can result in expulsion from the school.

3. **Length of Suspension**
The length of suspension for students may not exceed a period of 10 continuous days unless an administrative recommendation has been made and agreed to by the student’s parent/guardian. If a student is recommended for a period of suspension exceeding 10 continuous days, a second conference will be scheduled between the parent/guardian to discuss the progress of the suspension upon the completion of the 10th day of suspension. Arrangements may be made to provide the student with classroom material and current assignments to be completed at home during the length of the suspension.

4. **Recommendations for Expulsion**
Students will be recommended for expulsion if the Executive Director finds that one of the reasons for expulsion has occurred and at least one of the following findings is substantiated:
- Other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct.
- Due to the nature of the violation, the presence of the student causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the student or others.

5. **Expulsion Hearing**
Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. The hearing will be held within 30 days after the Executive Director determines that an act subject to expulsion has occurred. The hearing may be presided over by the Board of Directors or an administrative hearing panel appointed by the Board.

Written notice of the hearing will be forwarded to the student and the student’s parent/guardian at least 10 calendar days before the date of the hearing. This notice will include:
- The date and place of the hearing.
- A statement of the specific facts, charges and offense upon which the proposed expulsion is based.
- A copy of Equitas Academy disciplinary rules that relate to the alleged violation.
- The opportunity for the student or the student’s parent/guardian to appear in person at the hearing.

Written notice of expulsion a student will be sent by the Executive Director to the parent/guardian of any student who is expelled. This notice will include the following:
- The specific offense committed by the student for any of the acts listed in “Reasons for Suspension and/or Expulsion.”
- Notice of the student or parent/guardian’s obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student’s status with Equitas Academy

**Appeal of Suspension or Expulsion**
The suspension of a student will be at the discretion of the Executive Director of Equitas Academy or the Executive Director’s designee. Expulsion of a student will be recommended by the Executive Director and must be approved by the Board of Directors. Parents and/or
guardians will be notified in advance to enactment of the suspension or expulsion and can appeal a student’s suspension or expulsion. A suspension appeal will be heard by the Executive Director, and upon consideration the Executive Director’s decision is final. An expulsion may be appealed within five working days of the date the expulsion has been finalized by Board of Directors or an administrative hearing panel appointed by the Board. The student will be considered suspended until a meeting is convened to hear the appeal (within 10 working days) at which time the parent(s) must attend to present their appeal. The appeal will be heard by a fair and impartial panel of representatives assigned by the Equitas Academy Board of Directors. The decision of the panel of representatives of the Board and Executive Director will be final.

In the event of a decision to expel a student from Equitas Academy, the school will work cooperatively with the district of residence, county, and/or private schools to assist with the appropriate educational placement of the student who has been expelled. Any incident of violent and/or serious student behavior shall be communicated to the district/school to which the student matriculates.

**Rehabilitation Plans**

Pupils who are expelled from the Equitas Academy shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the charter school’s governing board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to Equitas Academy for readmission.

The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of Equitas Academy’s governing board and the pupil and guardian or representative, to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The pupil’s readmission is also contingent upon the capacity of Equitas Academy at the time the pupil seeks readmission.

Equitas Academy will provide information to pupils and their families who have been expelled. Students may choose to attend other public schools in their district of residence or pursue an interdistrict-transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the district.

**Special Education Discipline**

In the case of a special education student, or a student who receives 504 accommodations, the charter will ensure that it makes the necessary adjustments to comply with the mandates of State and federal laws, including the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973, regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. Prior to recommending expulsion for a Section 504 student or special education student, the charter administrator will convene a review committee to determine: whether the student’s misconduct was a manifestation of his or her disability; whether the student was appropriately placed and receiving the appropriate services at the time of the misconduct; and/or whether behavior intervention strategies were in effect and consistent with the student’s IEP or 504 Plan. If it is determined that the student’s misconduct was not a manifestation of his or her disability, that the student was appropriately placed and was receiving appropriate services at the time of the misconduct, and that the behavior intervention strategies were in effect and consistent with the student’s IEP, the student may be expelled.
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 federal social security.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(K)

Retirement
Equitas Academy will make any contribution that is legally required of the employer, including STRS, Social Security and unemployment insurance. All full-time certificated employees who are eligible will participate in the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS). Employees will contribute the required percentage and Equitas Academy will contribute the employer’s portion required by STRS. All withholding from employees and Equitas Academy will be forwarded to the STRS fund as required. Retirement reporting will be contracted out to a qualified service provider; however, the Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring that such retirement coverage is arranged. Equitas Academy shall forward any required payroll deduction and related data to the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) as required by Education Code 47611.3 and 41365.

Benefits
All employees at Equitas Academy are at-will employees. The terms and conditions for employment at Equitas Academy will be reviewed in detail during the hiring process and offer of employment.

Mandatory benefits, such as workers compensation, unemployment insurance, Medicare, and social security (for non-STRS members) will be provided by Equitas Academy. Life, health, dental, vision, and related benefits will also be provided to all full-time employees subject to the personnel policy of the school. Employees on charter school leave from LAUSD will elect to give up district-offered coverage during the term of their employment with Equitas Academy.

Staff Compensation and Benefits
The Board of Directors will adopt a salary schedule policy for the school. This salary schedule will be based on, but not limited to, the salary scale of the Los Angeles Unified School District, the salaries of leading private and charter schools in Los Angeles and surrounding communities, and best practices in salary schedules among national charter schools. Administrative and staff salaries will be set at the discretion of the Executive Director, based on the candidate’s experience and responsibilities.

Process for Staff Recruitment and Selection
To ensure selection of the highest quality staff, we will implement the following staff selection process:

- The Board of Directors will hire the Executive Director
- All other staffing decisions will be made by Executive Director in consultation with Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the teaching positions
- Posting of job openings (online, newspaper, through referrals, and email)
- Use of teacher recruitment agencies and career fairs
- Request of a resume, cover letter, and short essay responses
- Short introductory interview (in-person or by phone)
- Sample teaching lesson followed by debrief
- Extensive interview with multiple members of the school’s existing staff
- Verification of credential and previous employment, State and Federal background checks, and professional and personal reference checks of strong candidates
• Offers of employment to the strongest candidates

Monitoring Credentials
Equitas Academy will maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and ensure that they are readily available for inspection. The Equitas Academy Executive Director or designee will ensure that credentials are processed and maintained in accordance with requirements as set forth by the Commission for Teacher Credentialing and the State’s interpretation of Highly Qualified for the purposes of compliance with No Child Left Behind. Credentials will be reviewed during the hiring process for new staff and reviewed on an annual basis for all staff. All credential materials will be kept at the school and be readily available for inspection. Equitas Academy will comply with all State and Federal laws concerning the maintenance and disclosure of employee records. Teachers of core content areas will be required to 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.

