

Los Angeles Leadership Academy

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Mission

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy prepares urban secondary students to succeed in college or on chosen career paths, to live fulfilling, self-directed lives, and to be effective leaders in creating a just, democratic, and humane world. An integrated curriculum, project-based instruction, and performance-based assessment challenge students to think critically and creatively. Supportive relationships between students, staff and families promote a community of well-rounded learners through attention to students' individual needs and interests. Students develop leadership by taking action on important social issues in a process of reflection, research, skill development, and community partnership.

ELEMENT A: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**School site**

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy is pleased to be welcomed by Immanuel Presbyterian Church at 3300 Wilshire Boulevard as the new tenant of its educational building at 668 Catalina Blvd. The minister, Frank Alton, and his congregation share our commitment for community involvement and improvement, and they demonstrate this commitment daily through substantial community organization and service activities. The historic educational building has two basketball courts, two squash/handball courts, a large theater with balcony and projection booth, a dance studio, and a computer lab, in addition to many attractive classrooms.

The school campus will serve as the primary site of instruction, but the educational program will use the local area as an important resource for learning. Class assignments will require that students identify and make use of information sources outside the school building, including libraries, individuals and organizations, educational offerings, and so on. Field trips will help students learn the informational, cultural, and demographic landscape of the city.

Whom the school will educate

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will serve 60 students per grade in grades six through twelve, beginning in Fall 2002 with 120 sixth and seventh graders. Student recruitment will focus on two geographic areas of Los Angeles: the neighborhood immediately surrounding the facility, and a neighborhood three to five miles to the south. Our commitment to two communities stems from a desire to have a multiethnic student population. The schools closest to the facility are predominantly Latino, with Asian-Americans comprising the rest of the balance. By partnering with the community to the south, we hope to draw a substantial number of African-American students. Our outreach strategy is designed to achieve ethnic diversity resembling that of the secondary student population of the Los Angeles Unified School District. By drawing many students from two small areas, we hope to create synergy in those communities, as families and the school make commitments to each other.

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will be home to many students from international families. Reflective of the surrounding neighborhood, many students' parents, and students themselves, will be fairly recent immigrants to the United States. Of these families, the largest number will be from Mexico and El Salvador, with the remaining from Korea, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and other countries. Many students will have a language other than English as their first language, with Spanish being the most common. In nearby schools, between 60-80% of students speak a language other than English in the home, and about 50% of middle school students and 15-25% of high school students are classified as English Language Learners. Higher numbers of African American students in our school will lower these percentages.

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will evolve a culture and educational program that helps diversity become a benefit rather than a barrier for students, whether differences are by ethnicity, nationality, language, religion, sexual orientation, or physical, intellectual, and emotional needs and abilities. The school community will respect and celebrate diversity through its activities the historical, cultural, linguistic, and personal assets that each student possesses. The educational program will help students see how diverse perspectives and values actually enhance their understanding and effectiveness in the world. Since ethnic and

national diversity cause tension in the students' surrounding communities, the school will be proactive in providing structured space for students to navigate these differences and view other students as complex individuals not defined by just one characteristic such as ethnicity, nationality, or gender.

Our educational program will be flexible enough to allow staff to find ways to meet the needs of all students, so that all students succeed, irrespective of individual differences and despite the effects of poverty in their community. Both student recruitment areas have high concentrations of families living below the poverty line, with 95% of students in nearby schools eligible for the Free or Reduced Meal program. Students may need help getting nutritious meals, eyeglasses, or meeting other basic needs, and our staff will try to connect students and their families with community resources that can meet these needs. Social problems such as unemployment, homelessness, drug and alcohol abuse, domestic and gang violence, and health problems occur with greater frequency in densely populated areas with high concentrations of poverty. Such stressors can erode social fabric and family life, and undermine children's ability to learn and flourish as individuals. However, families and children daily exhibit strength, determination, and resiliency that help them prosper despite adverse conditions. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will look for ways to nurture these qualities with a supportive, responsive staff and program.

Profile of an educated person

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will direct its activity to the goals of seeing every student graduate, and of assuring that every graduate is an educated person. An educated person is a self-motivated, reflective, competent, lifelong learner who demonstrates and develops intellectual, personal, and civic qualities. Intellectual development is demonstrated through critical thinking that considers the roles of viewpoint and evidence in drawing conclusions, uses supposition to consider alternative outcomes and explanations, and makes connections within an area and to other relevant areas. An educated person has an awareness of the relevance and importance of ideas, information, and inquiry to personal and civic purposes. An educated person integrates into his or her thinking knowledge basic to core academic disciplines, and applies methods used by the disciplines designed to ask and answer questions, test ideas, and show proof, to measure and represent information; and to express ideas. Basic knowledge about the world and deep knowledge about subjects of interest and importance are part of intellectual development, as are skills for effectively using technology and gathering information. Finally, intellectual development involves the ability to communicate ideas and information clearly and effectively, in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes.

Personal development encompasses social, physical, emotional, and ethical competencies, as well as practical skills, habits, and self-awareness. These include the ability to relate to people in a variety of contexts, to cope with life's many challenges, to view the world with ethical sensibility, to have facility of self-expression, and to monitor and maintain emotional and physical fitness. A quality education also instills habits that help one have control of one's life: to set and attain goals, to learn from experiences, and to know when and how to follow social norms. Self-awareness involves recognizing one's strengths and limitations, knowing what one wants to achieve in life, and being reflective about one's interactions and relationships with others.

Civic development refers to one's ability to work strategically in a democracy toward a vision for a better world. Effective citizens understand how structures of power function and how they shape the world in which we live. They work effectively and respectfully with others, and are able to negotiate differences, build coalitions and create greater social awareness. Citizenship requires balancing individual and collective needs, in fairness to all people and with mindfulness of ecological and social interconnectedness in an ever-smaller global village. Thoughtful citizens develop personal responses to injustice based on a personal philosophy and a set of beliefs about the social, economic, and political world order. Civic leaders use practical tools to access the levers of power to address social problems. They work in cooperation with others to attain solutions to make the world a more just and caring place.

While not every educated person chooses to act as a leader, the Los Angeles Leadership Academy sees a natural and desirable connection between education and leadership. A leader is a person who employs intellectual, personal, and civic qualities to make the world a better place. A leader considers alternative

paradigms to decide what is just and compassionate. A leader takes action, with reflection and courage, in partnership with others. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy has expectations that students will examine their roles in the school and the larger community, and will take action to realize their visions for a positive school community and a better world. We believe that by filling leadership roles in the school and in the community at large, students will be inspired to become leaders as well as educated people.

Overview of educational philosophy and practice

Teachers will organize instruction such that students will:

- Be prepared to excel at the college level and in chosen careers;
- Become proficient in asking and answering questions according to the methods of major academic disciplines, and learn to draw on several fields when approaching a problem;
- Understand how culture shapes individuals' perspectives and actions, as well as how individuals affect the culture and the broader society in which they live;
- Develop a vision of a just and caring world, align their actions according to those visions, and know how to act strategically to realize their visions;
- Understand the relevance of learning to personal, community, and social goals;
- Practice creative expression through the visual and performing arts;
- Practice healthy living by maintaining physical fitness, being conscious of diet, and understanding how their developing bodies are functioning; and
- Demonstrate self-awareness, self-direction, and breadth in accomplishment.

Instructional activity will:

- Be grounded in critical pedagogy, a democratic educational practice rooted in a dialogical praxis in which students discover themselves as historical subjects with the power to question, critique, and act in the interest of democratic life
- Include project-based learning and other constructivist and experiential learning strategies oriented to inquiry and depth;
- Engage student interest, often allowing student choice of topics to explore in depth;
- Have meaning and relevance to students, connecting to their previous knowledge and experience; and
- Reflect teachers' commitment to best practices in education, social justice, and lifelong learning.

The school will be organized to:

- Provide teachers common planning time to support an integrated curriculum, information sharing about students, and participatory decision-making;
- Create a working laboratory for democracy, in which staff, students, and parents develop voice and vision;
- Support fluid school boundaries so community members become integrated into the life of the school and students participate in the productive, cultural, and civic life of the community; and
- Make adult learning as high a priority as student learning so that teachers are supported in constantly improving their practice and may serve as true examples of life-long learners.

All stakeholders will be expected to help develop and evolve a school culture that:

- Exemplifies respect, generosity, and fairness to all people;
- Supports students' needs and interests; and
- Balances individual and collective needs.

How Learning Best Occurs

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy learning community will continually be asked to link curriculum, instruction, and the school's organization, policies, and practices to a conception of how learning best occurs, when learners:

- Start with their own knowledge and experience as the basis for learning;
- Feel that new ideas, information, and skills are relevant, useful, or important;
- Are motivated by genuine interest or purpose;
- Are known well by their partners in learning;
- Are challenged just beyond their present level of performance, and work to high expectations;
- Regularly experience success or accomplish something difficult during the learning process;
- Construct meaning through their experience, *doing* more often than *listening*;
- Are engaged in activities that match personal learning styles;
- Can focus without excessive distraction by physical surroundings or personal issues; and
- Practice and apply new skills and concepts to real situations.

We believe that an effective educational program places learning in the context of personal development and well-being. Learners are best prepared to learn when they are well; well-being must be a priority in any educational environment. Traditional school learning is only one area of development people need to thrive in the world. Families are the primary agents to nurture the healthy and productive development of their children, but when families cope with multiple stressors that cripple their ability to guide their children in a rapidly changing, challenging world, educators must be prepared to help. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy affirms this obligation, and builds its program based on a conception of the conditions that best promote learning, when students:

- Are valued, respected, nurtured and supported in their endeavors;
- Work in a safe environment with clear, consistent behavioral norms and consequences;
- Are physically active, eat well, and have proper medical care and housing;
- Have relationships that endure and even improve despite occasional negative interactions;
- Are in touch with their needs, interests, and feelings;
- Communicate effectively with others in many contexts;
- Have a sense of control over what happens in their lives;
- Feel accepted and valued in their social groups;
- Have explanations for troubling events in their lives and in the world;
- Have practical skills for accomplishing their goals;
- Help others in some way;
- Are prepared to cope effectively with life's diverse challenges; and
- Live in accordance with a considered, well-developed ethical view.

Curriculum

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will integrate a program of leadership development with academic study. Instruction will develop intellectual, personal, and civic qualities fundamental to the school's mission, vision, and view of an educated person. The specific curricular content and skills to be mastered will be taken from California State Board of Education (SBE) content and performance standards. The L.A. Leadership Academy's distinctive goals for students will supplement state content standards. The curriculum will balance the need for breadth and depth. A combination of assessment tools (portfolios, exhibitions, criterion-referenced standardized tests, teacher-designed tests, benchmark tasks, surveys, narratives, and self-evaluations) will align with learning outcomes. These assessment tools will give a rounded and continuous picture of students' progress that will then be used to guide students and inform instruction (see Appendix A). The whole learning community will be asked to support every student in moving skills at or beyond each grade level. The details of the educational program described is subject to change as the learning community evolves its thinking on how to best meet the mission and vision of the school.

Intellectual development. An innovative, research-based curriculum will begin with a focus on literacy in grade six, gradually raising the complexity of ideas and application as students move toward graduation. Literacy will be reinforced through emphasis on reading, writing, speaking, listening and vocabulary development across all content areas. At the same time, students will develop knowledge basic to English, Spanish, mathematics, science, and the social sciences. They will learn to view problems through the lens of each discipline by practicing the methods of each. Applications through projects and community-oriented work will help students realize the relevance of their studies to lived experience and will help them to experience being practitioners of the disciplines. Instruction will help students learn how to learn, so that they ask critical questions and investigate possible answers with research, logic, and experimentation. Students will also be exposed to the contributions of different cultures in each subject area.

Students will develop understanding of the fundamentals of the visual and performing arts, health maintenance, physical fitness, technology, and information gathering, by taking separate classes as well as through their integration in core academic areas. Instruction in these areas will move between study, application, and reflection. The curriculum will lay the groundwork for students to express themselves artistically, to regulate physical and emotional health, and to experience the benefits of sports and of a fitness program. Students will also learn how to gather information from libraries, the internet, specialists, and other local resources. They will apply technological skills in their project. They will study and exercise components of informed, critical judgement and will develop effective communication. Students will apply these qualities in a wide variety of contexts.

Woven throughout the coursework in all content areas will be a focus on six areas of general intellectual development. Students will be asked to consider VIEWPOINT, that is, whose perspectives must we consider, in analyzing new ideas and information, and what ideas are being presented. They will be asked to use EVIDENCE in making judgments, and to show how they know what they know. They will make CONNECTIONS within their work and to other issues of interest, sometimes in a context of an integrated curriculum. They will use SUPPOSITION to consider alternative outcomes and explanations. They will be asked to find the RELEVANCE of their studies to their own lives, and to explain why their inquiries are important. Finally they will use varied means of COMMUNICATION to present ideas and questions. Students will demonstrate progress in these areas in their portfolios for each area and as a particular focus of their culminating exhibitions.

Personal development. The curriculum will reflect the belief that education must address students as whole people. Instruction will be developmentally appropriate and promote interpersonal, emotional, and practical skills so that students are prepared to maintain healthy relationships, cope with life challenges, and set and achieve personal and career goals. Viewing life from the perspective of ethics will help students develop their own rules for living and a basis for judging right and wrong actions. Ethical and emotional sensibility, keen habits of mind, and breadth of knowledge will contribute to the development of a sophisticated world view grounded in thought and feeling.

Civic development. Working within a framework of civic leadership, the civic development component asks students how they might use their talents to benefit society. Students will develop a personal philosophy by considering principles of justice and compassion in current and possible social, political, and economic contexts. Students will identify and map assets in their cultures and in their communities. Knowing about these assets will help equip them to respond as they identify important social problems affecting people in and outside of their communities. Through community action projects, they will learn to use resources and democratic processes to employ strategic responses. The problem solving in these projects will require students to synthesize and apply intellectual, personal, and civic learning. The combination of study, practice and reflection will advance students' capacity for civic participation.

Leadership. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will develop leadership through a process of study, practice, and reflection, as students form and advance their own visions of how the world ought to be. The leadership curriculum will be folded into core subject classes that address component parts of civic leadership by mapping instructional activities onto the desired pupil outcomes of civic leadership. Community action projects and other leadership activities will also develop leadership as a whole by integrating learning across all subject areas and synthesizing skills.

Our conception of leadership hinges on a sense of civic purpose. Why should an individual work with others to realize collective action? Principles such as justice, independence and social equality provide a philosophical framework for students to answer the question. Students will be asked to find purpose using their intellect, feelings, and ethical and civic sensibilities to consider how they want to work for the common good. When they identify social problems to address, they use their intellectual qualities to understand the nature of the problem, to evaluate solutions, and to gain evidence supporting their intended action. Personal qualities are also critical to good leadership, such as strong interpersonal skills and emotional and ethical sensibilities that inform vision. Finally, civic development gives students skills to be effective leaders, so that they understand the basics of governance, power dynamics, communication, consultation with communities and stakeholders, and generally how to work to realize a vision.

The school as a laboratory for democracy. The school is conceived as a civic laboratory as all members are asked to create a democratic, just, caring, and respectful community. The school promotes citizenship by asking students to evolve this community in accordance with these key principles, as members who agree to participate in democratic decision making, to practice fairness, caring and respect, and to offer feedback on how the school's actual practice measures up to its principles. The school, then, asks every member to be leaders who recognize the importance of their participation in community life, and who speak and act when they see something is wrong. Meaningful participation in this mini-democracy will require the use of intellectual, personal, and civic skills.