Staff Evaluations and Measurement of Performance
All Equitas Academy staff will be evaluated by their supervisors once a year. Annual goals and objectives will be developed jointly by staff member and supervisor in accordance with the mission and vision of Equitas Academy. Staff evaluations will be based on the degree to which goals and objectives have been achieved. If a staff member is having difficulties achieving his/her goals, the supervisor will provide appropriate support and training. If an employee disagrees with an evaluation, a written objection may be appended to the review. Employees always have the right to engage in the Due Process and Process for Resolving Complaints/Grievances.

Vacation, Sick Time, Bereavement
Equitas Academy will comply with all the regulations pursuant to California Educational Code 233. The Executive Director will set the school calendar (vacation, holiday, hours, sick time, bereavement) and the Board of Directors will approve each year.

Work Schedule
Work calendars, hours per week, and vacation time will be determined by individual employment contracts or work agreements. Administrators and office staff will work a calendar year of 12 months. Equitas Academy will adhere to all applicable requirements of the California Labor Code.

Termination
Equitas Academy recognizes two reasons for termination:

• Voluntary Termination (Resignation). Voluntary termination occurs when an employee chooses to leave or fails to report to work without notice to, or approval by, his or her supervisor.

• Involuntary Termination (Discharge). Involuntary termination occurs when Equitas Academy chooses to discharge the employee.

Any employee may submit a grievance regarding dismissal, discipline, and termination pursuant to the grievance process outlined below.

Due Process for Resolving Complaints/Grievances
Employees who have a complaint or wish to challenge disciplinary action termination taken by Equitas Academy must use the following procedures:
(1) An Employee having a grievance shall present the grievance in writing to his or her supervisor within 10 calendar days of the event or condition given rise to the grievance. Failure to file a grievance in a timely manner shall be construed as a waiver of the party's rights under this procedure. The supervisor shall meet with the employee and other persons as determined by the Executive Director. If the grievance is not resolved within 14 calendar days of receipt by the Executive Director, the grievance shall be deemed denied and the employee may proceed to Step 2.

(2) A Grievance Board shall be called, to be chaired by a designee of the Board of Directors. A five-member grievance board shall meet within 35 days of receipt of Grievance. Both parties will be given 1 hour each to present all arguments and documentation, including witnesses, to the Grievance Board. Failure to appear before the Grievance Board will be taken as a waiver of all rights under the grievance procedure. The Grievance Board decision is final and no further action is available under this grievance procedure. A written decision made by the Grievance Board will be rendered within ten working days of the completion of the hearing. In the event that additional information, investigation, or hearings are necessary after the initial hearing, the hearing may be continued and the final decision will be made within ten working days of the last committee hearing, or as soon thereafter as is practical.

Grievance policy and due process is subject to revision by Equitas Academy Board of Directors at any time.
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 § 47605 (b)(5)(L)

*Pupils who choose not to attend Equitas Academy may choose to attend other public schools in their district of residence or pursue an interdistrict-transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the District.
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“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)

*Leave and return rights for union-represented employees who accept employment with the Charter School will be administered in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements between the employee’s union and the District and also in accordance with any applicable judicial rulings.
Element 14 – Dispute Resolution

“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)

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

Any Dispute between the District and Equitas Academy 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:  Equitas Academy
    c/o School Director
    631 S. Commonwealth Ave
    Los Angeles, CA 90005

To Director of Charter Schools: Director of Charter Schools
    Los Angeles Unified School District
    333 South Beaudry Avenue, 25th 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 attorneys’ fees, costs and expenses associated with the mediation. The mediator’s fees and the
administrative fees of the mediation shall be shared equally among the parties. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 120 days from the date of either party’s request for mediation following the Issue Conference. The parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator to resolve the Dispute. The mediator may be selected from the approved list of mediators prepared by the American Arbitration Association. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, mediation proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial mediation procedures of the American Arbitration Association.

4) If the mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to resolve the Dispute by binding arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, arbitration proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the State Bar of California or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California.

Each party shall bear its own attorney’s fees, costs and expenses associated with the arbitration. The arbitrator’s fees and the administrative fees of the arbitration shall be shared equally among the parties. However, any party who fails or refuses to submit to arbitration as set forth herein shall bear all attorney’s fees, costs and expenses incurred by such other party in compelling arbitration of any controversy or claim.
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 employees 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)

The Equitas Academy is deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for the purposes of the Educational Employee Relations Act (EERA).
**Element 16 – Procedures to be Used if the Charter School Closes**

“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 § 47605(b)(5)(P)

**Revocation**
The District may revoke the charter if Equitas 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 the Equitas Academy if the District finds, through a showing of substantial evidence, that the Charter School did any of the following:

- Equitas Academy committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter.
- Equitas Academy failed to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the charter.
- Equitas Academy failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.
- Equitas 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 the Equitas Academy in writing of the specific violation, and give the Equitas 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.

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

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

**Documentation of Closure Action**
The revocation or non-renewal of a charter school must be documented by an official action of the authorizing entity. Notice of a charter school's closure for any reason must be provided by the authorizing entity to the California Department of Education (CDE). In addition, the charter
1. Parents or guardians of students. Written notification to parents/guardians/caregivers of the enrolled students of the Equitas Academy will be issued by Equitas Academy within 72 hours after the determination of a Closure Action and the effective date of closure. A copy of the written notifications to parents is also to be sent to LAUSD within the same time frames.

2. The authorizing entity

3. The county office of education. Written notification to the Los Angeles County Office of Education of the Closure Action shall be made by the Equitas Academy by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.

4. The special education local plan area in which the school participates. Written notification to the Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA) in which the Charter School participates of the Closure Action shall be made by the Equitas Academy by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.

5. The retirement systems in which the school’s employees participate. The Charter School will within fourteen (14) calendar days of closure action contact the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), and the Los Angeles County office of Education and follow their procedures for dissolving contracts and reporting. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.

6. The CDE. Written notification to the California Department of Education of the Closure Action shall be made by the Equitas Academy by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.

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

1. The effective date of the closure

2. The name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure

3. The students’ school districts of residence

4. How parents or guardians may obtain copies of student records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements

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

1. A description of the circumstances of the closure

2. The location of student and personnel records

In addition to the four required items above, notification to parents, guardians, and students should also include:
1. Information on how to transfer the student to an appropriate school

2. A certified packet of student information that includes closure notice, a copy of their child’s cumulative record which will include grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed coursework, credits that meet graduation requirements, a transcript, and State testing results.

3. Information on student completion of college entrance requirements for all high school students affected by the closure

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

School and Student Records Retention and Transfer

Equitas Academy shall observe the following in the transfer and maintenance of school and student records:

1. The Charter School will provide the District with original cumulative files pursuant to District policy and applicable handbook(s) regarding cumulative records for secondary and elementary schools for all students both active and inactive at the Charter School.

Transfer of the complete and organized original student records to the District will occur within seven calendar days of the effective date of closure.

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

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

4. The original cumulative files should be organized for delivery to the District in two categories: active students and inactive students. The ICSD will coordinate with the Charter School for the delivery and/or pickup of the student records.

5. The Charter School must update all student records in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) prior to closing.

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

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

Financial Close-Out

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

Equitas 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.

The financial closeout audit of the Charter School will be paid for by the Equitas Academy. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt incurred by Equitas Academy will be the responsibility of the Equitas Academy and not LAUSD. Equitas Academy understands and acknowledges that Equitas Academy will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Equitas Academy. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. Equitas 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 the Equitas Academy participates, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.

Equitas Academy shall ensure the completion and filing of any annual reports required. This includes:

1. Preliminary budgets

2. Interim financial reports

3. Second interim financial reports

4. Final unaudited reports

These reports must be submitted to the CDE and the authorizing entity in the form required. If
the charter school chooses to submit this information before the forms and software are available for the fiscal year, alternative forms can be used if they are approved in advance by the CDE.

These reports should be submitted as soon as possible after the closure action, but no later than the required deadline for reporting for the fiscal year.

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

Disposition of Liabilities and Assets

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

1. The return of any donated materials and property according to any conditions set when the donations were accepted.

2. The return of any grant and restricted categorical funds to their source according to the terms of the grant or state and federal law.

3. The submission of final expenditure reports for any entitlement grants and the filing of Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as appropriate.

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

a. The corporation’s bylaws will address how assets are to be distributed at the closure of the corporation.

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

For six (6) calendar months from the Closure Action or until budget allows, whichever comes first, sufficient staff as deemed appropriate by the Equitas Academy Board, will maintain employment to take care of all necessary tasks and procedures required for a smooth closing of the school and student transfers.

The Equitas Academy Board shall adopt a plan for wind-up of the school and, if necessary, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code.

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

Prior to final closure, the Charter School shall do all of the following on behalf of the school's employees, and anything else required by applicable law:

a. File all final federal, state, and local employer payroll tax returns and issue final W-2s and Form 1099s by the statutory deadlines.

b. File the Federal Notice of Discontinuance with the Department of Treasury (Treasury Form 63).

c. Make final federal tax payments (employee taxes, etc.)

d. File the final withholding tax return (Treasury Form 165).

e. File the final return with the IRS (Form 990 and Schedule).

This Element 16 shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, cancellation of this charter or any other act or event that would end Equitas Academy right to operate as a Charter School or cause Equitas Academy to cease operation. Equitas Academy and District agree that, due to the nature of the property and activities that are the subject of this petition, the District and public shall suffer irreparable harm should Charter School breach any obligation under this Element 16.

The District, therefore, shall have the right to seek equitable relief to enforce any right arising under this Element 16 or any provision of this Element 16 or to prevent or cure any breach of any obligation undertaken, without in any way prejudicing any other legal remedy available to the District. Such legal relief shall include, without limitation, the seeking of a temporary or permanent injunction, restraining order, or order for specific performance, and may be sought in any appropriate court.

*Facilities
Proposed Charter School Location: TBD
Names of District school sites near proposed location: 10th Street Elementary
Proposed Charter School to be located within the boundaries of LAUSD.

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

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

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

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

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

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

☐ Minimum Payments or Charges to be Paid to LAUSD Arising From the Facilities.

(i) Pro Rata Share. LAUSD shall collect and Charter School shall pay a Pro Rata Share for facilities costs as provided in the Charter School Act of 1992 and its regulations. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding facilities costs in the use agreement; and

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

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

(i) Co-Location. If Charter School is co-locating or sharing the LAUSD facilities with another user, LAUSD shall provide the operations and maintenance services for the LAUSD facilities and Charter School shall pay the Pro Rata Share. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such in the use agreement.
(ii) Sole Occupant. If Charter School is a sole occupant of LAUSD facilities,

LAUSD shall allow the Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, to provide some operations and maintenance services for the LAUSD facilities in accordance with applicable laws and LAUSD’s policies on operations and maintenance services for facilities and F&E. NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING, LAUSD shall provide all services for regulatory inspections, which as the owner of the real property is required to submit, and deferred maintenance and Charter School shall pay LAUSD for the cost and expense of providing those services.

The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such services in the use agreement.

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

Facility status: The charter petitioner must demonstrate control of a facility such as a commitment from the landlord, to ensure that the property is actually available to the charter developer, and that the facility is usable with or without conditions (such as a conditional code permit.) The charter school facility shall comply with all applicable building codes, standards and regulations adopted by the city and/or county agencies responsible for building and safety standards for the city in which the charter school is to be located, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Applicable codes and ADA requirements shall also apply to the construction, reconstruction, alteration of or addition to the proposed charter school facility. The Charter School 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 issued by the applicable permitting agency, allowing the petitioner to use and occupy the site. The Charter School may not open without providing a copy of the Certificate of Occupancy for the designated use of the facility. If the Charter School moves or expands to another facility during the term of this charter, the Charter School shall provide a Certificate of Occupancy to the District for each facility before the school is scheduled to open or operate in the facility or facilities. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in this charter,

the interpretation, application, and enforcement of this provision are not subject to the Dispute Resolution Process outlined in Element 14.