Middle School Program

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy's middle school curriculum in the core content areas will be delivered by teams of three teachers: one in English, one in Mathematics and Science/Health, and one in Social Studies and Inquiry/Community Action. Each team of teachers will have common planning time to coordinate integrated curricula and projects that straddle the content areas. Students will have an 85-minute block with each teacher on a team, as well as a 45-minute period of Spanish for Native Speakers, Spanish as a Foreign Language, or English as a Second Language, according to the students' linguistic profile. They will have a 50-minute period of Physical Education three times a week, and a 50-minute period of Visual and Performing Arts twice a week. Students will have a Technology lab for half of an English block each week. Finally, students will have a 50-minute Advisory each week that will focus on personal development goals, academic planning, and preparation for learning exhibitions. Students will prepare portfolios in each core content area, and present a learning exhibition that focuses on the six key habits of mind and learning outcomes that are not explicitly assessed in the core content areas.

A typical middle school student schedule might look as follows:

Monday-Wednesday-Friday

9:00 - 10:25	English
10:35 - 12:00	Mathematics and Science/Health
12:00 - 12:40	Lunch
12:40 - 2:05	Social Science and Inquiry/Community Action
2:15 - 3:00	Physical Education
3:05 - 3:50	ESL

Tuesday-Thursday

9:00 - 10:25	English
10:35 - 12:00	Mathematics and Science/Health
12:00 - 12:50	Advisory
12:50 - 1:30	Lunch
1:35 - 3:00	Social Science and Inquiry/Community Action
3:05 - 3:55	Visual and Performing Arts
4:00 - 4:45	ESL

See also the attendance requirements section in Element B. At the eighth grade level, and for part of the seventh grade year, a portion of students' time in content area courses will introduce them to the concentration areas to be fully developed at the high school level (see below). Details of the master schedule are subject to change.

High School Program

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy's high school program will organize students' work into content-oriented courses and project centers that develop specific sets of applied skills. The content courses will include the A-G admissions requirements for the University of California and will meet the California content standards. Students will also take seminars and courses that match faculty expertise to specific areas of student interest. For example, if a group of students is interested in learning more about an area of foreign or social policy, a faculty member with the ability to facilitate student learning in that area may offer to teach a seminar or sponsor a workshop in that area. The seminar or workshop may last for a few weeks or for a whole semester. The ability to respond to student interest in this way will depend on the flexibility allowed by the schedule. While a cookie-cutter curriculum is easier for a school to manage, L.A. Leadership Academy believes that the most powerful learning occurs when students are internally motivated to understand a particular issue. Also, the curriculum requires students to practice civic leadership through sustained projects that address issues of interest, and students will need opportunities to develop expertise on their issues to conduct these projects with the expected level of sophistication. Students will conduct independent research into issues, but student-initiated seminars and workshops will provide a structure for reading, writing, research, discussion, and exposure to experts on topics they care about.

In-house "concentrations" help students develop practical tools for civic leadership as well as a set of vocational skills. Proposed areas include Law, Public Policy, Community Organizing, Media Arts, Art, and Print and Radio Journalism, though the exact number and types will depend on staffing capability and input from members of the learning community. Each of these fields offers powerful means to exercise civic leadership, and students will realize some of that power through real world application. Each concentration will be headed by a faculty member with experience and expertise in the field. Concentration teachers coordinators will work actively to forge links to community practitioners interested in being guest presenters, professional mentors, and hosts for project work. For example, mentors in Journalism might coordinate production of a youth radio program or introduce students to the newspaper production world. Students may stay in a particular concentration for just one term or several, as long as the coordinator is able to assure that the experience remains rigorous and that students continue to deepen and broaden their skills and understanding.

The high school schedule will be designed in blocks. Though the details are subject to change, the daily schedule may consist of three blocks of 110 minutes each. One 110-minute block will be a concentration

class or other elective, and the other two will be content area classes or a student-initiated workshop or seminar. The school year will be divided into trimesters, so that six courses may be taught in the two non-concentration blocks: English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, a student-initiated workshop or seminar, and either Spanish as a Foreign Language, Spanish for Native Speakers, or English as a Second Language. A typical student schedule at the high school level might look as follows:

Monday - Friday

9:00 – 10:50	Concentration (110 minutes)
11:00 – 12:50	English and Social Studies (110 minutes alternating)
12:50 – 1:30	Lunch
1:30 – 2:20	Advisory or Student Common Planning Time
2:25 – 4:15	Mathematics and Science (110 minutes, alternating)

See also the attendance requirements section in Element B. The eleventh and twelfth grade years will provide more time for individual project work and student-initiated seminars and workshops. Details of the master schedule are subject to change.

Comprehensive School Design Plan

In the coming months the developers of the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will facilitate the development of a comprehensive school design plan. Key participants will be future school staff, potential parents and students, and members of the Board of Directors, with input from community members with a relevant relationship to the school. The process will involve investigation, dialogue, detailed planning and revision. Investigation will entail getting the most up-to-date information on research-based educational practices, reading about the experiences of like-minded educators, and observing practices of successful schools with similar perspectives and objectives.

Content Areas

Beliefs about how learning best occurs and how humans flourish translate into a set of instructional activities and principles used in all content areas. While students will be exposed to new ideas and methods in each curricular area, students' existing knowledge and abilities will be the basis for expanding and revising their understanding of the world. Students' knowledge, feelings, interests and perspectives will often be starting points for inquiry and further study. Open-ended projects and assignments will accommodate students' different needs and interests and foster an environment of support and curiosity.

Differentiated instruction will include techniques such as scaffolding that allow students working at different skill levels to participate at appropriate levels of challenge. Instructional activities will also vary to accommodate differences in learning styles, using hands-on learning, movement and role playing to reach kinesthetic learners, for example. Cultural and linguistic differences will be accommodated and used to enrich all students' educational experiences. Teachers will use SDAIE techniques to make courses taught in English more comprehensible to students. Portfolios and exhibitions based on school-wide rubrics will be primary assessment tools, as they align well with differentiated and open-ended instructional activities.

Teaching methods will vary according to specific instructional purposes. Whole class instruction will be used for presentation and discussion of material and objectives, and for sharing experiences and ideas. Small group instruction will be used when a subset of students needs reinforcement, specialized assistance, or new challenges. Collaborative group work will be used frequently so that students learn from each other, learn how to work together, explore new ideas and interests together, and experience how the sum of a groups' parts can add up to a greater whole. Individualized work will be used both as a precursor and a supplement to group work, so that students develop independent thought and have space to build conceptual understanding and skill mastery on their own. Journals will be used in different instructional contexts. Field trips will offer additional learning opportunities in each content area, and help students map the city's cultural and

informational resources. Technology skills will be introduced in a lab class and developed through extensions and applications in the subject areas.

The descriptions of our approach to English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science are supplemented by key California Content Standards in each area that the curriculum will focus on in sixth and seventh grades (See Appendix A). Other content standards will also be covered; for example, most mathematics topics are needed to continue successfully at higher levels. However, we feel that highlighting those most important to our mission will help us focus on doing those well. The content standards listed here will be supplemented by school-specific standards springing from our particular intellectual, personal, and civic outcomes for students. This list will be developed well before school opens, in consultation with potential staff, students parents and friends of the school with relevant professional knowledge..

English. The English curriculum aims to develop fluent and versatile readers, skilled writers, and confident and thoughtful participants in discussion and improve their lives who use their literacy to see the richness of the world. Students will read and write in a variety of genres, and for purposes that are personal as well as academic. Literacy strategies will emphasize reflection and expression, raising student interest and sense of relevance as well as supporting personal development outcomes. Writing and analysis of literature will develop students' communicative power, appreciation of language and reading, and depth of understanding of content in other areas of study. Students will prepare presentations, participate in discussions, and listen for ideas and information in varied contexts and for varied purposes. In addition to becoming competent in the mechanics and the craft of oral and written communication, students' study of the relationships between language and thought in English will help them make similar connections in Spanish and in other disciplines. Students will be continually asked to reflect on their growth as readers and writers to assess their progress and to set new goals.

Instruction will incorporate strategies from reading and writing workshops based on the work of Lucy Calkins and Nancie Atwell. Whole group instruction will often be limited to mini lessons to explain the workshop or direct students' activity to one aspect of reading or writing. Students will sometimes work independently, regrouping to talk about their learning process. They will also work in small peer groups or with a partner for help, practice, and collaboration. Teachers will circulate, questioning students in ways that help move their processes forward. Teachers will push for authority and purpose in students' writing, so they are writing about what they know and care about, and for reasons they believe in. See Appendix A for key California Academic Content Standards in English-Language Arts on which the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will focus.

Spanish. Students will accurately read, write, speak, and comprehend the Spanish language to an intermediate level and be familiar with prominent aspects of Spanish language-based cultures around the world. Students will be placed in classes according to their language needs. Non-native Spanish language learners will begin with the basic grammar, vocabulary, sentence construction, reading and comprehension and move to progressively higher material. Native Spanish speakers who are proficient or fluent in English will focus on grammatical and orthographic accuracy in speech and writing, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. Native Spanish speakers who are not yet proficient in English will substitute English Language Development (ELD) classes for Spanish language classes until they reach proficiency in English. An instructional focus for all students will be on developing an understanding of the relationship between thought and language, of grammatical and etymological relationships between English and Spanish, and of the value of bi-literacy.

Instructional strategies in Spanish will emphasize the use of spoken and written language in purposeful contexts. The presence of many native Spanish speakers within the school and in the surrounding community creates an opportunity for students to practice speaking, reading, writing, and comprehending the language. Students will also practice frequently in class, so that primacy is on the developing comfort and interest in using Spanish. Teachers of English and Spanish classes will communicate about content so that their curriculums complement each other to strengthen students' overall understanding of language.

English as a Second Language (ESL). Students who are classified as English Language Learners will take ESL in lieu of Spanish until they are reclassified as English Proficient. As with Spanish classes, the ESL program will work as an extension of language and literacy development in English classes. The primary objective of ESL classes is to develop students' ability to comprehend, speak, read, and write in English. Another function of the class is that it provides space for immigrant students to discuss common challenges and experiences related to the transition to a new country and culture. At the same time, language development activities will ask students of different language profiles to work together, often with the aim of building relationships and cultural understanding across barriers arising from differences in language skills and national or ethnic identity.

Instructional methods in ESL will be based on an understanding of the cognitive processes of language development and of differences in learning styles. The natural language method will structure activities around students' use of spoken and written communication in authentic contexts. Visual and physical cues (in the Total Physical Response method, for example) will help students with low auditory and written comprehension access English.

Mathematics. Students will develop mastery and conceptual understanding of operations in basic math, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and statistics through a combination of research-based instructional methods. Instruction will emphasize hands-on activities and real world applications to help develop understanding of concepts underlying algorithms. Students will develop metacognition of their mathematical thinking through mathematical writing and discussion. Problems and projects that combine different mathematical skills and concepts will deepen students' understanding and reveal new mathematical relationships. Presentations of mathematical concepts through tables, charts, graphs and drawings will facilitate mastery and enhance the ability to communicate mathematically.

In addition to integrating mathematical strands, mathematics instruction will be integrated with other subject areas to enhance the versatility of students' mathematical skills, to show real world connections, and to help students discover how understanding of problems that appear non-mathematical can be enhanced through mathematical thinking. Mathematics can be brought into the exploration of social problems by analyzing demographics, trends over time, and statistics. Students will also use quantitative data to make judgements and to show evidence. Mathematics teachers will communicate the skills they are developing at a given time so that team teachers may find ways to interweave the concepts in their teaching, as appropriate.

Mathematics instruction will be rigorous but will leave no student behind. Because mathematical concepts tend to build on one another, it is crucial that teachers continually monitor student progress, and that they have the ability to intervene when students are not keeping pace. Also, teachers will work to assure that girls' success in mathematics remains on a par with that of boys by countering cultural influences that can lessen girls' chances of success in mathematics. As people of color and women are underrepresented in science and engineering careers, mathematics teachers will be proactive in helping students in these groups feel that competence and career aspirations in science and mathematics can be part of their identity.

See Appendix A for key California Academic Content Standards in Mathematics on which the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will focus.

Social Sciences. The social studies curriculum will be framed by the California Content Standards, but will also incorporate methods and ideas from social science disciplines such as anthropology, philosophy, psychology, and sociology. These multiple perspectives will help students ask critical questions and view the world with complexity. History will be taken not as a static set of facts, but as a series of relationships and events that might have evolved differently, that help us to understand the present and to apply understanding in analogous situations. Students will act as historians by conducting their own historical research. Research areas will include the history of urban social issues affecting the students' lives.

Instructional methods will focus on making the curriculum accessible, meaningful and relevant to students. Integrated curricular activities will help students make connections to their own lives as well as to learning in other classes. Students will be active rather than passive learners, engaging with history through simulations,

debates, and other constructivist activities. Ideas, events, and “lessons learned from history” will be related to students’ community action projects, and students’ knowledge and experiences will in turn inform their interpretation of social science questions. Journals will be a space for reflection, connection, and gestation of new ideas. Students will discuss ideas in many formats, including forums they organize for the school community, the community outside the school, and in conjunction with students on other campuses.

An extension of the social studies class is a lab tentatively called Inquiry, in which students examine their identity, values, and beliefs, their relationships to family, peers, community members, nations, and the world, and the broader social relationships in the world. The course will move from the most concrete and personal to more abstract and distant relationships, asking students to view these relationships in terms of fairness, understanding, and mediating considerations. Students will explore dynamics of culture, communication, power, and social change. Activities will be geared to helping students consciously evolve their own belief system about the world and their place in it, constructing a vision for their lives and for a more humane and just world. In Inquiry, students will map resources and cultural assets of students’ communities and of Los Angeles. Students will identify important issues in the community that they choose to explore and address in group or class community action projects. As part of their coursework, students will involve family and community members in their inquiries and action projects. See Appendix A for key California Academic Content Standards in Social Studies on which the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will focus.

Science/Health. The science curriculum will follow the sequence of the California content standards and will support students’ intellectual, personal, and civic development through its instructional activities. Content will not be taken in isolation but as part of the broader questions about society and civic leadership posed by the school. Students will know core concepts of health, ecology, biology, chemistry and physics, and how they are interrelated and connected to the world around them. Curriculum will also advance students’ awareness of the historical evolution of scientific knowledge, of conditions that enhance or threaten health, of the need to conserve natural resources and preserve the environment, and of the need to conserve natural resources and preserve the environment. A key element in the L.A. Leadership Academy’s science curriculum will be that Students will relate their learning in science to the community, and use community issues and points of interest as starting points of inquiry.

Small group collaboration will model the team-oriented work of scientists. Students will explore scientific concepts through laboratory investigation, sharing observations and producing connections between what they have learned in the classroom to the community and the world at large. Lab reports will ask students to make written reflections and substantiate their conclusions using graphical representations and reasoned arguments. Students will present their emerging ideas on lab results, current events, and independent research through written and oral presentation. See Appendix A for key California Academic Content Standards in Science on which the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will focus. In addition, students will participate in current debates about social issues such as bio-ethics, bio-engineering, and environmental justice.

Visual and Performing Arts. Through the visual and performing arts program students will develop understanding of how people use dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts to express ideas and emotions that they cannot express through language alone. The program will combine an artistic expression component with an academic component. In the artistic expression component, students will learn to communicate in at least one artistic medium, and will perform or present their new skills for a public audience. Their instruction will emphasize the roles of reflection, critical judgment, and imagination in the artistic process. The academic component will integrate the arts with other areas of study, as students performance a representative piece of music or drama from a historical period they are studying, for example. Students will also explore ways the arts have reflected and influenced various world cultures, and how the arts contribute to contemporary life.

The visual and performing arts program will support civic leadership development in several ways. Students will see how the arts have been used for community education and consciousness-raising and will have opportunities to use their artistic expression to shape and “recreate” the world. They will gain appreciation for how engagement with the arts raises the quality of life for individuals and communities, and this

appreciation is important for a well-rounded civic leader. They will gain greater awareness of their selves and their culture, as well as awareness of others and others' cultures.