Health & Safety: The school will comply with the Healthy Schools Act, California Education Code Section 17608, which details pest management requirements for schools. Developers may find additional information at: www.laschools.org/employee/mo/ipm

Asbestos Management: The charter school will comply with the asbestos requirement as cited in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40CFR part 763. AHERA requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.
Appendix A — Code of Conduct

EQUITAS ACADEMY
Code of Conduct and Family Contract

Intention
The mission of Equitas Academy is to provide a structured, achievement-based community that prepares students to graduate from college preparatory high schools, four year colleges, and universities. Instilling the school's core values is necessary to achieve this goal.

The following beliefs inform our Code of Conduct:

- **Safety.** The Code of Conduct is designed first and foremost to ensure that Equitas Academy is safe for every student at all times.

- **Respect.** One of the six core values of Equitas Academy is respect. Respectful behavior is a hallmark of effective character development and facilitates strong community.

- **Self-discipline.** By learning to behave professionally, students learn skills useful beyond the walls of Equitas Academy. Students who behave well in school, speak in public, and are helpful to others will develop strong self-advocacy skills that will serve them well throughout their lives.

- **Clear consequences.** Many disciplinary problems can be avoided by having clear, well-articulated consequences. The students of Equitas Academy will know exactly what behavior is expected and what consequences will result if the expectations are not met. The school will communicate with parents at all times about any disciplinary consequence.

- **Uninterrupted learning.** The purpose of this code is to remove distractions from the classroom so that students can commit 100 percent of their attention to academic learning.

Rules
In order for all teachers to focus on teaching, all students to focus on learning, and to ensure the safety of all members of the school community, Equitas Academy has established a clear set of rules for student behavior.

The following rules inform our expectations for all students.

1. Students will exhibit respectful behavior toward other students, teachers, school leadership and the school community.

2. Students must arrive at school in the Equitas Academy uniform every day.

3. Students will attend school every day. Absences are excused only for illness, religious observance, or family emergency, and must be verified in writing by a parent/guardian.

4. Student will always be prepared and on time for class everyday.

5. No possession of weapons on school grounds.

6. No fighting, violence, or behavior threatening of violence.

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Equitas Academy’s Code of Conduct is adapted from the work of Achievement First. We would like to acknowledge and thank them for their generosity.
7. No possession or sale of any drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substance.

Any student, who violates rule 5-7, will receive an immediate out-of-school suspension and should expect an expulsion hearing.

Any student declared a “Habitually Disruptive Student,” having been suspended for school three or more times for disruptive behavior, should expect an expulsion hearing.

Parents and Guardians
- I commit to supporting Equitas Academy's demanding academic program, high standards of conduct, and extended school day and year.
- I commit to making sure that my student is at school on time, in uniform, every single day, unless sick or unable to attend because of a serious family emergency.
- I commit to monitoring my student's schoolwork, homework, and grades regularly. I will always encourage him or her to work hard and produce the best possible work.
- I commit to maintaining an environment at home where my student can do his/her homework, with a clean desk or table and necessary materials.
- I commit to calling Equitas Academy if I have questions and attending the required parent events four times a year.
- I commit that I, or someone in my family, will volunteer 40 hours each year at Equitas Academy.
- I have read and understand the Code of Conduct.

For Students
- The day begins at 7:30 am with dismissal at 3:30 pm.
- I understand the core values and commit to always doing my best to follow them.
- I commit to attend school every day unless I am sick and to give my full respect and my full attention to every task.
- I commit to do my homework every night and bring it neatly to school and turn it in at the appropriate time.
- I commit to always obey the Code of Conduct at Equitas Academy, at any school events, or on the bus.
- I commit to speaking regularly with my parents and guardians about my progress at school, my grades, my assignments, and my behavior.
- I have read and understand the Code of Conduct.

For Teachers and Staff
- I commit to being at Equitas Academy from 7:15 am - 4:00 pm every day.
- I commit to being fully prepared for each class that I teach.
- I commit to grading and returning all homework within one day of when it is due; I commit to grading and returning all tests and written assignments within three days of when they are due.
- I commit to enforcing all rules and policies consistently and fairly.
- I commit to calling the parents/guardians of my advisees twice a month, and calling the parents/guardians of my students with reasonable frequency to communicate both positive and negative feedback.
- I commit to maintaining the highest standards of academic performance and appropriate conduct.
- I have read and understand the Code of Conduct.

Parent/Guardian Signature _______________________________ Date ____________

Student Signature __________________________________________ Date ____________

Teacher Signature __________________________________________ Date ____________

Executive Director Signature ________________________________ Date ____________
Equitas Academy Charter School

Appendix B — Family Notification Letter

Notification of Incomplete Homework and / or Nightly Reading

Dear Equitas Academy Family,

Last night, your scholar did not complete his or her homework and / or nightly reading (see below for details on what was incomplete). As you know, the daily practice of homework and reading is crucial to reinforce the skills taught in the classroom, to help students develop a deeper understanding of concepts, and to promote good study habits. Please note that reading must be logged in order for it to be counted as complete. Please support your child on their path to college by ensuring that they make up the work that they missed and do both their reading and homework EVERY single night.

Last night, your scholar:

____ Did not have a book entered into his/her reading log. Please make up the reading that was missed and enter the book title into his/her reading log. Also, be sure to record the book that your scholar read for today’s date______________

____ Did not do his/her Homework. Please complete it tonight.

__Had incomplete Homework. Please complete:_______________________________

____Did not have his/her Homework Packet in their folder. Please send the Homework Packet to school tomorrow or send a note letting us know that he/she needs a new one.

____ Other:_____________________________________________________________

Thanks in advance for your efforts to ensure that your scholar gets the practice he or she needs to succeed.

Sincerely,
### EQUITAS ACADEMY WEEKLY SYLLABUS

**Week of:**

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<th>Subject</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
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**CA Learning Standards/Performance Skills:** *By the end of the week, students will be able to:*

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<th>Thursday</th>
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**Objective:**

Students **will be able to:**

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**Agenda:**

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**Homework:**

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47 Equitas Academy Weekly Syllabus is adapted from Excel Academy. We would like to acknowledge and thank them.
# Appendix D—Sample Lesson Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Cycle</th>
<th>Defining Success</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJECTIVE.</strong> What will your students be able to do by the end of class?</td>
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<td><strong>ASSESSMENT.</strong> How will you know concretely that all of your students have mastered the objective?</td>
<td>CA Standards and/or Performance Standard:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OPENING.</strong> How will you focus, prepare and engage students for the lesson’s objective?</td>
<td>MATERIALS.</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>INTRODUCTION OF NEW MATERIAL.</strong> How will you convey the knowledge and/or skills of the lesson? What will your students be doing to process this information?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GUIDED PRACTICE.</strong> In what ways will your learners attempt to explain or do what you have outlined? How will you monitor and coach their performance?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INDEPENDENT PRACTICE.</strong> In what ways will your different learners attempt the objective on their own? How will you gauge mastery?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CLOSING.</strong> How will you have students summarize what they’ve learned? How will reinforce the objective’s importance and its link to past and future learning?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DIFFERENTIATION:</strong> How will you differentiate your instruction to reach the diversity of learners in your classroom?</td>
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# Sample Ethics Lesson Plan

**Obj:**
1. Students will be able to define ‘ethics.’
2. Students will be able to describe the purpose of the Ethics program.
3. Students will be able to explain how practicing ethical behavior will make them a more ethical person.

*Each lesson you have will start with a Do Now. You will have about 5 minutes to complete a Do Now and you must make sure your follow directions. If the directions ask you to answer in complete sentences, do so. Do Now are usually pretty easy, you shouldn’t have to ask your teacher questions during the Do Now.*

*I am going to pass out your Do Now paper. Please work on it silently. If you finish early, please read your independent reading book.*

**Opening:**

“Who is the person you admire the most? What about them do you admire? Write 5-7 sentences.”

**Act:**

**Discussion (20 min.)**
- Sharing Do Now answers—relation of doing good doing good things.
  - Set expectations for discussion: *In your Do Now you did some writing about a person that you really admire. Now I’m going to ask some of you to show some courage and share. Each of you should be sure that you are being respectful while you are listening. Who can remind me of how we should show respect when we’re listening? (have a student remind the group about SLANTing) Also, remember that when people share in a group they need to know that no one is going to make fun of them or laugh. When you speak I want you to be loud and clear—have a confident voice.*
  - Have students share, one at a time. Lead the discussion to reveal that we tend to admire people that do good things. Some students may have written about a relative who works hard, someone who gives them food, clothing, or shelter. Make it explicit that people we admire do good things on a daily basis. Once this point has been made clear, link it to why we teach ethics.
    - *We spend an hour a week, on Tuesday mornings, discussing ethics. Ethics is the study of what it means to do good things during our lives. Each of you just shared about a person you admire—we saw that something all or most of these people have in common is that they do good things for themselves and for others. This is a main reason that we teach ethics—we are learning how to become better people and to fill our daily lives with doing good things for ourselves and others. This is what we are going to talk about today.*

**Becoming More Ethical People**

- Introduce the idea of building ethical habits. Make the ethics/muscle analogy: *Who here likes to play sports? What makes you really good at the sports you play? (take answers from a couple of students—lead the discussion to include answers about practicing long hours, lifting weights, doing conditioning, etc.) What makes most people amazing athletes is that they work really hard to get themselves into good shape—they spend hours at the gym running laps, lifting weights, and becoming physically stronger people. The greatest athletes know that in order to become strong, you have to work at it. When an athlete first starts training, bench pressing 220 pounds might seem impossible, but the more they work at it (starting with 100 pounds and adding more each day as they practice) they eventually see that they can work their way up to lifting a huge amount of*
weight. Becoming an ethical person is a lot like becoming a really strong athlete. Being ethical is hard work and it takes practice. Telling the truth can be hard; respecting your parents when they make you mad can be difficult. However, the more you practice doing the right thing, the more likely you are to do it in the future. You see, everyone has ethics muscles just like they have regular muscles. You have to work out your ethics muscles to make them stronger. Every time you make the right choice to do the right thing, you are working your ethics muscles—you are becoming a stronger and more ethical person. No matter how ethical you become, it will often be hard to do the right thing. This is why we practice. This is why we practice doing the right thing.

- Pass out a piece of white, unlined paper to students and have some crayons or colored pencils for your group to share. Before beginning, refer back to the Do Now and review or have students remind the group of the good things the people they admire do. If students are shy to participate, help them by coming up with an example or two first. Visualize with the students how these people do these things now because of the habits they’ve built. After students have a good mental picture of the habits of the people they admire, tell students their assignment. On this piece of paper, I want you to create a very detailed drawing. I want you to draw a picture of yourself developing your ethical muscles. What types of thing will you do that will help you build your ethical muscles. Remember, we’re not talking about lifting weights anymore, we’re talking about making the choice to do the right think. Draw yourself in a situation where you are doing the right thing. Give students about 10-15 minutes to draw their picture. If students are struggling, help them come up with ideas individually.
- After the drawings are complete, have a student share if they are comfortable. Have your own drawing ready to share with students if they are hesitant.

Class Notes
- After sharing, complete the class notes section in the packet. Ask students if they can remember the definition for “ethics”. Then, give them the definition for “ethical”:
  - Definition of “ethics”: as “The study of what it means to do good.”
  - Definition of “ethical” as “a word that describes a good deed or somebody who does good.”

Wrap up this part of the lesson. Who can tell me why we teach ethics? How are we going to become more ethical people?

Ethics Portfolio (20 min.)
- After you’ve wrapped up the previous part of the lesson, introduce to students the Ethics Portfolio. Explain to students that the point of the ethics portfolio is to show how you’ve demonstrated the virtues.
- Read through ethics portfolio. Q+A

HW Intro (10 min)
- Preview the assignment. Read the quote aloud: “When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad.” Tell students that tonight, for homework, they are to think about what this quote means and to explain it in their own words. They should write about what types of things they can do good on a daily basis that will make them feel good—things that will make them feel more ethical.
- Have students place the homework in their HW folder and record on their blue sheet.

Staying organized is a trait of a scholar. Students who do well in school take the time to organize their work. Each sheet of paper goes into your binder in task order. Each sheet has a task number on it; sometimes your teacher will write it in for you; sometimes you will do this yourself. You know your binder is organized if all your papers are in order. Remember that you shouldn’t have pages in the pockets of your binders unless a teacher
has given you permission to do so. Now we are going to put our papers from today in our binders. Our Do Now packet is Task 1. On the count of three I want everyone to open their binders at the same time—I want to hear one “click”. 1-2-3. Great! Now put your papers in. On the count of 3, lets close them—1 click! 1-2-3. Good job!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HW:</th>
<th>“When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explain this quote in your own words. In your answer, explain what the quote means and give examples of some of the good things you can do each day that will make you feel good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mod/Accom:</td>
<td>FOR ALL SESSIONS: PREVIEW/REVIEW RULES OF GROUP PARTICIPATION.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class notes available to all students, showing bulleted format.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Since this is the first discussion with our new students, be sure to precall students before having them answer. Also, be proactive about reminding them of expectations. Give praise to students to answer questions thoughtfully and to students who are engaged throughout the lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments:</td>
<td>Student questioning, HW Assignment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F—Board Performance Expectations

Individual Performance Expectations for Board Members
In accepting a position as a Board Member of the Equitas Academy Charter School, I acknowledge that I have read and agree with the performance expectations listed below, and that I will make every effort to meet these expectations. All Board Members are held to the same performance expectations.