Due to funding limitations, the visual and performing arts program will be smaller than we would like in the first years of operation. In the middle school years, students will have two to five class periods per week dedicated to visual and performing arts. Content area teachers will also integrate arts education in ways that meet some of the exit outcomes in the arts. Depending on the amount of funding available to coordinate an after-school program, some combination of volunteers and paid staff may provide workshops in the visual and performing arts as an extracurricular activity. One advantage of the school site is that there is a social hall with a stage and a balcony that can accommodate an audience of close to 500 people. We will also look to local arts organizations for enrichment experiences for students

Physical Fitness. All students should recognize and experience the benefits of physical fitness, increased energy, resistance to illness, and even emotions. While we cannot guarantee that all students will experience these effects, all students will participate in a rigorous physical fitness program that is likely to keep students in shape. Students will learn the guidelines for creating a healthy fitness program, harmful practices to avoid, and unseen or long-range benefits. Students will also learn rules and techniques of several sports. Depending on the availability of funding and staff capacity to develop an after school program, volunteers and paid staff will provide opportunities to develop skills in basketball, volleyball, weight-training, wrestling, and fencing. Sports programs will be run with an emphasis on team-building, cooperation, and focused effort.

Technology. Students will learn how to properly handle computers, use email and the internet, and use word processing programs. They will learn how to gather information from the internet, with a critical eye to the validity of sources. These skills will be integrated across content areas in coursework. Students will also be aware of other ways computers are used. There will be opportunities to learn how to build and maintain websites, and to communicate with other students from different cultures in and outside the United States.

Additional Instructional Strategies

Literacy. The top priority of the school is to assure that all students can read and write well. While most students will be able to decode texts, many will need to develop vocabulary, comprehension, and analytical skills to be able to navigate the meaning of many kinds of texts. Students will also learn to communicate ideas through narrative, persuasive, expository, and descriptive writing, including autobiography, fiction, poetry, research reports, and persuasive compositions. Though a double period of language arts in students' first year will support the focus on literacy, reading and writing will also be emphasized across all areas of instruction. A bilingual literacy program in Spanish and English will respond to students' needs according to their language profiles, helping all students develop metacognition about the structure and use of language.

Project-Based Learning. Knowledge of best practices shows that doing is the best way to learn, and project-based learning necessitates the application of skills in context and with an aim in mind. Projects will develop problem-solving skills, require students to integrate knowledge, and draw work over an extended period of time so that it is not isolated in class-lengths bits of time. To succeed in the world of work and to foster social skills, students need to work effectively in collaborative efforts; projects will provide an opportunity to develop teamwork. Project work will also allow students with different strengths to develop and demonstrate their individual talents. Individual evaluation of students' efforts will assure that all students have equal incentives to contribute. Project-based learning will occur within and between classrooms, sometimes focusing on issues in the school's surrounding community and involving people and resources outside the school. Applications of learning in real-world situations will demonstrate relevance and meaning to students.

Performance-Based Assessment. Students will demonstrate learning primarily through portfolios and exhibitions to be evaluated according to school-wide rubrics. Not only do these forms of assessment pair well with project-based learning, they capture broader picture of student achievement and accordingly generate more complete feedback. The preparation of portfolios and exhibitions demands more cognitive engagement from students, and their public nature creates incentives to present excellent work. A number of small schools, notably in New York City's Performance-Based Coalition, have shown excellent results with this

approach. L.A. Leadership Academy will work with the California School Redesign Network and Performance-Based Consortium of Stanford University to design our assessment system and to develop instructional capacity in the effective use of performance-based assessment.

Integrated Curriculum. By examining problems through a variety of disciplinary lenses, students' learning will have depth and connection. Multidisciplinary learning will sometimes be organized thematically. For example, if students are studying immigration, they could read a related work of literature; study the historical context; examine the actual civics context; analyze a related scientific problem; and gather and analyze relevant demographic and statistical data. Students will draw on many sources to develop their ideas, form conclusions, and make sound arguments. As students confront new problems they will be challenged to investigate from a variety of disciplinary perspectives so that they become versatile, creative thinkers.

Staff Professional Development. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy believes that a strong professional development program for the staff is vital to maintaining high quality and coherence in curriculum and instruction. Together, the staff will assess its professional development needs and decide on services that best align with the school's mission and instructional approach, taking into account the needs and perspectives of students and parents. In the year before opening, professional development will focus on project-based learning and on developing a strong assessment program. Other professional development will help the staff understand how to better serve the needs of students with diverse learning styles and special needs and how to effectively involve parents and community members in an educational program. Our emphasis on staff development will assure sufficient time for reflection, research, discussion, and participation in conferences and workshops to occur on an ongoing basis.

Student Promotion and Retention. Since the mission of Los Angeles Leadership Academy includes assuring that all students have a rigorous educational experience, expectations for student performance will be kept high. Different students have different challenges, needs, and strengths, so a true commitment to the success of all students means that the school's structure must allow the staff to be responsive and creative when a student's work does not meet the minimum expectations. The best way to keep all students on target is through ongoing support strategies that enable each student to demonstrate successful achievement of the rigorous standards. Support strategies include assuring that students get needed interventions along the way, that instruction is in synch with students' varied learning styles, and that parent support and shared commitment is in place.

Students who make appropriate effort but do not meet standards will receive additional academic interventions, including one-on-one counseling and support. Students who do not make appropriate effort will conference with staff and eventually with parents, and may be placed on behavioral or academic contracts. We are committed to meeting all students' needs, and our staff will be proactive, creative, and reflective in trying to identify and meet those needs. However, if staff try every possible appropriate intervention and student performance does not improve satisfactorily, as a last resort we will counsel with the student and parents to find a more advisable placement. Regardless of effort, inadequate student performance may sometimes be the result of a poor fit between students' learning styles and interests and our educational orientation. We will try to tease out those cases and offer suggestions of alternative programs that may better suit students' needs.

College Preparation. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will assure that students develop the academic skills needed to thrive in college. Part of making college a realistic option for students is assuring that they and their families receive appropriate counseling about college entry requirements and opportunities for financial assistance. Staff will also help students prepare for college entrance examinations and complete strong applications to the schools of their choice. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will also be proactive in communicating with colleges and universities to raise awareness of its distinctive program and its system for evaluating student work. Students' high school programs will meet University of California A-G requirements. Due to the small size of its faculty, the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will offer a limited number of Advanced Placement courses, but may supplement these with Honors programs and distance-learning AP classes. We will also facilitate placement in local college courses for students wishing to study particular subjects in greater depth.

Advisory. A key component of Los Angeles Leadership Academy's instructional strategy is the advisory program in which one faculty member will be responsible for a small group of students for three to four years. The advisory groups create a space to develop deeper relationships between students and with advisors, so that all students are known well by other students and by one adult in the school. The advisor will be the primary liaison for communication between the school and the home. Advisories will meet three to five times per week.

In addition to functioning as a homeroom, two developmental areas will be centered in the advisory: exhibitions and personal development. Exhibitions are culminating assessment exercises in which students demonstrate their achievements in specified areas to a committee of teachers, peers, parents, and sometimes internship mentors. This is the space for looking at students' growth in a more holistic light, asking students to present evidence of their growth in personal, civic, and general intellectual development (see Element C, and Appendix). Advisors will facilitate preparation of exhibitions, and be permanent members of a student's exhibition committee.

The advisory will be the site of certain instructional activities to promote students' personal development. To realize their potential in school, students must be physically and emotionally healthy. Advisors will promote students' health by monitoring their advisees' well-being, by promoting a safe environment for dialogue about issues pertinent to students' well-being, and by presenting curriculum relevant to healthy personal development. Advisors will take responsibility for conferring with students when they sense personal difficulty. If they feel additional services are needed, advisors will alert support staff and communicate with parents.

Enrichment and Extracurricular Programs. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will offer enrichment opportunities during and after school hours. Enrichment opportunities during the school day will spring out of a curriculum that offers many open-ended projects. In the middle school years, these include choices in class assignments, community action projects, artistic expression, and exhibition requirements. In the high school years, these will expand into elective project centers and an internship program. While the exact project center offerings will depend on the staff and the evolving vision, they will be linked to the leadership component of the mission. To practice leadership for a more just and humane world, students will develop skills and practical tools for working toward their visions of a more just and humane world. Thus, project centers might include law, public policy, radio and print journalism, video production, arts for community education, technology, and community organizing. The internship component of the high school program will allow students to explore interests in depth by working alongside community mentors in a structured, supported program that fits with students' overall educational experience.

The variety of organized clubs and workshops at lunchtime and after school will depend on the interests of staff and the availability of after-school program funding to hire additional staff. Ideally, an after-school program will offer additional opportunities to develop skills in visual and performing arts and in organized sports, as well as in activities such as photography, debate, and video production. Academic enrichment will be available through staff and volunteer tutoring and hopefully as part of a funded after-school program.

Students with Special Needs

The process of serving students with special needs will begin before school opens by preparing school-wide strategies through data collection on incoming students and planning in anticipation of a diverse set of needs. The diversity of the planning group will help assure that the school's plans consider a breadth of student needs and possible interventions. Special populations we expect to serve include English Language Learners, academically gifted students, academically low-achieving students, and students with Individualized Educational Programs (IEP).

Data on incoming students will be gathered by talking with students and parents, by looking at existing records and services provided at their previous schools, and when possible, by scheduling an entry conference between students' new advisors and teachers from the previous schools. Based on this data, the

staff of the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will have services in place for students at school's opening based on students' anticipated needs. Staff, students, and parents or guardians may initiate a process of examining whether students need to begin, alter, or discontinue receiving special services. The process may only involve conferencing or may require language testing or special assessments. Requests, conferences, and assessments will be documented and kept in students' files.

English Language Learners. English Language Learners will be supported through a combination of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, modified instruction, a supportive school culture, and additional academic support as needed. Students needing additional support in learning English will take ESL in lieu of Spanish until they place out of the ESL 5-6 level. Teachers of other courses will provide sheltered instruction using SDAIE techniques when some students have difficulty understanding English. They will also pair English Language Learners with students who can effectively translate, and many activities will be hands-on rather than text-based, diminishing reliance on reading and listening as the only learning methods. The school will also promote the success of English Language Learners by valuing Spanish language as a critical resource and fostering a bilingual culture. English Language Learners will act as mentors to Spanish Language Learners as part of class assignments and through the community action work. When possible, non-native English speakers will have opportunities to read, dialogue, and present work in their native language.

In accordance with SB 638, the L.A. Leadership Academy will use the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) to identify new-enrollees with a home language other than English, to monitor their progress in learning English, and to help reclassify them when they become proficient in English. New enrollees shall be tested within 30 calendar days of enrollment. Procedures and instruments used for identification, assessment and reclassification may be the same as those used by LAUSD.

Academically Gifted Students. Some students will enter the school better prepared or be naturally endowed to learn at a faster pace than the majority. Since the mission of the Los Angeles Leadership Academy includes assuring that all students' educational experience is rigorous, teachers will be prepared to provide additional challenges for these students. Portfolios and exhibitions are particularly useful in assuring that students are accountable for working up to potential by customizing expectations to the learner. Students working at different paces will sometimes be paired so that students excelling in a particular subject help students struggling with material more challenging. Research shows that people deepen understanding through the process of teaching others, and students may develop greater curiosity as they consolidate their own learning. Furthermore, as other students benefit from the help, paired learning will help keep up the pace.

Academically Low-Achieving Students. Services for academically low-achieving students will begin with a diagnosis of what the student needs to perform better. Staff will be trained in the signs of common learning disorders to increase the likelihood that these needs will be identified. Instruction activities will vary to accommodate different learning styles to draw out students' various strengths and to avoid excessive favor or disfavor to particular learner profiles. Students simply needing additional assistance in particular subjects or skill areas may get additional help from peers, staff, and volunteer tutors. Students who are not achieving because of distracting issues in their personal lives will have a forum for identifying and discussing issues in advisory or one-on-one with staff. When additional interventions are needed, the staff will be proactive in coordinating support services.

Students with Individualized Educational Programs. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy staff will monitor students to assure that they receive appropriate support services, including special education and/or related services for students with exceptional needs. An important objective of professional development is to assure that teachers and administrators are aware of the breadth of student needs and the ways they are manifested in the classroom. Teachers who skillfully target students' diverse needs through appropriate instruction can do a lot to reduce the need for additional supplemental services. Our goal is to reduce the number of students needing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) through corrective and preventative teaching strategies. However, we are committed to create a supportive environment for students with exceptional needs, and to provide needed services for those students who have Individualized Education

Plans (IEPs). The governance section of our charter details our process for doing so, and assurances of our agreement to comply with all state and federal laws regarding special education services.

Special Education Services

Legal Assurances Regarding Special Education. Pursuant to California Education Code § 47641 the Los Angeles Leadership Academy intends to be a public school for the purposes of special education and will fall under the Los Angeles Unified School District's Special Education Local Plan (SELPA). The District and the L.A. Leadership Academy intend to jointly ensure that all students with exceptional needs who reside in the District and who attend the L.A. Leadership Academy are provided with a free and appropriate education in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400 *et seq.*, and California Education Code §§ 56000 *et seq.* The District and the LALA will also ensure that they comply with the consent decree in *Smith v. Los Angeles Unified School District*, the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and mandates from the United States Office for Civil Rights. A child with disabilities attending the L.A. Leadership Academy shall receive special education instruction or designated instruction and services, or both, in the same manner as a child with disabilities who attends another public school of the District.

Identification and Referral of Students Who May Have Exceptional Needs. The L.A. Leadership Academy shall develop and retain the capacity within its staff and/or by retainer of qualified professionals the ability to identify students who have or may have exceptional needs that qualify them to receive special education and/or related services. The L.A. Leadership Academy will develop, maintain, and implement policies and procedures within the school to ensure that students who have or may have exceptional needs are identified. The District agrees to forward to the L.A. Leadership Academy, within five working days of the request of the L.A. Leadership Academy, any cumulative file information regarding any pupil who previously attended the district and who has enrolled in the L.A. Leadership Academy, including but not limited to information regarding special education and related services, in order to ensure that the L.A. Leadership Academy is able to identify students with exceptional needs. The L.A. Leadership Academy will comply with §§ 56300 *et seq.* of the California Education Code and 20 U.S.C. § 1412 regarding the identification and referral of students with exceptional needs. The L.A. Leadership Academy shall notify the Director of Special Education as soon as practicable of any and all pupils who seek to enroll or who are dropped from enrollment, and who have had an IEP in the current or previous year or who have a record of having ever received special education services.

Individual Education Plan Development. The L.A. Leadership Academy shall develop and retain the capacity within its staff and/or by retainer of qualified professionals, the ability to develop written individual education plans (IEPs) in accord with all applicable federal law. The L.A. Leadership Academy will develop, maintain, and implement policies and procedures within the school to ensure that an IEP is developed, maintained, and reviewed for all students with exceptional needs who are enrolled within the school. All IEPs shall be developed, maintained, and reviewed in a form and format as required by the SELPA. The District may not develop or cause to be developed an IEP that specifies that a student shall be placed in the L.A. Leadership Academy. The L.A. Leadership Academy may not develop or cause to be developed an IEP that specifies that a student shall be placed in the District. In the event that either party believes that a placement in a school or program of the other party may be an appropriate provision of an IEP, such a placement shall not be made within the consent of the other party and the student's parent. The L.A. Leadership Academy will comply with §§ 56320 *et seq.* of the California Education Code regarding the assessment of individuals with exceptional needs. Compliance will include identifying students with active and/or existing IEPs. The L.A. Leadership Academy will initiate and conduct meetings to develop, review, and revise the IEP of each individual with exceptional needs in compliance with §§ 56340 *et seq.* of the California Education Code.

Pre-Placement Evaluation and Assessment. The L.A. Leadership Academy shall develop and retain the capacity within its staff and/or by retainer of qualified professionals, the ability to evaluate and assess students who have or may have exceptional needs that qualify them to receive special education and/or related services. The L.A. Leadership Academy will develop, maintain, and implement policies and

procedures within the school to ensure that students who have or may have exceptional needs are evaluated and assessed in a fashion that enables the school to identify students' strengths, needs and eligibility for special education and related services.

Provision of Special Education and Related Services. The L.A. Leadership Academy shall provide or contract for the provision of all special education and related services that are contained within or required by the terms of the IEP of any student who is enrolled in the L.A. Leadership Academy. The L.A. Leadership Academy will also provide appropriate and timely interim placements for students who are new to the L.A. Leadership Academy and whose IEPs have not been finalized.

Search and Serve. The L.A. Leadership Academy will make every effort to search, identify and serve all special needs students enrolled in the school. At the time of enrollment, the L.A. Leadership Academy staff will have each parent fill out a questionnaire that will help:

- determine if the child is in need of an assessment
- alert us to conducting more thorough observations to further determine if the child should be referred for an assessment
- determine if a pre-referral intervention plan meeting is appropriate
- determine if a child has already been identified as being in need of special services
- determine if the child is a regional center client
- determine if the child has a pre-existing or active IEP

If needed, a team made up of the parent/guardian, teacher, student and director will come together to discuss and identify the student's needs and develop an intervention plan to ensure the student's academic and social success in school. Parents will be informed of their child's right to special education and related services that are available to them at no cost.

When a child has been referred for assessment by parents, guardians, teachers or other school personnel, the parent or guardian will receive a written response from the L.A. Leadership Academy within fifteen working days of the receipt of a referral for the assessment. If the school determines that an assessment of a student is not appropriate, the parent will receive written notice of this decision. This notice will further explain the basis for the refusal and the parent's right to request a due process hearing to contest the charter's refusal. If the L.A. Leadership Academy determines that an assessment is appropriate, the parent will receive an Assessment Plan (AP).

The parent must consent to the AP by signing the AP before the assessment can take place. The parent will have fifteen days from the receipt of the AP to consent to and sign it. If the parent does not consent to the AP, the L.A. Leadership Academy will meet with, discuss and work through concerns and resolve this difference. If the parent still does not consent, the L.A. Leadership Academy may opt to initiate a due process hearing to override the parent's refusal to consent, in an effort to protect the student if the L.A. Leadership Academy believes that the student is being denied necessary services.

Within fifty days, not counting school vacations greater than five days, from the receipt of the parent's signed AP, the L.A. Leadership Academy must complete the assessment and hold an IEP meeting. Assessing the student will involve gathering information about the student to determine whether the student has special needs, and if eligible, the nature and extent of special education services that the student may need. Assessments may include individual testing, observations of the student at school, interviews with the student and school personnel who work with the student, and a review of school records, reports, and work samples. The L.A. Leadership Academy will be fiscally responsible to obtain its own personnel or contract with specialists to perform assessments.

Guidelines for Assessment.

- Student will be assessed only after parent consents to Assessment Plan.
- Student will be assessed in all areas related to his or her alleged disability.

- Assessment will be administered in the student's primary language or in the presence of an interpreter.
- Assessment will include a variety of appropriate tests to measure a student's strengths and needs.
- Assessment will be adapted for students with impaired sensory, physical, or speaking skills.
- A multidisciplinary team, including at least one teacher or other specialist with knowledge of the student's supposed disability, will assess the student.
- Assessment materials and procedures will be racially, culturally, and sexually non-discriminatory.

If the parent disagrees with the school's assessment of their child, the parent may obtain an independent educational assessment at public expense only if the school is not able to demonstrate that the evaluation was appropriate. Upon the parent's request, the L.A. Leadership Academy will provide information about how to obtain this independent assessment by a qualified examiner.

Development and Implementation of an Individualized Education Program. After a student has been assessed, an IEP meeting will be held. The IEP meeting will be held at a time and place convenient for the parent, the L.A. Leadership Academy staff, and any invited district representative. At the IEP meeting, the IEP team will discuss the assessment results and determine whether the student is eligible for special education services. If the student is eligible, then an IEP will be developed at the meeting. The following people are members of the IEP team:

- the parent or guardian, and or their representative
- an L.A. Leadership Academy administrator or qualified representative who is knowledgeable about the program options appropriate for the student
- the student's teacher; if a student does not presently have a teacher, a teacher with the most recent and complete knowledge of the student and who has observed the student's educational performance; if a teacher with the most recent knowledge of the student is not available, a special education teacher qualified to teach a student of his or her age
- other persons, such as the student, whom the parent or the school wishes to invite as appropriate, persons who assessed the child or someone familiar with those assessment procedures

The parent is viewed as an integral member of the IEP team. If the parent cannot attend the IEP meeting, the L.A. Leadership Academy will ensure the parent's participation using other methods, such as conferencing by telephone or meeting at the parent's home. The L.A. Leadership Academy will ensure that the parent understands what is going on at the meeting. If necessary, the L.A. Leadership Academy will provide an interpreter if the parent has a hearing disability or their primary language is not English.

The team will discuss the assessment and consequent goals and set up an IEP for the student. After the written IEP has been finished, it will be implemented as soon as possible. The parent can review and request revisions of the plan. The IEP will contain:

- annual goals and short-term objectives focusing on the student's current level of performance
- the services that the student will receive
- when the services will begin, how often they will be provided, and for how long
- the instructional program(s) where these services will be delivered
- the rationale for placement decisions
- the amount of time the student will spend in general education; if the student is not completely educated in general education, the IEP will state why
- the IEP will state how the student's progress will be measured
- transition goals for work-related skills
- English as a Second Language goals as necessary

The L.A. Leadership Academy students with disabilities will attend the L.A. Leadership Academy unless the IEP determines that the best services and the least restrictive environment are at another school. The L.A. Leadership Academy will make available to all parents and teachers District, state, and federal literature regarding special education programs, regulations, and laws.

The L.A. Leadership Academy shall invite special education representatives from the District and the student's district of residence to any IEP meeting held at the charter school when there is an expectation that a student with disabilities may be considered for any change in placement, program option, or services. We will develop the IEP in collaboration with these special education representatives.

When, as a result of the IEP, it is agreed that the most appropriate placement in the least restrictive environment is not in the charter school, the parent of the identified student must be in agreement with the decision. If the parent were in disagreement, the matter would have to be resolved through due process procedures. The school will set aside funds in order to facilitate due process procedures whenever required.

Times for IEP Meetings. IEP meetings will be held:

- once a year the IEP team will meet to determine the student's progress and placement to make any needed changes to the IEP
- every three years the IEP team will meet to review the results of a mandatory comprehensive reevaluation of the student's progress
- after a student has received a formal assessment or reassessment
- when a parent or teacher feels that the student has demonstrated significant educational growth or a lack of anticipated progress
- when a parent or a teacher requests a meeting to develop, review, or revise an IEP
- when a student is approaching a transitional age: childhood into adolescence; adolescence into adulthood
- when a student in an IEP is faced with a suspension for more than ten days or an expulsion, the IEP will meet to determine whether the student's misconduct was a manifestation of his or her disability

IEP Review. If a student is receiving special education services, an IEP meeting will be held at least once a year to determine how well the IEP is meeting his or her needs. In addition, every three years, the student will be reassessed and his or her IEP reviewed as part of an overall comprehensive reevaluation of the student's progress, in accordance with the IDEA regulations.

If a parent or teacher has concerns that the student's educational needs are not being met, either the parent or the teacher may request a reassessment or an IEP meeting to review the IEP anytime during the school year, by sending a written request to the school. Once the request is received, the L.A. Leadership Academy will hold the IEP meeting within thirty days not counting school vacations greater than five days. The parent or teacher may request a reassessment by sending a written request to the school or completing a Request for Special Education Assessment, which can be obtained at the school office. The L.A. Leadership Academy will have written permission from the parent or guardian before it reassesses the child.

The L.A. Leadership Academy will take the necessary measures to ensure that parents are well informed of their rights to secure appropriate special needs service programs for their child. The L.A. Leadership Academy will make available to all parents and teachers District, state, and federal literature regarding special education programs, regulations, and laws. We will inform parents of their rights at time of enrollment and during any and all IEP meetings. The L.A. Leadership Academy will ensure that parents:

- are provided with written notice of their rights under IDEA Section 504
- consent for an initial evaluation and initial placement of their child be obtained
- are notified of any change in placement that may occur
- be invited along with teachers to conferences and meetings that provide information and assistance in the development of individual education programs
- understand they have the right to initiate a due process hearing to challenge a decision regarding the identification, evaluation or educational placement of their child
- are offered mediation to resolve the area of disagreement and a written confirmation of the results of said mediation
- understand they have a right to an impartial hearing if they reject the mediation offer

The L.A. Leadership Academy will provide a program for the special needs student that is built around the student's needs. The L.A. Leadership Academy may provide designated instruction and services that include, but are not limited to:

- Language and speech development and remediation
- Orientation and mobility instruction
- Adapted physical education
- Counseling and guidance
- Socialization skills training
- Mainstreaming/Inclusion assistance
- 1:1 assistance
- Special Education Teacher

The L.A. Leadership Academy will employ a Resource Specialist or contract with a consulting company to oversee the provision of services and perform compliance evaluations and audits of our special needs services delivery system. The L.A. Leadership Academy teaching staff will receive thorough training in our special education process, program services and strategies.

Students will be educated with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent that is appropriate. The L.A. Leadership Academy will consider the continuum of program options that goes from least to most restrictive for the student: general classes to Resource Specialist Programs/Special Day Class classes to special schools/centers to non-public/home to state/residential hospitals.

The team will consider the least restrictive setting for the student. The IEP team shall determine the extent to which mainstreaming to regular education will enable the student to enhance his/her educational, social, emotional and/or physical growth. The team will further determine which supplemental aids and services are necessary to ensure inclusion throughout the school day. The mainstream experiences and supplemental services shall be written into the student's IEP.

The L.A. Leadership Academy will take all necessary measures to successfully attain student goals as indicated in the student's IEP. The following are student outcomes our school will be striving for:

- Increased growth on assessments that include both the learning process and the skills outlined in the IEP's goals section
- Greater student engagement and motivation to participate in learning tasks
- Observation of increased student competence and motivation
- Improved abilities in all areas of development
- Increase in social interactions with peers
- Improved self-concept and self-esteem

The L.A. Leadership Academy will make the necessary arrangements to provide transportation to those special needs students whose IEP requires transportation.

B. MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES

Paralleling its vision of an educated person, the Los Angeles Leadership Academy’s exit outcomes are divided into three broad components: intellectual, personal, and civic. Leadership is not identified as an outcome within a particular area since it is a synthesis of intellectual, personal, and civic outcomes. Intellectual outcomes correspond to specific subject areas as well as areas of general intellectual development that run across all subject areas. The personal and civic components will be taught through advisory and in community projects as well as woven throughout the curriculum. For details on the Benchmark goals, see Element C.

Subject Area	Measurable Outcomes	Assessment Tools	Benchmark Goals
English Language and Literature	Students will read and comprehend at grade level in a variety of genres, including narrative and expository, write effectively at grade level in a variety of genres, communicate confidently, thoughtfully, and effectively in prepared presentations and discussions in a variety of contexts and with a variety of purposes, analyze and identify stylistic conventions in literature from many cultures and historical contexts, make connections among texts and across disciplines, and use literacy to explore the richness of the world, to improve their lives, and to form a vision of and act to create a more just and humane world.	1. National New Standards Exam 2. Portfolio 3. Progress Report	1. Percentage of students achieving at proficiency will increase by 5% annually 2-3. Percentage of satisfactory portfolios and exhibitions will increase by 5% annually
Spanish Language and Literature	Students will read, write, speak, and comprehend Spanish at a developmentally appropriate level, understand and apply rules of grammar, use a developmentally appropriate range of vocabulary; have read in Spanish from a variety of literary genres, be familiar with the culture and history of several Spanish-speaking regions, be aware of the cultural context and impact of Spanish-speaking people in Los Angeles and in the United States, and have an understanding of the relationship between thought and language, of grammatical and etymological relationships between English and Spanish, and of the value of bi-literacy.	1. Portfolio 2. Progress Report	1-2. Percentage of satisfactory portfolios and exhibitions will increase by 5% annually
Mathematics	Students will demonstrate mastery and conceptual understanding of operations in basic math, algebra, and geometry, extend mathematical understanding to practical applications, be able to articulate process in solving problems, discover mathematical properties and algorithms through exploration of mathematical problems, find multiple methods to understand and solve mathematical problems, use quantitative data to make judgements and to show evidence for conclusions, and convey mathematical solutions and quantitative evidence using tables, graphs, charts and drawings.	1. National New Standards Exam 2. Portfolio 3. Progress Report	1. Percentage of students achieving at proficiency will increase by 5% annually 2-3. Percentage of satisfactory portfolios and exhibitions will increase by 5% annually
Social Studies	Students will have knowledge of the government, geography, history, and current social issues of California, the United States, and the world, supplement this understanding with perspectives and examples of anthropology, sociology, economics, psychology, philosophy, and political science, understand causes and dynamics of social change, and have knowledge needed for thoughtful, active democratic participation.	1. Portfolio 2. Progress Report	1-2. Percentage of satisfactory portfolios and exhibitions will increase by 5% annually

Science/ Health	Students will understand and apply the scientific method, understand ideas and methods fundamental to life science fields, physics, and chemistry, have awareness of the historical evolution of scientific knowledge, of conditions that threaten human and environmental health, and of effects of interactions between humans and other life forms, have the background needed to understand and participate in science policy debates, and relate science and community life through inquiry and action.	1. Portfolio 2. Progress Report	1-2. Percentage of satisfactory portfolios and exhibitions will increase by 5% annually
Visual and Performing Arts	Students will communicate effectively and publicly perform or present in at least one artistic medium, will understand the roles of imagination, critical judgment, and reflection in artistic expression and interpretation, will identify arts resources in the community, will make connections among the arts and other core disciplines, will understand the contributions of the arts to world cultures historically and in contemporary life, and will understand and practice artistic expression for community education.	1. Benchmark Tasks 2. Progress Report	1. 80% of students will complete the benchmark tasks
Technology	Students will use email, type efficiently, appropriately use the internet for research and general information purposes, use basic word processing programs, be able to learn new programs, effectively manage files, and be aware of other uses of computers.	Benchmark Tasks	80% of students will complete the benchmark tasks
Information Technology	Students will use libraries, the internet, specialists and organizations to gather evidence, distinguish credibility of sources, and locate primary source materials.	Benchmark Tasks	80% of students will complete the benchmark tasks
General Intellectual Development	Students will approach problems or new information by examining the role of <i>viewpoint</i> , making judgments based on sound <i>evidence</i> , using <i>supposition</i> to consider different alternatives and outcomes, making <i>connections</i> between the work and to other areas of interest, and by evaluating <i>importance</i> . Students will also effectively use varied means of <i>communication</i> to present ideas and questions.	1. Portfolio 2. Exhibition 3. Progress Report	1-2. Percentage of satisfactory portfolios and exhibitions will increase by 5% annually

Since many areas of personal and civic development are hard to measure directly, satisfactory completion of benchmark tasks (B), parent and staff narratives (N), and student self reports (SR) will be used to indicate progress. In any of these assessment strategies, rubrics will be helpful in providing specificity and reference points to increase objectivity and consistency of judgments. External evaluation will measure student achievement in academics, so benchmark goals for personal and civic development are not given.