Performance Expectations

1. Govern by fulfilling the Board’s collective responsibilities detailed by the Board’s job description as well as abiding by all legal responsibilities of the school.

2. Advocate for the school’s vision and mission by building the diverse constituencies in both the public and private sectors necessary to support the successful launch and sustainability of the school.

3. Lend credibility to the school with professionalism, integrity, and enthusiasm.

4. Consult and Collaborate by maximizing the potential of expertise on the board for the benefit of the school, ensuring that diverse perspectives are heard and incorporated into the application.

5. Cultivate prospective Directors, donors, partners, and volunteers and utilize personal and professional networks for the financial, organizational, and educational benefit of the school.

6. Contribute to the school’s fundraising goals by making an annual contribution of a size appropriate to your financial means and comfort level.

7. Attend the authorizer, Los Angeles Unified School District interview as well as all Board meetings at a timely and precise manner highly prepared to participate in a meaningful and productive way by focusing on strategic and critical issues.

8. Be accessible for personal contact in between board meetings and for other committee duty.

9. Volunteer a minimum of 10 hours a month to complete tasks during the pre-charting phase of the school such as the completion of the charter school application. Continue to focus energies on governance and support the lead founder throughout.

10. Disclose to the Board any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived, and abide by the decision of the Board related to the situation.

Signed: ___________________________________________ Date: _______________
Executive Director
The Executive Director’s responsibilities include management of all areas of the school from academic achievement to personnel management and financial oversight.

Leadership Skills and Characteristics
- Embody, advocate and operationalize the mission, vision and strategic direction of Equitas Academy
- Create, monitor and sustain a school culture of academic rigor through clear expectations of students, families, faculty, and leadership team
- Demonstrate a strong passion for education by developing mission driven programs and policies
- Advocate on behalf of the students, families, and faculty in a way that is consistent with the mission of the school
- Achieve dramatic and consistent improvement in student academic performance
- Provide the essential data, relevant reports, and information necessary to govern the school in a timely manner
- Recruit, appoint, support, manage, and evaluate the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Dean of Student Life
- Knowledge of budgetary planning and accounting principles
- Proven understanding of statistical data and analysis
- Proven effectiveness in community relationships and acquiring sponsorship from private sectors
- Knowledge of educational and regulatory compliance at all governmental levels
- Support the professional development and growth of faculty and administrative staff
- Communicate as the primary spokesperson for the school and advocate to all external audiences including investors, media, community partners, government, organizations, and local leaders
- Comply with the charter, accountability requirements, and all relevant law

In addition to the leadership responsibilities, the Executive Director will have key administrative duties.

Administrative Duties
- Provide day–to-day leadership of the school
- Recruit, hire, evaluate, and terminate all staff members
- Manage leadership team
- Recruit and enroll students, including public lottery
- Along with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, lead community meetings, faculty meetings, and school leadership meetings
- Administer, teach and lead professional development when appropriate
- Use data driven analysis to evaluate teacher performance and student academic achievement
- Provide all necessary resources, training, and materials for the staff to effectively raise student academic achievement
- Sets goals and objectives, evaluate performance and develop growth/skill strengthening plans for the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and staff.
- Recommend staffing levels and budgetary priorities to the Board of Directors
- Provide leadership and empower Director of Curriculum and Instruction and staff to achieve both measurable and intangible academic deliverables
- Document and disseminate the school’s academic and operational processes
- Develop and implement fundraising initiatives that contribute to student and staff development and meet school’s financial commitments
- Mediate and manage school-related conflicts
- Handle employment and dismissal of personnel, salaries and contracts, job assignments and performance evaluation, and orientation and training.
- Establish budgets and plans to ensure that school meets its financial commitments to its students, staff, and community
• Lead and resource the application process for governmental funding, including grants
• Interface with community and business leaders to achieve academic, marketing, and financial goals for the school and to share best practices
• Work to ensure the school’s commitment to diversity and visibility within the urban community
• Manage and allocate the finances of the school (budget, cash flow, development, grants, contracts, bonuses, etc.) prudently and efficiently to maximize student achievement
• Work with the Board and its Committees and with the Development Director to marshal resources for capital improvements and a permanent facility, for extracurricular curricular opportunities, and supplemental academic programs
• Ensure the accuracy of all financial documents in conjunction with the operation of the school including budgets, cash flow statements, expenditures, revenues, payroll, benefits, taxes, etc.
• Perform and execute any other tasks as assigned by the Board of Directors

Qualifications and Experience
• Strong commitment to the mission and vision of the school
• Experience in education, strategic planning, staff development, board relations, financial management, and operations
• Motivational and energetic leader who is committed to excellence
• Solutions-oriented strategic thinker who has overcome complex organizational challenges
• Unwavering in pursuit of excellence even in the face of difficult opposition and challenges
• Results-driven educational leader with a commitment to standards-based curriculum and the use of data and assessments to drive instructional decisions
• Teaching experience in urban areas with marked and measurable success
• Fundraising experience with a history of cultivating and securing financial support from individuals, foundations, and corporations
• Experienced public speaker
• Well-developed technical and persuasive writer
• Masters level degree preferred

Compensation and Benefits
Compensation will be competitive and commensurate with experience.

Start Date
An exceptional candidate will assume a full time role no later than July 1, 2012. The position will remain open until filled.

Commitment to Diversity
Equitas Academy is actively seeking to build a diverse and experienced team of educators. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, handicap, age, religion, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin. We are an equal opportunity employer.

Application Process
Outstanding candidates should send a resume and a personalized cover letter to: info@equitasacademy.org.
Director of Curriculum and Instruction
The Director of Curriculum and Instruction provides instructional leadership for the ultimate academic success of the school.