Areas of Personal Development	Outcomes	Assessment Tools
Social/ Interpersonal Skills	Students will effectively develop friendships and positive relationships with others, negotiate differences and conflicts with others, communicate feelings and needs, respond effectively to others' feelings and needs, effectively use and deliver constructive criticism, and define appropriate and inappropriate	1. Exhibitions 2. Benchmark Tasks 3. Narratives

	behavior.	
Ethics	Students will develop a set of moral rules to live by, recognize the importance of honesty in all aspects of their life, be aware of harmful or helpful consequences of behavior, have a set of ordered principles with which to analyze ethical dilemmas.	1. Exhibitions 2. Benchmark Tasks 3. Narratives
Life Skills	Students will know how to arrive on time, set goals and work incrementally to achieve them, keep materials and tasks organized, manage finances responsibly, possess skills to obtain jobs, understand and select among career and educational options.	1. Exhibitions 2. Benchmark Tasks 3. Narratives
Physical Health	Students will know what constitutes healthy eating, know how to prevent illness and disease, and experience the benefits of a physical fitness program.	1. Exhibitions 2. Benchmark Tasks 3. Narratives
Emotional Health	Students will be able to recognize their own emotional state, be perceptive of others' emotional state, have practice seeking to understand others, recognize and constructively manage difficult emotions, have skills for coping with challenges and managing stress, ask for help when needed, know how to get help, and recognize signs of mental illnesses such as depression and mania.	1. Exhibitions 2. Benchmark Tasks 3. Narratives
Self-Awareness	Students will be able to identify personal strengths and weaknesses, have a conception of what they want to achieve in life, be able to set limits for self and with respect to others, and develop metacognition skills as they "think about how they think."	1. Exhibitions 2. Benchmark Tasks 3. Narratives 4. Surveys
Study Skills	Students will learn effective note-taking methods, test preparation skills and test-taking skills, to listen for key information, and to distinguish what information is needed to answer open-ended questions, to notice when and what they do not understand and ask questions, to keep up with work, and to navigate texts and materials particular to content areas.	Benchmark tasks

Areas of Civic Development	Outcomes	Assessment Tools
Leadership Qualities	Students will navigate differences of opinion and style to work together effectively and build unity, identify common goals among groups to build coalitions, refine a vision with critical thought, plan strategically to achieve a vision, adapt to changing circumstances, communicate effectively, motivate others, recognize and utilize the strengths of others, think and act with independence, and act with courage and out of compassion.	1. Exhibitions 2. Benchmark Tasks 3. Narratives
Citizenship	Students will have the skills to participate thoughtfully, actively, and effectively in a democracy, see ways individual participation matters, know how to balance individual and group needs, evaluate social issues based on ethical and practical criteria, recognize forms of racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, and other forms of oppression, and have understanding and an opinion on major public policy issues.	1. Exhibitions 2. Benchmark Tasks 3. Narratives 4. Surveys
Tools for Civic Engagement	Students will be competent in using practical means for accessing levers of power, for example, through journalism, community organizing, law, public policy processes, artistic expression or technological outreach.	1. Exhibition 2. Progress Report
Personal Philosophy	Students will develop personal responses to injustice and a set of beliefs about the social, economic, and political world order and their place in it based on an articulated system of beliefs and underlying logic or values, consideration of alternative frameworks for evaluating social issues and policy options, and analysis of the desirability and feasibility of scenarios for societal transformation or stasis.	1. Exhibitions 2. Benchmark Tasks 3. Narratives

Process for Selecting Curriculum, Materials, and Instructional Activities

Curriculum, materials and instructional activities will be chosen based on how well they reflect best practices in education, align with the desired pupil outcomes, and accommodate the interests and passions of students and teachers. The criteria will incorporate research data and understanding of cognitive learning processes. To best align with the school’s instructional philosophy and desired pupil outcomes, methods and materials will not take subject matter in isolation but as parts that fit with the overall objectives of the school. For example, an important civic development outcome is that students understand principles of justice, independence and social equality. To have a full appreciation of these principles, students must encounter them in varied ways throughout the school’s activities and curriculum. Therefore, the curriculum, materials, and instructional activities cannot be simply the sum of separate subject area materials. Instructional methods and materials must support an integrated curriculum. The comprehensive school design plan will lay out specific criteria for instructional materials in each area before materials are selected and purchased. Subject area teachers will refine the criteria in each subject, and the staff will work as a whole to plan an integrated curriculum.

Attendance Requirements

Instructional Minutes. The instructional schedule will meet the minimum instructional minutes required by the Los Angeles Unified School District. For middle and high schools, this is 65,300 minutes, with regular-length days of 370 minutes. The school year will include 180 days of instruction. At the middle school level, each school day will have four 85-minute blocks, with one block divided into a period of Spanish and a period of Physical Education or Visual and Performing Arts. Half of one English period per week will be used as a Technology lab. Three days per week will have an additional 50-minute period. Although the teachers may make some adjustments in the exact schedule, instructional minutes at the middle school level may be allocated as follows:

A typical middle school student schedule might look as follows:

Monday-Wednesday-Friday

9:00 - 10:25	English
10:35 - 12:00	Mathematics and Science/Health
12:00 - 12:40	Lunch
12:40 - 2:05	Social Science and Inquiry/Community Action
2:15 - 3:00	Physical Education
3:05 - 3:50	ESL

Tuesday-Thursday

9:00 - 10:25	English
10:35 - 12:00	Mathematics and Science/Health
12:00 - 12:50	Advisory
12:50 - 1:30	Lunch
1:35 - 3:00	Social Science and Inquiry/Community Action
3:05 - 3:55	Visual and Performing Arts
4:00 - 4:45	ESL

The high school schedule will be designed in blocks. Though the details are subject to change, the daily schedule may consist of three blocks of 110 minutes each. One 110-minute block will be a concentration class or other elective, and the other two will be content area classes or a student-initiated workshop or seminar. The school year will be divided into trimesters, so that six courses may be taught in the two non-concentration blocks: English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, a student-initiated workshop or seminar, and either Spanish as a Foreign Language, Spanish for Native Speakers, or English as a Second Language. A typical student schedule at the high school level might look as follows:

Monday - Friday

9:00 – 10:50	Concentration (110 minutes)
11:00 – 12:50	English and Social Studies (110 minutes alternating)
12:50 – 1:30	Lunch
1:30 – 2:20	Advisory or Student Common Planning Time
2:25 – 4:15	Mathematics and Science (110 minutes, alternating)

Details of the master schedule are subject to change.

School Calendar. The L.A. Leadership Academy will operate on a single-track, traditional year calendar. The school calendar allows sufficient time for teachers to conduct performance-based assessment. These days are included in teacher contracts. There are 180 days of school in this calendar. Funding to pay for teachers to prepare for the opening of school six weeks in advance is budgeted in the California Department of Education Charter Schools Star-Up Grant application. This draft of this calendar is subject to revision.

Start of School: September 3

End of school: June 25

Pupil-Free Days: August 29-30
October 14
November 27
December 3
March 13-14
May 9
June 26-27

Holidays: September 2 (Labor Day)
November 11 (Veterans' Day)
November 28-29 (Thanksgiving)
January 20 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
February 17 (Presidents' Day)
May 25 (Memorial Day)

Winter Break: December 23-January 3

Spring Break: April 7-18

C. METHODS TO MEASURE PUPIL PROGRESS

The assessment plan of the Los Angeles Leadership Academy is designed to be a tool for external accountability as well as to improve instruction and student achievement. Ongoing and benchmark assessments will be used to meet the following objectives:

- To give parents and students meaningful, useful feedback on student progress
- To help teachers revise curriculum and instruction according to student needs
- To monitor school's progress in meeting its mission, and to revise its activities accordingly
- To compare our progress to that of schools with similar student demographics
- To be accountable for meeting student exit outcomes

To best assure that we are measuring what we expect students to learn, assessments will align with the school's pupil exit outcomes and curriculum. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will conduct all required state assessments per Education Code 47605(c)(1), in compliance with the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program. Staff will help translate results so their meaning is accessible to students, parents, and teachers. The results of required tests will only be used for purposes of external accountability where they align with the school's curriculum and exit outcomes. The SAT-9 does not capture the depth and richness of our learning outcomes, although some aspects will be used to look at students' progress in certain areas of reading, writing, and math. A national standardized test, probably the National New Standards Exam, that aligns well with our curriculum and instruction will provide the mechanism for comparing L.A. Leadership Academy students' performance with students from other schools. These test results will be valid, reliable indicators of student achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Since they are criterion-referenced, scoring is based on student performance relative to a set of performance standards rather than to other students, providing more useful feedback on achievement of learning objectives.

Additional assessments will give external evaluators a fuller picture of student learning. Portfolios and exhibitions will be the primary component of the assessment strategy. Other assessment tools include teacher-designed tests, narratives, student self-evaluations, and completion of benchmark tasks. Student progress reports will be the primary record of student progress, where assessment results will be interpreted clearly, meaningfully, and consistently. Student and teacher attendance and retention rates will also be monitored, as these are closely related to student success. Assessments will inform curriculum and instruction and help students, parents, teachers, and the school's Board of Directors facilitate student success. Their design will be developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate. Brief descriptions of each method of assessment follow.

Assessment Tools

Stanford-9 (SAT-9): The L.A. Leadership Academy will comply with all state law regarding the administration of standardized testing. With regard to the SAT-9, that test is not aligned with California content standards or with our measurable student outcomes. However, part of our work in the year before opening is to find parts of the SAT-9 that do align with our student outcomes. It is to our benefit to find ways to use the scores to inform instruction, and to explain to parents what these scores do and do not say about their children's learning. Whereas the National New Standards score reporting provides more detailed analysis of student performance and aggregates data by class, the SAT-9 scores are often harder for classroom teachers to use. If our teachers or the Curriculum and Instruction committee finds that elements of the SAT-9 align meaningfully with our measurable student outcomes, they will develop a plan for the use of scores to inform teachers' practice internally, and to inform the external evaluation.

National Standardized Test: In the coming year, the staff will decide which criterion-referenced national standardized assessment with validated measurements most closely aligns with the school's pupil outcomes and curriculum. The test will be administered in at least two grade levels to assess grade level competency in reading, writing, and mathematics. The National New Standards exam will be the national standardized test used unless the Curriculum and Instruction committee finds that another standardized test better aligns with our measurable student outcomes, or provides more meaningful data. The choice to use the National New

Standards comes at significant expense to the school: whereas the SAT-9 is free and required, the National New Standards is expensive to implement, and carries a political cost as well. The L.A. Leadership Academy's willingness to incur both of these costs reflects a commitment to place its students' learning first, so that students and teachers will be able to use instructional time to promote the desired learning outcomes.

Portfolios: In each content area students will complete a portfolio of work that demonstrates conceptual understanding and skill mastery through diverse applications. Teachers will also assess student progress toward subject area and general intellectual development benchmarks as demonstrated in subject area work. School-wide evaluative rubrics will align with curriculum and pupil outcomes in each subject area. Rubrics will be based on a set used by a high-performing school with a similar educational philosophy and goals for pupil outcomes, the Francis Parker School of Devens, Massachusetts.

Exhibitions: At least twice a year, student exhibitions will provide a more comprehensive look at students' intellectual, personal, and civic development. Students may be asked to demonstrate progress in general intellectual development by selecting their best example of each benchmark outcome from their content portfolios. They will present documentation of progress toward personal and civic outcomes through reflective writing, completion of benchmark tasks, narratives from teachers, parents, mentors or peers, and other means. A combination of of parents, staff, and peers will participate in exhibition evaluations.

Teacher-designed tests: Teacher-designed tests including quizzes and cumulative exams will be used to measure mastery of specific content and skills, mainly for diagnostic purposes and as a supplement to student applications of content and skills in context.

Student Self-Evaluation: Students will evaluate their performance according to school-wide performance rubrics. They will assess their progress in writing, commenting metacognitively on their intellectual, personal, and civic growth.

Narratives: Probably the most important instructional strategy at the Los Angeles Leadership Academy is that of having teachers know students well. Narratives offer a chance to tap into the knowledge that comes from close relationships between students, teachers, parents, advisors, and mentors for assessment purposes. Incorporating input from these learning partners, students may write their own narratives, to be signed off by their teacher, in collaboration with their advisor. These written observations may be used informally in ongoing assessment, and more formally in exhibitions and student progress reports. They offer a means to express something about student performance that is not captured by other assessment tools.

Surveys: Student, parent, and teacher surveys will be used to track differences in attitude toward subject matter over the course of the year. They may also be used to track changes in less directly measurable benchmark outcomes, including aspects of personal and civic development. Surveys may be administered near the beginning and end of each school year.

Benchmark tasks: As many benchmark outcomes, particularly in the personal and civic development areas, are less directly measurable, one way to assess student progress is through the satisfactory completion of benchmark tasks. For example, one outcome is that students will experience the benefits of a physical fitness program. Satisfactory participation in an appropriate fitness program is a useful proxy for direct measurement.

Assessment System

Data gathered through the assessment tools listed above will be gathered and recorded in ways that best inform teacher practice, help students and teachers gauge their progress and how they need to develop, make student achievement visible to the Board of Directors and other community members, and feed into the external accountability system. No assessment should be done for its own sake. Instructional time is precious, so assessment will be used to improve teaching and learning. Before school opens the California School Redesign Network and Performance-Based Collaborative of Stanford University will assist with development of a system that achieves these objectives.

Data collection: Data will be collected on student attendance and retention. As students are asked to take active roles in shaping a positive school culture and in participating in decision-making, data will be collected about students' actual participation. In addition to quantitative data, this may include observations about students' attendance and participation patterns, both in class and in school life.

Student Progress Reports: Student progress reports create a succinct written record of student performance by compiling data from multiple assessments. Progress reports are one of several ways to keep parents in the communication loop about student performance, and insure that data collection is regular and consistent. The school-wide rubrics used to score portfolios and exhibitions will translate into a meaningful analysis of student performance, with point values accompanied by written explanations. Progress reports will compile narratives, attendance data, and information about student participation in class and school life. Results of standardized tests will be mailed separately as well as included in the student progress report with explanations designed to help students and parents interpret their relationship to other assessments. Advisors will review and complete advisees' progress reports.

Grading policy: Student portfolios and exhibitions will be evaluated on four-point rubrics customized to each subject area and to each measurable learning outcome, and used consistently throughout the school. Teachers will meet by subject, by grade level, and as a whole staff to select a rubric that aligns with exit and benchmark outcomes and with curriculum, both of which meet the California content and performance standards. Progress reports will be sent out four times a year, after portfolios and exhibitions have been evaluated. Effort and improvement levels may be noted as well.

Ongoing communication between advisors, teachers, parents, and students will be a hallmark of the Los Angeles Leadership Academy, and will be triggered by the assessment timeline. Parents will conference with advisors and students two to four times per year to discuss students' progress reports and upcoming learning plans. Parents will also attend and participate in student exhibitions one to four times per year. Subject area teachers will meet with parents at least twice a year. Students will conduct ongoing self-assessments and participate in assessments of their peers. Advisors and teachers will meet throughout the year to discuss assessment results, within subject areas, by grade levels, as a whole staff, and in dialogue with students, parents and members of the Board of Directors. These conversations will be used to improve curriculum and instruction as well as to evolve the assessment process itself.

Promotion requirements

To graduate from the L. A. Leadership Academy, students must demonstrate achievement in the three areas identified in the school's mission statement: intellectual, personal, and civic. Achievement will be demonstrated through satisfactory completion of an appropriate program of academic study, applied learning, and community service. Graduation portfolios must be presented, evaluated, and approved (See Appendix B). Students must pass all state competency tests or their equivalent.

School-wide performance goals include the following:

- The percentage of students performing at grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics will increase by five points each year. The Curriculum and Instruction Committee will determine the most appropriate instrument to assess proficiency. The reading level of all entering students will be assessed, and the performance of all students reading below grade level will be assessed until grade level proficiency is reached.
- The percentage of satisfactory portfolios and exhibitions (those receiving a score of three or four) will increase by five points each year.
- The percentage of distinguished portfolios and exhibitions (those receiving a score of four) will increase by two points each year.
- The percentage of students performing at grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics will be higher than LAUSD averages.
- Student attendance and retention rates will be higher than LAUSD averages.

- At least 80% of parents will confer with advisors or teachers and students at least twice a year.

Results from standardized tests, student progress reports, stakeholder surveys and volunteered input, data collection and other assessments will be compiled in an annual report that will serve as the basis for an annual programmatic audit. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will contract with an outside evaluator to plan a longitudinal study, and, if funding permits, to conduct the study.

ELEMENT D: GOVERNANCE

Public Operating Principles. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will comply with all laws relating to public agencies in general, and all federal laws and regulations and state codes as they pertain to charter schools. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations, will not charge tuition, and will not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

Non-Profit Status. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy has been incorporated as a nonprofit corporation, has been granted tax exempt status under sec. 501(c)3, and as such is permitted to receive tax deductible contributions. By-laws that govern the Board of Directors are included in Appendix X along with the Articles of Incorporation. By-laws will be amended as needed, based upon ongoing program evaluation and changing needs.

Board of Directors

Like all corporations, the Los Angeles Leadership Academy is governed by a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is comprised of 15, 17, or 19 voting members and one non-voting member. To prevent any real or perceived conflict of interest or incompatibility of office, the representative of the LAUSD will sit on the Board of Directors as a non-voting member who facilitates communications and mutual understanding between the charter school and the District.

Appointment of Directors. The selection of the Board is controlled by the corporation's by-laws, which mandate that a nominating committee propose candidates to guarantee a diversity of points of view. Except in the first years of its existence, all Board members will serve a four-year term. In the first years, one third of the members will serve for two years, one third will serve three years and one third will serve four years. Thus in any one year only one third of the Board will be either replaced or re-elected. A Board member may be re-elected no more than twice.

Duties of Directors. The Board of Directors is responsible for approving school policy, not for managing school operations. Directors will:

- attend monthly meetings of the Board;
- attend meetings of the Board committees on which they sit
- contribute to the mission and vision of the school based on the skills and experience they bring;
- assure that decisions are consistent with the vision and mission of the school;
- assure that decisions do not threaten the financial stability of the school;

Qualifications. Directors will be selected based on their commitment to the mission and vision of the school, their willingness to fill the roles and functions as Directors, and their experience in educational leadership or expertise, adolescent development, community involvement or civic leadership, fundraising, financial management, legal or personnel matters related to schools, program design or development, or experience with low-income or minority children. The experience requirement will not apply to parent and student members, who will be nominated and elected by their constituent group. Potential Directors selected for the Board will participate in a process to assure that they understand the mission and vision of the school.

Functions of the Board of Directors. It is the job of the Board of Directors to establish and approve major operational policies, to select and evaluate the Executive Director, to approve the school's annual budget and oversee the school's financial affairs, to direct fundraising activities, to approve all major contracts, and to raise private funds when necessary. Amendments to the charter and memorandums of understanding will be made through the Board for review and approval by the District. The Board of Directors plays a key role in developing a culture of cooperation for the school. The Board must understand the mission and vision of the school and inform all of its decisions with that mission and vision. Because the school strives to produce a continuous stream of leaders in a multicultural society, the Board itself must exemplify the kind of leadership it expects from its students. For that reason the Board will reflect the many faces of our community at large,

and will resonate with the many voices of those whom the school attempts to serve. This will be accomplished as follows:

1. The LAUSD representative will serve ex-officio
2. One member will be selected from the middle school faculty and one from the high school faculty;
3. One member will be a student enrolled in the middle school selected by the middle school students, and one a student enrolled in the high school selected by the high school students;
4. One member will be a parent of a student enrolled in the middle school and one member a parent of a student enrolled in the high school, both to be selected by the parents;
5. Remaining Board members will represent a wide cross-section of the community at large, each of whom will have particular skills and backgrounds necessary to bring to bear a full range of experience and talent.

See Appendix H for a list of founding Board of Directors members.

Advisory Board. In addition to the Board of Directors there will be an Advisory Board comprised of individuals with particular skills whom the Board may call on from time to time in order to accomplish specific tasks. The Advisory Board may also include prominent individuals in the community who cannot commit the time necessary to sit on the Board of Directors, but who nevertheless wish to contribute some time and effort to advance the success of the school. See Appendix H for a list of founding Board of Directors members.

Governance Committees

The Board of Directors and the Executive Director will appoint committees as needed in order to inform its work. For its members, the committees may draw upon all stakeholders: students, faculty, non-teaching employees, volunteers, parents and members of the Board of Advisors. Board of Directors members may only be voting members of Board committees. Board Committees in formation include Development, Facilities and Long-term Planning, Liability, and Nominating. School committees to be formed by the Executive Director include Budget, Curriculum and Instruction, and Personnel. Committee members will cooperate to enhance articulation across committees in ways that advance the mission and vision of the school.

Board Committees. The Development Committee directs fundraising efforts. Unfortunately, private fundraising has become a necessary way of life for charter public schools. California ranks 43rd in the country in per pupil expenditures on public schools, while personnel expenditures are some of the highest. Even at full complement of 420 students the annual budget will not provide for important personnel needs, programs and activities, instructional materials, capital needs, and so on. The Development Committee will monitor funding sources and assure that grant-seeking is timely and aggressive.

The Facilities and Long-Term Planning Committee is responsible for the current and future facilities needs of the school. Chief among these is the need for a facility to house the high school, with an eye to implementation of Proposition 39. This committee will monitor the leasehold relationship with Immanuel Presbyterian Church, and the necessary upgrading of the premises to meet the needs of the school.

The Liability Committee is the school's liaison to its insurance vendors, and recommends all policies regarding protection of the school against liability of every kind. At a minimum the school will maintain in effect appropriate policies insuring against general liability, Board errors and omissions, and workers' compensation claims. This committee will arrange for and direct all necessary training of personnel in efforts to avoid liability.

The Nominating Committee is responsible for the recruitment and nomination of all new Board members. This committee orients and trains new Board members, and is charged with responsibility for evaluating the Board in accordance with the school's mission.

School committees The job of the Budget Committee is to balance competing priorities in ways that best meet the mission and vision of the school. Members from all stakeholder groups will be represented on the committee and are encouraged to voice their opinions. In order to assist the school in its initial budget calculations (see Appendix J), the school has retained the services of Excellence in Education (ExEd) a private nonprofit agency in Santa Monica. ExEd represents many charter schools in Southern California and brings substantial expertise to the task of preparing schools budgets. This committee will also be responsible for selecting the independent auditor who will prepare the annual financial audit as described in Element I. The Executive Director or the Program Director will sit on this committee.

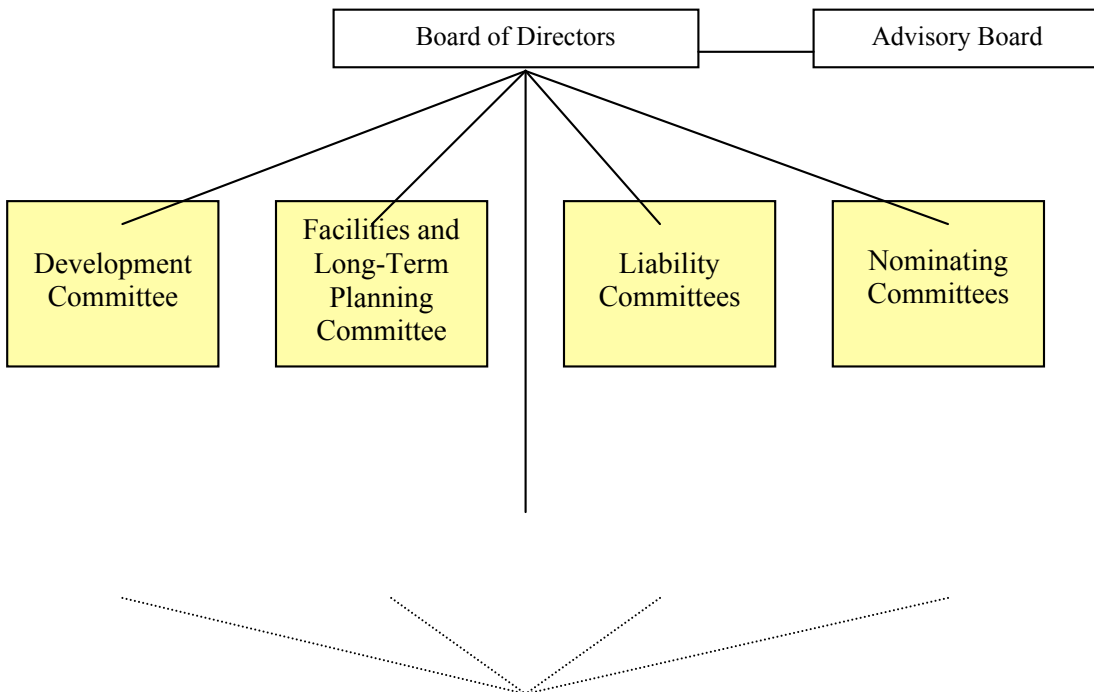
The Curriculum and Instruction Committee will make sure that all instructional practices advance the mission of the school. In conjunction with all faculty, this committee will design a professional development plan that supports the instructional vision, and will be responsible for maintaining and distributing to teachers a list of suggested instructional and professional development resources in order to keep pace with best practices. The committee will recommend graduation criteria for both the middle and high schools, will set benchmarks for pupil progress in every grade in each subject area, will review measurable pupil outcomes on an annual basis, and. The committee will recommend appropriate texts and supplies, This committee will be responsible for directing the compilation of the school’s annual performance report. The committee will make financial recommendations for the instructional budget to the Executive Director based on its findings, which shall be consistent with the mission and vision of the school. The Executive Director or the Program Director will sit on this committee.

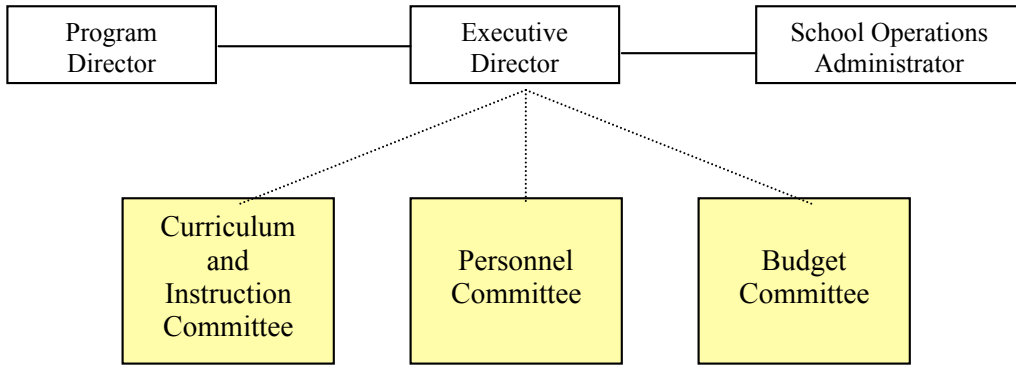
The Personnel Committee makes recommendations regarding all personnel policies, and is responsible for keeping the school’s personnel manual current. This committee sets priorities in hiring, and directs all recruitment campaigns. This committee also serves as a court of appeal in personnel matters. The Program Director and the Executive Director will sit on this committee.

The Board will appoint ad hoc committees as the need arises.

Organizational Chart

Each committee consists of at least one student, at least one parent, and at least one member of the faculty or administrative staff, and at least one Board member. For a description of the Directors’ jobs, see Element E.





Parent/Guardian Involvement

In this charter, the term “parents” refers to the primary adult caretakers of children, be they biological parents, parents by marriage, biological grandparents, adult siblings, or legal guardians through the foster care system.

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy recognizes that parent partnership in education is critical to children’s success in school. A true partnership between parents and schools does not consist of a one-way flow of information and directives from the school to the parent. Schools must be responsive to the needs of parents, view them as experts on their children, and utilize their potential to help the school and their children thrive. The L.A. Leadership Academy recognizes that many parents are not accustomed to actively participating in school life and decision-making, so all staff will actively support and encourage parents to become involved. The Community Outreach Coordinator will find varied ways to bring parents into school life and draw on their areas of expertise and experience.

The School Design Phase. The partnership begins before school opens, by assuring that potential L.A. Leadership Academy parents understand the mission and vision of the school and by integrating the needs and values of parents and their students into the school design. Parents interested in enrolling a child in the L.A. Leadership Academy will be invited to participate in all aspects of the school design process. In particular, they shall be asked to help create the Parent Handbook and a participation agreement between the school and parents of all students to be signed before enrolling their children in the school.

Parents in Governance. Parents’ voices are respected in school decisions because they know their children best, and because the school has a duty to be responsive to their needs and interests, so long as they are consistent with the school’s mission and vision. The L.A. Leadership Academy offers parents seats on all governance committees and on the Board of Directors to assure that parent perspectives are heard and respected in decision-making arenas. Parents are asked to become informed about issues on which they are asked to help make decisions. Parent governance representatives have a special charge to assure that pertinent information is communicated to other parents, and that they are diligent in assuring that their communiqués in committee and to the Board of Directors reflect the diversity of ideas and perspectives present among parents.

All school committees will open a minimum of one to three seats for parents/guardians, with at least one seat reserved for a parent/guardian of a student at the middle school level, and one parent/guardian of a student at the high school level. A parent/guardian from each level shall sit on the Board of Directors.

Parent membership in the Board of Directors and on the governance committees is to be representative in nature. Parents assuming these roles agree to undertake the responsibility of representing fairly the breadth of interests and perspectives among all parents/guardians. This means that parents involved in governance will play a role in educating parents about governance matters at issue, and taking steps to get input from all parents. The Community Outreach Coordinator will help facilitate this process.

Ongoing School-Home Links. Strong relationships between school and home depend on mutual respect, trust, and communication. The best way to build such relationships is by fostering dialogue to assure that parents understand and support the fundamental mission and vision of the school, and to help school staff understand the needs, wishes, values, and culture of parents and students. The Community Outreach Coordinator will be the primary facilitator of this process. School-home bridge-building activities include:

- Orientation for new families to clarify the mission and vision of the school, the educational approach, and expectations for parent participation;
- Parent meetings to solicit input on major school decisions and feedback on ongoing operations;
- Preparation and presentation of the school's parent handbook;
- Invitation of parents to committee meetings and school functions;
- Inclusion of parents in assessment process, and in learning exhibitions;
- Training in how the school's assessment process works, including parents' roles in it;
- Inclusion of parents in instruction, as appropriate;
- Regular communication between parents and advisors;
- Workshops to help parents support their children's education;
- College, career, and academic counseling for every parent and student; and
- School celebrations.

Teacher Involvement

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy views teachers as the experts in curriculum and instruction. As the primary executors of the school's educational program, they are the day-to-day stewards of the school's mission and vision. Their voices will be heard as authoritative in matters related to curriculum, instruction, and student achievement, and as having weight in all areas of school decision-making. All committees may have teacher representatives. Teachers will confer among themselves and with administrators to discuss concerns, student progress, student needs, professional development plans, long range school plans, and other governance issues.

Student Involvement

Students' voices are respected in school decisions, and their expertise about their needs and interests is valued. Student opinion regarding the effectiveness of instructional styles in meeting their learning needs is valued. The school has a duty to be responsive to all students' needs and interests, so long as they are consistent with the school's mission and vision. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy offers students seats on all governance committees and on the Board of Directors to assure that student perspectives are heard and respected in decision-making arenas. With this participatory role in decision-making comes responsibility: students have a duty to become informed about issues on which they are asked to help make decisions. Student governance representatives have a special charge to assure that pertinent information is communicated to students, and that they are diligent in assuring that their communiqués in committee and to the Board of Directors reflect the diversity of ideas and perspectives present among students.