Leadership Skills and Characteristics
- Embody, advocate and operationalize the mission, vision and strategic direction of the Academy
- Create, monitor and sustain a school culture of academic rigor through clear expectations of students, families, faculty, and administrators
- Advocate on behalf of the students, families, and faculty in a way that is consistent with the mission of the school
- Achieve dramatic and consistent improvement in student academic performance
- With the Executive Director, recruit, interview, select, evaluate, and retain outstanding instructional staff
- Support the professional development and growth of faculty
- Administer, teach and lead professional development when appropriate
- Design and implement a coherent research-based curriculum in the core subjects
- Along with the Executive Director, lead community meetings, faculty meetings, and administrative meetings
- Comply with the charter, accountability requirements, and all relevant law
- Attend and advise the Board of Directors regarding Accountability Committee on a monthly basis
- Create, monitor, and sustain a disciplined culture of high academic and behavioral standards
- Support the needs of the faculty and the Director of Student Life in reaching the goal of all children learning
- Work collaboratively with the Executive Director
- Observe teachers on a regular basis and provide detailed feedback both written and oral, formal and informal

In addition to the leadership expectations, there are also specific administrative responsibilities that the Director of Curriculum and Instruction must uphold. These include but are not limited to:

Administrative Duties
- Develop school systems and structures that will maximize student learning
- Evaluate academic achievement through detailed data analysis and present that information to faculty and administrators in an easily accessible format
- Provide all necessary resources, training, and materials to the teaching staff to effectively raise student academic achievement
- Assist in student recruitment and family outreach
- Set and monitor grading policies and practices, classroom structures, and teaching methodologies to ensure school wide consistency
- Design the school's academic standards, benchmarks, assessments, and curriculum to align with state and national standards
- Assist in the planning and implementation of the teacher summer professional development
- Coordinate administration to students of all standardized evaluations including six-week assessments, CST tests, CELDT and national norm-referenced exams
- Document and disseminate the schools' curriculum units and academic processes
- Mediate and manage conflicting demands of the teaching staff
- Establish personnel policies and standards of conduct in conjunction with the administrative team
- Set and monitor the teaching schedule for the core faculty
- Prepare and submit timely reports and evaluations to all external agencies and funding sources as required
- Teach as needed
- Serve as the primary substitute teacher
• Perform other tasks as assigned by the Executive Director

*Qualifications and Experience*

• Strong commitment to the mission and vision of the school
• Experienced in education, strategic planning, and staff development
• Motivational and energetic leader who is committed to excellence
• Unwavering in pursuit of excellence even in the face of difficult opposition and challenges
• Results-driven educational leader with a commitment to standards-based curriculum and the use of data and assessments to drive instructional decisions
• Teaching experience in urban areas with marked success and quantifiable and objective student performance gains that surpass state averages
• Proven ability to work collaboratively with a diverse team of teachers
• Analytical problem-solver and solutions-oriented strategic thinker who overcomes difficult organizational challenges
• Three to five years of urban teaching and educational leadership experience is preferred
• Special Education Credential emphasis preferred
• Masters level or advanced degree preferred
**Teachers and Enrichment Teachers**
The Equitas Academy teachers are relentless in their aim to see student growth and work to hone their skills as effective teachers in the classroom.

**Leadership Skills and Characteristics**
- Embody and advocate the mission, vision, and strategic direction of the school
- Work closely with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction to develop and implement strategies for all students to reach success
- Reinforce school-wide rules and expectations in the classroom and lesson plans
- Communicate effectively and maintain strong relationships with students, families and colleagues
- Assist in the design and implementation of research-based curriculum
- Maintain the school culture of high academic and behavioral expectations through continuous reflection
- Use the detailed data analysis of student performance to inform best practices
- Complete tasks as assigned by the Executive Director or Director of Curriculum and Instruction
- Be able to work cooperatively with colleagues
- Knowledge of how to integrate and plan CA Standards-Based lessons and curriculum

**Administrative Duties**
- Assist in student he arrival and departure, transitions between class periods, and lunch periods
- Complete lesson plans and submit to Director of Curriculum and Instruction in a timely manner
- Providing supervision before- and after-school and at lunch and/or recess as assigned in order to maintain student safety
- Planning and delivering thorough, challenging, standards-based lesson that ensure all students master required content
- Assessing students daily through informal measures and at least one formal test or quiz each week
- Creating comprehensive chapter and/or unit tests, as well as cumulative final exams
- Reinforcing school-wide rules and expectations in classrooms and elsewhere on campus
- Reflecting continually in order to ensure a culture of high academic and behavioral standards
- Communicating effectively with students, parents, and colleagues
- Using detailed data analysis of student performance to inform best practices
- Identifying students who are academically at risk and initiating effective intervention strategies
- Complete any other tasks given by Director of Curriculum and Instruction or Executive Director

**Qualifications and Experience**
- California Teaching Credential
- Successful manager of an urban classroom who has used structure and high expectations to drive student success
- Experienced classroom teacher with demonstrated quantifiable and objective student performance gains
- Ability to work with a variety of learning abilities, including those with special needs and low skill level in a heterogeneously grouped classroom setting
- Demonstrated ability to work well in a team, especially with parents and community members
- Analytical problem solver
- Basic understanding of data analysis
- Minimum three years of urban teaching preferred

**Compensation and Benefits**
Compensation will be competitive and commensurate with experience.

**Start Date**
An exceptional candidate will assume a full time role no later than July 1, 2012. The position will remain open until filled.
**Commitment to Diversity**
Equitas Academy is actively seeking to build a diverse and experienced team of educators. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, handicap, age, religion, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin. We are an equal opportunity employer.

**Application Process**
Outstanding candidates should send a resume and a personalized cover letter to: info@equitasacademy.org or call 213-201-0440 for more details.
**Office Manager/Administrative Assistant**
The administrative assistant is responsible for the daily operations of the front office.