Community Involvement

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will be actively involved in community life. Students will get to know the resources, cultural assets, and needs of the community through observation, inquiry, and participation in community governance forums. Students will communicate with diverse area residents, workers, and other area stakeholders. They will choose issues on which to focus in their community action projects. Students will invite community members to attend forums, community tours, and other activities they organize. Students and teachers will learn about the staff and work of local community organizations to find shared connections in their work and activities. The L.A. Leadership Academy will look for ways area businesses and organizations might collaborate to enhance the school's mission and vision, and assure that the school is a good neighbor.

The school will draw on the resources of the broader community of Los Angeles through its Board of Directors, Advisory Board, and enrichment and instructional activities. Community members with expertise or experience related to students' academic, personal, or civic development will work with students, teachers, and sometimes parents to enhance the school's ability to meet its learning outcomes. This will happen through guest speaker visits, guest facilitator visits as students work on particular projects, community mentoring, professional development with teachers, and workshops with parents. A corps of volunteer tutors will bring positive adult role models into the school as area residents and workers work with students before and after school.

ELEMENT E: QUALIFICATIONS OF STAFF

The most critical element to the success of the Los Angeles Leadership Academy is its staff. The mission and vision of a school are just words on paper without a team committed to and capable of realizing them. Regardless of their role in the school, every person hired by the Los Angeles Leadership Academy actively helps promote a rigorous educational experience, healthy personal development, and civic leadership for all students. Every staff person is expected to treat all students, parents, staff, and other community members with respect, and to follow the Los Angeles Leadership Academy Code of Conduct.

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will not discriminate against any employee on the basis of race, color, age, gender, sex, national origin, actual or perceived sexual orientation, marital status, affiliations, political or religious beliefs, medical condition (cancer-related), physical disability or in retaliation. To best meet families needs and the school's mission, employee recruitment will seek to create a bilingual, multicultural staff. All staff is expected to be sensitive to the linguistic and cultural needs of students, and to participate in staff development to enhance their skills in this area.

Prior to the first day of work and within one month of hiring, the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will require each employee to submit to a criminal background check as required by Education Code Section 44237. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will adhere to California laws, including fingerprinting, drug testing, and prohibitions regarding the employment of any person who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony. Prior to work each employee must furnish an up-to-date Mantoux Tuberculosis (TB) testing, and documents establishing legal employment status.

All personnel will be hired by contract. Full-time staff will be hired for one-year terms, in the first year of the school's operation. The Board of Directors may make exceptions to this policy in future years. Contract extensions in the second year will be from one to three years. Contract extensions in subsequent years will be from one to five years. Contracts will be renewed based on demonstration of meeting or exceeding the requirements of individual contracts and adhering to policies, procedures, and expectations outlined in the employee handbook. These expectations will be designed to support the mission and vision of the school and to comply with state laws.

In the first year of operation, salaries and benefit levels will be comparable to those offered to the Los Angeles Unified School District. The formulas for calculating salary and benefit levels will continue to be linked to those of the Los Angeles Unified School District unless the staff elects otherwise. Any alteration is subject to approval by the Board of Education and must consider financial stability.

Staff hiring and relations will reflect the following commitments:

- Expectations will be clearly communicated;
- Thoughtful, consistent evaluation processes will provide meaningful assessment of staff member's job performance with respect to the mission and vision of the school, and to state laws;
- Employees performing below expectation will receive conferencing and corrective interventions as appropriate;
- The school will support professional development and encourage staff to contribute based on their unique talents;
- All employees will help create and sustain respectful, supportive working environment with open lines of communication; and
- The school will provide carefully considered incentives to motivate and reinforce excellent performance.

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy anticipates hiring for the positions listed below.

Executive Director

Roles and functions. The Executive Director is directly responsible to the Board of Directors. This position may be merged with that of Program Director, although they will initially be performed by separate individuals. Delegating duties as appropriate, he or she will:

- Supervise the operations of the school in accordance with school policies;
- Work closely and cooperatively with the School Operations Administrator and the Program Director to ensure effective and smooth operations;
- Maintain a balanced school budget, such that it best promotes the mission and vision of the school;
- Draft an annual budget proposal for the Board of Directors;
- Assure that the school is in compliance with state and federal law, its Charter, and the requirements of any funding sources it receives;
- Secure private, state, and federal grants, and direct private fundraising efforts;
- Serve as primary liaison to the Board of Directors;
- Report to the Board of Directors as to the short term fiscal and programmatic success, in cooperation with the School Operations Administrator and the Program Director;
- Hire and fire according to the processes outlined in the Charter and the Personnel Handbook;
- Assemble and present annual reports;
- Respond to complaints and suggestions of staff, students and parents not addressed by teachers, the Community Outreach Coordinator, or the Program Director;
- Acknowledge praiseworthy efforts of staff, students, and parents;
- Participate in education-related organizations as appropriate;
- Open and close the campus;
- Maintain a safe, clean, and aesthetically pleasing campus;
- Prepare and maintain employee policies, safety procedures, emergency drills and evacuation plans and corresponding handbooks;
- Assist with student discipline;
- Coordinate extracurricular and co-curricular programs; and
- Sit on the Budget and Personnel committees as needed.

Qualifications. The Executive Director will have at least three years experience with program development or administration for a school, organization, or corporation. He or she will have at least two years experience sitting on or reporting to a Board of Directors for a school, organization, or corporation. He or she will demonstrate deep understanding of and commitment to the mission and vision of the school. He or she will have proven experience as a team leader, and will be able to inspire staff through positive and capable leadership. He or she will have experience resolving personnel issues objectively and through due process. The Executive Director will guide staff such that each member uses his or her expertise to enhance the educational program.

Evaluation. The Board of Directors is responsible for evaluating the performance of the Executive Director, based in part on the evaluations of staff and parents. The Personnel Committee will develop criteria for evaluation based on a concept of ideal fulfillment of the roles and functions of the Executive Director. This evaluation will be completed by the Board of Directors and reviewed with the Executive Director annually. An evaluation will be completed and presented by December 30 of each year, with an opportunity for revisions before the final version is submitted by March 1 of each year.

Program Director

Roles and functions. The Program Director will:

- Guide the educational program to assure that it best advances the mission and vision of the school;
- Facilitate collaboration among teachers in developing and implementing curriculum and instruction;
- Facilitate positive, constructive communication among Board Directors, administrative staff, teachers, students, and parents, especially as related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
- Coordinate student assessment and academic accountability reporting;
- Complete an annual performance report;
- Coordinate professional development opportunities in consultation with teachers;
- Oversee staff and student scheduling;
- Assist teachers with student discipline;
- Disseminate information on best practices to teachers;
- Coordinate teacher evaluation;

- Support instructional practice through observation and discussion;
- Arrange for substitute teaching staff as needed;
- Oversee course approval process for the University of California;
- Coordinate WASC accreditation activities;
- Collaborate with the Community Outreach Coordinator to bring parents, community members and volunteers into the life of the school;
- Actively participate in any education-related organizations as appropriate; and
- Report to the Board of Directors, and sit on the Curriculum and Instruction, Personnel and Budget Committees.

Qualifications. The Program Director will have deep understanding of and commitment to the vision and mission of the school. He or she will demonstrate ability to translate this understanding into an effective educational program. He or she will have proven experience in educational leadership or program development. He or she will have proven experience working in effective collaboration with teachers to realize a shared vision. He or she will have a working knowledge of methods of progressive education, critical pedagogy, and instructional strategies related to the vision of the school. He or she will demonstrate commitment to keeping current with best practices in education.

Evaluation. The Program Director will be evaluated annually by the Executive Director and the teachers, who will review the evaluation with the Program Director and the Board of Directors. Criteria for the evaluation will be developed by an ad-hoc committee of teachers based on a concept of ideal fulfillment of the roles and functions of the position. The evaluation will be completed and presented by December 30 of each year, with an opportunity for revisions before the final version is submitted by March 1 of each year.

School Operations Administrator

Roles and functions. The School Operations Administrator will:

- Monitor the school's accounting;
- Assure that all reporting functions are conducted accurately and in a timely manner;
- Assure that all payments are made accurately and in a timely manner, including payment of wages and salaries;
- Pursue timely receipt of Block Grant, Title I, and other payments to the school;
- Oversee the processing of student enrollment and staff hiring paperwork;
- Advise the Executive Director as to contracts with vendors for security, transportation, and food service;
- Manage transportation, as needed;
- Supervise the operation of all school computer software systems;
- Place orders for office and classroom supplies;
- Arrange standardized testing activities,
- Supervise the Clerk; and
- Sit on committees as needed.

Qualifications. The School Operations Administrator will have at least three years of related experience. He or she will understand and be committed to the mission and vision of the school.

Evaluation. The School Operations Administrator will be evaluated annually by the Executive Director, who will review the evaluation with the School Operations Administrator and the Board of Directors. Criteria for the evaluation will be developed by the Personnel Committee based on a concept of ideal fulfillment of the roles and functions of the position. An evaluation will be completed and presented by December 30 of each year, with an opportunity for revisions before the final version is submitted by March 1 of each year.

Community Outreach Coordinator

Initially these roles will be filled by the School Operations Administrator.

Roles and functions. The Community Outreach Coordinator will:

- Maintain lines of communication with parents and guardians;
- Facilitate high levels of meaningful participation of parents and guardians in the life and decision-making of the school;
- Act as a liaison for parents, guardians, and community members to the Executive director as needed;
- Coordinate training of parents and guardians to act as partners in education;
- Bring community members into the life of the school in ways that enhance the mission and vision of the school;
- Respond to requests for information about the school; and
- Sit on the Parent Committee and the Community Action Committee.

Qualifications. The Community Outreach Coordinator will have proven experience working with schools as an advocate, organizer, or staff person. He or she will have experience representing a constituency or coordinating group activity. He or she will lead meetings effectively and with a positive presence. He or she will be able to manage complaints effectively, and represent those complaints accurately when they require the attention of additional staff. He or she will understand and be committed to the mission and vision of the school, effectively communicate this understanding to parents, and coordinate parent and community participation in ways that support the mission and vision. He or she will speak, comprehend, read, and write fluently in Spanish and English.

Evaluation. The Community Outreach Coordinator will be evaluated annually by the Executive Director and a group of parents, who will review the evaluation with the Community Liaison and the Board of Directors. Criteria for the evaluation will be developed by an ad-hoc committee of parents based on a concept of ideal fulfillment of the roles and functions of the position. The evaluation may be informal if the position represents less than 50% of the staff member's time. If the position represents over 50% of the staff member's time, an evaluation will be completed and presented by December 30 of each year, with an opportunity for revisions before the final version is submitted by March 1 of each year.

Clerk

Roles and functions. Delegating duties as appropriate to any office personnel or volunteers, the Office Manager will:

- Perform clerical and administrative procedures for daily school operations;
- Interact pleasantly and professionally with all members of the learning community and the public;
- Maintain a neat and welcoming atmosphere in the office;
- Prepare correspondence, forms, reports, memorandums, and student attendance and enrollment data in an accurate and timely manner;
- Assure that student data, permission slips, and other required paperwork are kept current for each student as needed;
- Prepare and mail correspondence with students' parents;
- Translate school documents and communications to Spanish or English as needed;
- Assure that the office phone is covered;
- Have regular, punctual attendance; and
- Assist teachers and administrative staff as needed.

Qualifications. The Clerk will have at least two years working as an office manager, administrative assistant, or equivalent position. He or she will effectively use standard office machines and computer software programs such as Microsoft Word, Excel and email programs. He or she will speak, comprehend, read, and write fluently in Spanish and English. He or she will effectively attend to the details of work, and conduct his or her activities with accuracy and timeliness.

Evaluation. The Clerk will be evaluated annually by the Executive Director, who will review the evaluation with the Clerk and the Board of Directors. Criteria for the evaluation will be developed by the Personnel Committee based on a concept of ideal fulfillment of the roles and functions of the position. An evaluation will be completed and presented by December 30 of each year, with an opportunity for revisions before the final version is submitted by March 1 of each year.

Teachers

Roles and functions. Teachers will:

- Facilitate curriculum, instruction, and assessment in a manner consistent with the mission and vision of the school;
- Actively maintain respectful, open communication with students, parents, and other staff members;
- Help students learn to regulate their own behavior, develop strong interpersonal and coping skills, and use their voice;
- Assess student needs and look for ways to meet them as an ongoing part of their job;
- Collaborate with other teachers to plan integrated curriculum;
- Participate in weekly staff meetings to discuss school plans, student progress, teaching practice, and other issues as needed;
- Map instruction and student work to key California Academic Content Standards and to the Measurable Pupil Outcomes;
- Participate in planning and professional development activities before and during the school year;
- Pursue professional development and keep current with best practices in their subject areas;
- Maintain a professional portfolio;
- Participate openly in reflective dialogue and the peer evaluation process;
- Cooperate to allow observation of teaching by other teachers;
- Maintain communication with parents and guardians of students;
- Participate on at least one governance committee; and
- Have regular, punctual attendance.

Qualifications. Teachers will have a valid credential to teach in California, with at least three years of teaching experience preferred. Teachers will demonstrate deep understanding of the mission and vision of the school, and will be able to translate that understanding into their practice as teachers. Teachers will demonstrate willingness and ability to fulfill all of the roles and functions of their position. Characteristics that add to the multilingual, multicultural nature of the faculty are valued as assets. Teacher candidates selected for hire will participate in a staff retreat before their contracts are signed to assure that they understand well the mission and vision of the school and to give existing staff better knowledge of the candidates.

Evaluation. Teachers will be evaluated according to a process and criteria they design before school opens. The process must be approved by the Board of Directors and will be piloted during the first year of school and refined in future years. The process will incorporate the use of portfolios and probably the use of peer evaluations, solicitation of student input, and self-evaluation. The process may be designed such that final evaluations are completed by the Program Director, the Executive Director, or the Personnel Committee. The staff will develop an evaluative rubric that characterizes teacher behavior for each criterion from beginning to experienced practice.

Teachers on a one-year contract, including emergency-permit and probationary teachers will have one full evaluation by the end of December, with one to three partial evaluations during that year. A teacher with an unsatisfactory final evaluation will not receive an invitation to renew his or her contract.

Teachers on a multi-year contract will participate in a three-year assessment cycle that involves classroom observation, peer evaluation, and portfolio presentation, with one evaluation per year.

In addition to formal assessments, teaching staff will continuously engage in reflection and discussion about teaching practice. Doors to classrooms will be open, literally and metaphorically, so teachers are encouraged and welcomed to know each other's instruction. For many teachers, this openness can be uncomfortable, but the teaching staff will be committed to making the process supportive and constructive. Our staff will continually seek to improve its teaching practice, and that means being honest and critical about one's own performance, as well as emphasizing each teacher's strengths. When some aspect of teaching practice is unsatisfactory and extra interventions are needed, the Program Director and the Executive Director will seek to provide appropriate remediation.

ELEMENT F: HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will implement a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies, created in consultation with our insurance providers and public safety agencies, and in compliance with local, state, and federal laws. These policies will be incorporated into school and employee handbooks as needed, and reviewed periodically by the school's governing bodies. Within the first month of each school year staff and students will review emergency procedures. At a minimum they will address the following areas:

- Staff submission to a criminal background check and provision of a criminal record summary, a medical exam and results of a current Mantoux Tuberculosis (TB) test;
- Student provision of immunization records, to the extent required of pupils enrolled in non-charter public schools;
- Procedures for authorization, correct administration, and locked storage of students' prescription medication;
- Procedures in the event of natural disasters such as fires and earthquakes;
- Procedures in the event of bomb threats or disasters caused by humans;
- Regular execution of fire and earthquake drills;
- Completion of a thorough evacuation plan, including procedures for parents;
- Appropriate training of instructional and administrative staff in emergency response;
- Provision to staff of an emergency kit that includes critical emergency phone numbers, the school's emergency plans and procedures, emergency response guide, and an emergency medical kit;
- Prevention of contact with blood-borne pathogens;
- The school as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free workplace;
- Child abuse reporting procedures;
- Instruction in health education;
- Use and upkeep of safe school facilities;
- Furnishing and maintenance of facilities in a secure and clean manner;
- Safe use and storage of custodial products and other hazardous materials;
- Safe food preparation and storage according to federal guidelines; and
- Bus and car transportation of students only with insured, licensed drivers.