*Leadership Skills and Characteristics*
- Believe in the school mission that all students should be prepared to graduate college
- Exhibit strong reception skills and interpersonal skills
- Independently, or in accordance with general instructions, compose correspondence concerning a wide range of subjects requiring a thorough knowledge of policies, regulations, and operational procedures
- Be organized
- Able to communicate effectively with various stakeholders (Board members, parents, students, teachers, school leadership)

*Administrative Duties*
- Collect and enter data into administrative databases
- Serve as a general office manager by ordering, managing, and maintaining inventory of school supplies
- Take notes in meetings and conferences and prepare accurate summaries
- Coordinate special events
- Collect and enter student attendance and make follow-up calls with families
- Coordinate school mailings
- Coordinate daily distribution of homework and detentions
- Develop and edit school newsletters
- Serve and coordinate breakfast, lunch and snack
- Review and edit documents to ensure consistency with policies, regulations, operational procedures, formatting, grammatical construction and punctuation
- Maintain school calendar
- Contact parents and emergency assistance agencies in the case of serious illness or injury
- Create systems to file all important school documents
- Complete other responsibilities as the Executive Director and Director of Curriculum and Instruction

*Qualifications and Experience*
- Bilingual in Spanish and English Oral and Written Proficiency Required
- College degree preferred
- Previous experience as an administrative assistant
- Proficiency in all Microsoft applications
- Prior experience in urban communities preferred

*Compensation and Benefits*
Compensation will be competitive and commensurate with experience.

*Start Date*
An exceptional candidate will assume a full time role no later than July 1, 2012.
The position will remain open until filled.

*Commitment to Diversity*
Equitas Academy is actively seeking to build a diverse and experienced team of educators. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, handicap, age, religion, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin. We are an equal opportunity employer.

*Application Process*
Outstanding candidates should send a resume and a personalized cover letter to:
info@equitasacademy.org or call 213 201-0440 for more details.
Appendix H— Parent Accountability Survey

Equitas Academy
Parent/Guardian Survey

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In order to be able to provide the best education to your child, we need your feedback. We would greatly appreciate you completing and returning this survey to your child's teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. How satisfied have you been with the following aspects of Equitas Academy?</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very dissatisfied</th>
<th>Does not apply (i.e. no answer)</th>
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<td>a Academic standards and expectations for students</td>
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<td>b Classroom management and student behavior</td>
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<td>o Level of your child's engagement in school</td>
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<td>p Your child’s overall progress at Equitas Academy</td>
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<td>q Overall program at Equitas Academy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
III. Why did you choose to send your child to Equitas? *(please check all that apply)*

Higher academic standards  □  Equitas has stricter discipline  □
Small size of school and/or classes  □  Child was doing poorly at old school  □
Better teachers  □  More attention to special needs  □
Equitas is a safer school  □  Location of the school  □

IV. Please list three strengths of Equitas Academy Charter School.

1. 
2. 
3. 

V. Please list three areas in which Equitas Academy Charter School can improve.

1. 
2. 
3. 

VI. Please provide any other comments, feedback or information.

*Thank you for your feedback!*
Equitas Academy
Special Education Family Survey

Please note, this questionnaire is an important part of the assessment of our performance and of the overall development of the school. We cannot overstate how helpful it would be to receive a completed survey from you. Thank you so much for your comments!

1. How satisfied have you been with the following aspects of the Approach to Student Support at Equitas Academy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Not too satisfied</th>
<th>Quite dissatisfied</th>
<th>Does not apply (no answer)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Class size</td>
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<td>B. Instruction</td>
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<td>C. Focus on student’s study and organizational skills</td>
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<td>D. Consultations with SPED teachers</td>
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<td>E. Consultations with school nurse</td>
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<td>F. Consultations with school counselor</td>
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<td>G. Afterschool tutoring program</td>
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<td>H. Homework support</td>
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<td>I. The staff’s accessibility and openness</td>
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<td>J. Communication between school and home</td>
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<td>K. Detailed progress reports</td>
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<td>L. Detailed report cards</td>
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<td>M. Saturday School Program</td>
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<td>N. Referrals and opportunities for enrichment programs</td>
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<td>O. Individualized schedules as needed</td>
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<td>P. Independent Reading Time</td>
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2. How satisfied have you been with the following aspects of the Approach to Special Education at Equitas Academy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Not too satisfied</th>
<th>Quite dissatisfied</th>
<th>Does not apply (no answer)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Small class size that allows teachers to make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and learning differences</td>
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<td>B. Professionalism of teaching staff</td>
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<td>C. Focus on student’s study and organizational skills</td>
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<td>D. Consultations with SPED service providers</td>
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<td>E. Availability of specialists</td>
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<td>F. Availability of supplementary aids such as portable keyboards</td>
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<td>G. Availability of teaching assistants for identified students</td>
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<td>H. Previewing program in core content areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>I. Reading and writing instruction</td>
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<td>J. Individualized math instruction</td>
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<td>K. Professionalism of specialists such as occupational therapists, speech and language pathologist, and school psychologist</td>
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<td>L. Assessments appropriately selected and interpreted for students referred for evaluation</td>
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<td>M. Assessments completed by appropriately credentialed and trained specialists</td>
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<td>N. Assessments provided as written reports with, when appropriate, recommendations</td>
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<td>O. Student participation in general and district-wide assessment programs (Stanford-10) and IEP Team’s designation of how each student will participate</td>
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<td>P. Team process and parental participation in developing IEP</td>
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<td>Q. School distribution of current copies of Family Rights Brochures</td>
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<td>R. School protection of the confidentiality of student records</td>
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</table>
S. School securing of parental consent in accordance with state and federal laws

T. Consideration of student’s behavior, including positive behavioral interventions, ability to follow school discipline codes, and any needed code modifications for a student whose behavior impedes their learning

U. Families and students being provided with copies of EACS Family and Student Handbook annually, and Handbook specifies all procedures for suspension and procedures for suspension of students with disabilities

V. School follows all state and federal requirements regarding the provision of special transportation needs

W. All teachers and service providers are appropriately licensed, certified, board registered, or waived when applicable

3. What are the important reasons that you chose to send your child to EACS? (please check all that apply)

Higher academic standards at EACS
Small size of school and/or classes
Better teachers at EACS
EACS is a safer school
EACS has stricter discipline
My child was doing poorly at his/her previous school
Less expensive than previous school
Location of the school
People told me EACS was a good school
My child’s old school was not meeting his/her special needs

2. What is your favorite thing about the Approach to Student Support and Special Education at EACS?

3. What is one thing you would like to change?
4. What is one specific event or activity that sticks out in your mind from the past year that makes you glad your child is enrolled at Equitas Academy?

5. Do you have any additional comments or recommendations for next year?

Please remember that if you and your family would be interested in writing a letter of recommendation on our behalf, regarding our work here at school, please send the letter directly to Director of Curriculum and Instruction. The letter can be of any length, covering any aspect of the school’s Student Support and Special Education program, summarizing how you think the school is performing. Thanks!