ELEMENT G: RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND GENDER BALANCE OF STUDENTS

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy is committed to maintaining a diverse student body, and will take the following steps to achieve a racial, ethnic, and gender balance that is reflective of the Los Angeles Unified School District as a whole:

1. *Conduct outreach to students from the closest elementary schools.* The schools closest to the facility are predominantly Latino, with 6-17% comprised of Asian American students.
2. *Conduct outreach to the nearest elementary school with a large percentage of African American students.* Three to five miles south of the facility, several elementary schools range from 30-48% African American. We believe that many students and their parents will be attracted to our program. We will make every effort to assure that students travelling to our school have appropriate transportation options, and that provisions are made to ensure that their parents participate fully in the life of the school.
3. *Conduct outreach through civic-oriented community organizations in central to west Los Angeles.* White students are a rarity in the schools of Los Angeles' lowest income areas, but some White parents may be interested in the unique program of the Los Angeles Leadership Academy. In particular, parents with an interest in civic leadership may wish to send their children to a school that shares their value of active social responsibility.

ELEMENT H: ADMISSIONS

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, age, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. In accordance with Education Code Section 476045(5)(H), the L.A. Leadership Academy shall admit all students who wish to attend, up to the school's enrollment limit. The school will adhere to entrance and enrollment age requirements set by the District. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will be non-sectarian and non-discriminatory in all areas of operation and will not charge tuition.

Admissions outreach are designed to minimize the probability of "cherry-picking" from local schools. Parents who are more aware of alternative educational options for their children are more likely to provide more academic support for their children at home. Thus, charter schools might tend to draw students who are somewhat more likely to succeed. The L.A. Leadership Academy is committed to serving all children, including those more likely to "slip through the cracks" for lack of adequate support at home or school. Therefore, our recruitment strategy will target students directly through after-school and L.A. Bridges programs, and by recommendations from teachers and counselors of students who might benefit from a more intimate, constructivist learning environment. Local non-profit organizations who serve homeless children, children in the foster-care system, and other children whose circumstances put them at risk for school failure will refer children to our school.

Application to the L.A. Leadership Academy should be an informed, carefully considered decision. As part of the application process, students and parents or guardians are expected to attend an information session to learn more about the educational program of the L. A. Leadership Academy. The application will ask students and parents to answer several questions related to their interest in attending the school. Parents may complete this portion orally if they choose. An incomplete answer by a parent will not disqualify a student. The content of answers will not be used as a factor of admission, but the requirement helps assure that students are seriously interested in attending the L. A. Leadership Academy.

The school will give admissions priority to the following students:

1. Children or wards of Los Angeles Leadership Academy staff
2. Siblings of students currently enrolled, or wards of their parents
3. Students whose race, ethnicity, or gender helps student enrollment attain parity with the racial, ethnic, and gender balance of the LAUSD
4. Children of parents or guardians who have served on our Design Team or signed our charter school petition
5. Students who reside in the Los Angeles Unified School District

If the number of applicants exceeds enrollment capacity at the time of the application deadline, students will be admitted to the school through a random lottery (respecting the admissions priorities stated above). Siblings of children whose names are drawn will automatically be given the next enrollment slot, in order to help keep families together.

Parents and students admitted to the school are expected to attend an orientation session to review the policies and expectations of the school. The Community Outreach Coordinator will work to assure that all families understand these policies and expectations and that they are aware of ways to be involved in the school's life and decision-making. Each student will be given a student handbook in the native language of the parent, provided a translator for that language can be secured, unless they indicate that a copy in English is preferred.

ELEMENT I: FINANCIAL AUDIT

The Los Angeles Leadership Academy's Budget and Finance Committee will oversee selection of an independent auditor and the completion of an annual audit of the school's financial affairs. Financial statements will be prepared with generally accepted accounting principles. The audit will verify the accuracy of the L.A. Leadership Academy's financial statements, attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and reviews the L.A. Leadership Academy's internal controls. The audit will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in any applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars. The annual audit will be filed with the District by the end of October of each fiscal year and that a copy of the auditor's findings will be forwarded to the chief financial officer of the LAUSD. The Finance Committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the L.A. Leadership Academy's Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The L.A. Leadership Academy's Board of Directors will report to the LAUSD regarding how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved, to the satisfaction of the District. Any disputes regarding the resolution will be referred to the dispute resolution process described in Element N.

The L.A. Leadership Academy will compile and provide to the District an annual performance report. This report will, at a minimum, include the following data:

- Summary data showing student progress toward the goals and outcomes specified in Element B from assessment instruments and techniques as described in Element C;
- An analysis of whether student performance is meeting the goals specified in Element B. This data will be displayed on both a school-wide basis and disaggregated by major racial and ethnic categories and language dominance to the extent feasible without compromising student confidentiality;
- A summary of major decisions and policies established by the L.A. Leadership Academy Board of Directors during the year including any changes in the Board's composition;
- Data on the level of parent involvement in the school's governance and volunteer programs and summary data from an annual parent and student satisfaction survey;
- Data regarding the number of staff working at the school and their qualifications;
- A copy of the L.A. Leadership Academy's health and safety policies and/or a summary of any major changes to those policies during the year;
- Information demonstrating whether the L.A. Leadership Academy implemented the means listed in charter Element G to achieve a racially and ethnically balanced student population;
- An overview of the L.A. Leadership Academy's admissions practices during the year and data regarding the number of students enrolled, the number on waiting lists, and the numbers of students expelled and/or suspended;
- Analyses of the effectiveness of the school's internal and external dispute mechanisms and data on the number of and resolution of disputes and complaints; and
- Other information regarding the educational program, staff development, and the administrative, legal, and governance operation of the school relative to compliance with the terms of the charter generally.

The District will seek input from the L.A. Leadership Academy as it continues to design an accountability system for charter schools that will include the submission of an annual programmatic audit report.

ELEMENT J: STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Approach to Student Discipline. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy has an approach to discipline that emphasizes prevention over punishment through a school culture of caring and respect, a focus on students' social and emotional development, and clear, consistent policies. The school culture will create powerful norms and incentives to guide student behavior. Students who are valued, respected, and treated as competent often respond in kind. Teachers and parents can help students cultivate conscientious, respectful behavior, and this behavior can be self-perpetuating as students increasingly follow suit. Teachers and administrators do their part by setting the tone of the school, by reminding students of expectations, by managing the school in appropriate and culturally competent ways, and by helping students learn how to take responsibility for their actions. Disciplinary issues will be handled in fair and sometimes inventive ways that seek, above all, to help students learn to live up to expectations.

The L.A. Leadership Academy's discipline policies and procedures will advance an ethic of caring and the goals of student learning and improvement through the following elements:

- 1) Discipline will be driven by the school's mission and values. Students' cognitive skills, healthy personal development, and effectiveness as leaders will be enhanced as the faculty shifts responsibility for students' behavior to students by coaching rather than ordering students. Adults may tell students what to do, but students will have opportunities to talk about what happened and to develop self-control.
- 2) Consequences are applied on a case-by-case basis. Zero tolerance and mechanical responses are not acceptable, as adults best serve the needs of the school by fairly exercising judgment based on their knowledge of students and situations.
- 3) Discipline is conducted in a process of talking and reflection. Students have opportunities to explain their actions, to introduce their own "witnesses," and they are expected to look earnestly at their behavior and attempt to prevent future problems.
- 4) Resources are devoted to relationship building. Small schools tend to have dramatically lower rates of serious disciplinary incidents and threats to safety. The small class size, the advisory program, student-centered learning methods, and relationship building activities build trust, respect, and a sense of collaboration among students and staff.
- 5) Teachers and parents have support to develop skills in effective positive classroom management and parenting techniques, and in character education, conflict resolution, and related areas.

Discipline Policies. The L.A. Leadership Academy will develop a comprehensive set of student discipline policies that clearly describe the school's expectations for attendance, work habits, mutual respect, and safety. The school's policies on student discipline will be designed and revised with input from the school community, including students, parents, and teachers. All students and a parent/guardian of each student will be asked to verify that they have reviewed and understand the policies prior to enrollment. The school's discipline policies will not be discriminatory, arbitrary or capricious and will follow general principles of due process. They will be printed in the Student Handbook. The discipline policies will be adapted as needed in regard to the discipline of a student with special needs as determined by the provisions of the IDEA.

Suspension and Expulsion

Students who present an immediate threat to the health and safety of others may be suspended or expelled. A remediation plan will be written with parents, students, and staff to clearly describe progressive discipline measures, grounds for suspension and expulsion, minimum/maximum number of consecutive days of suspension, notification process to parents of suspension, reasons for suspension, appeal process, length of suspension, and provision for student's education while suspended.

A student may be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated in this section and related to school activity or school attendance that occur at any time, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

- While on school grounds.
- While going to or coming from school.
- During the lunch period whether on or off the campus.
- During, or while going to or coming from, a school-sponsored activity.

Reasons for Suspension. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy may suspend a student for any of the following reasons as specified in the California Education code section 48900:

- Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or willfully used force or violence upon the person of another;
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object;
- Unlawfully possessed, use, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, and alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind;
- Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid, substance, or material represented 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;
- Stolen or attempted to steal school property or private property;
- Possessed or used tobacco, or any product containing tobacco or nicotine products in any form;
- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity;
- Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia;
- Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties;
- Knowingly received stolen school property or private property;
- Possessed an imitation firearm;
- Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery; or
- Harassed, threatened or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of protecting that pupil for being a witness, or both

Reasons for Expulsion. Students may be expelled from Los Angeles Leadership Academy for any of the following reasons as specified in the California 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; or
- Assault or battery upon any student or school employee.

Process for Suspension and/or Expulsion. The following steps will be taken in the event of a suspension or an expulsion:

- 1) Informal conference. Suspension will be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the administrative staff, with the student and the student's parent. The conference may be omitted if the administrative staff 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 will be notified of the suspension and a conference will be requested as soon as possible.
- 2) Notice to Parents. At the time of suspension, a school employee will make a reasonable effort to contact the parent 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 official wishes to ask the parent 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 that 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 ten (10) continuous days unless an administrative recommendation has been made and agreed to by the student's parent. If a student is recommended for a period of suspension exceeding ten (10) continuous days, a second conference will be scheduled with the parent to discuss the progress of the suspension upon the completion of the tenth day of suspension. All arrangements will be made to provide the student with classroom material and current assignments to be completed at home during the length of the suspension.

Suspension. A written remediation plan will clearly describe progressive discipline measures, grounds for suspension and expulsion, minimum /maximum number of consecutive days of suspension, appeal process, length of suspension, and provision for students' education while suspended. In-house suspension will be preferred to off-campus suspension. The L.A. Leadership Academy intends to use off-campus suspension only when a student presents a threat to the health and safety of another member of the school community. An informal conference conducted by the school and/or program director with the student and his/her parent/guardian, shall precede suspension. Students who present an immediate threat to the health and safety of others may also be immediately suspended and may later be expelled by the L.A. Leadership Academy's Board of Directors upon recommendation of the Executive Director. If a conference is not held for the reason stated, the parent/guardian shall be notified of the suspension and a conference will be requested as soon as possible. Written notification describing the events leading to the suspension will be provided for the parent/guardian in either case.

The L.A. Leadership Academy will follow the guidelines of Education Code 48915 (c) and may immediately suspend and recommend expulsion for students who possess, sell or furnish a firearm, brandish a knife at another person, unlawfully sell a controlled substance, or commit or attempt to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery. Expulsion may also be recommended Education Code 48915 (a) for causing serious injury to another person, except in self-defense, possession of any knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, robbery or extortion, assault or battery upon any school employee. When other means of correction have failed to bring about proper conduct or there exists a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others, expulsion will be recommended for repeated threats of violence, damage to school or private property, stealing, and acts of harassment.

The L.A. Leadership Academy will send written notification of the student expulsion to the parent/guardian of any student who is expelled. This notice will contain the following:

- 1) The specific offense committed by the student for any of the acts listed in "Grounds for Suspension/Expulsion."
- 2) Notice of the parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks future enrollment, of the student's status with L.A. Leadership Academy.

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 thirty (30) days after the school administrator determines that an act subject to expulsion has occurred. The hearing may be presided over by the School Board 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 ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. This notice will include:

- 1) Date and place of the hearing;
- 2) Statement of the specific facts, charges and offense upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
- 3) Copy of the disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation; and

- 4) Indication of the opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person at the hearing

Appeal of Suspension/Expulsion. The suspension or expulsion of a student will be at the discretion of the Executive Director or the administrative designee. A parent/guardian may appeal a student's expulsion within five (5) working days to the Board of Directors. The student will be considered suspended until the appeal hearing and a decision is rendered. A meeting will be convened by the Board of Directors to hear the appeal within ten (10) working days of the suspension/expulsion. A parent/guardian must attend to present their appeal. The appeal will be heard by a fair and impartial panel of representatives appointed by the Board of Directors. An appeal hearing includes the Executive Director, the parent of the student, the student's teacher and any other pertinent person. The decision of the panel of representatives of the Board of Directors will be final.

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

ELEMENT K: RETIREMENT SYSTEM AND EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

Retirement Rights: Staff at the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will participate in the federal social security system and will have access to other school-sponsored retirement plans according to policies adopted by the Board of Directors for the school's employees. The committee to recommend retirement plans to the Board of Directors must include representatives of the administrative, teaching, and clerical staff should members of these groups wish to be represented on the committee. The School retains the option for its teachers to participate in the State Teachers Retirement System, for classified employees to participate in the Public Employees Retirement System, and for non-benefitted classified employees to participate in the Public Agency Retirement System and coordinate such participation, as appropriate, with the social security system or other reciprocal systems. If the School should opt to participate in the STRS, PERS, or PARS systems, the district shall cooperate as necessary to forward in a timely fashion any required payroll deductions and related data.

Collective Bargaining Rights: The Los Angeles Leadership Academy is the exclusive public school employer for purposes of collective bargaining. Any District union employee who is offered employment and chooses to work for the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will not be covered by his or her collective unit bargaining agreement. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy may extend the same protections and benefits in individual contracts or as part of a collective agreement with the School. If the teachers, with or without the administrative staff, or the clerical staff agree by consensus that they wish to form or be part of a collective bargaining unit, they retain the right to do so. In such case, they shall state their will to the Board of Directors in a legal document signed by all members (i.e., all teachers, all teachers and administrators, or all clerical staff), and the Board of Directors shall approve of the formation of such a collective bargaining unit.

Salaries and Benefits: Initially the L.A. Leadership Academy shall use the salary scales of the Los Angeles Unified School District. Employees may propose an alternative system for establishing salaries through the Personnel Committee or by consensus of all teachers or all clerical staff. A recommendation to change the salary system is subject to approval by the Board of Directors based on fiscal soundness and consistency with the school's mission and vision. The Los Angeles Leadership Academy will offer benefits comparable to those of the Los Angeles Unified School District, including health, medical, dental, vision, life, and disability insurance. Employees may choose to alter the benefits package through the appropriate committee or by consensus of all staff. A recommendation to change the benefits package is subject to approval by the Board of Directors. Employees will be eligible to receive Worker's Compensation Insurance, unemployment insurance, and Medicare as applicable, with the L.A. Leadership Academy and the employee contributing appropriate amounts.

Working conditions. All employees are entitled to work in an environment free from harassment and discrimination, and all employees are required to maintain such an environment for all co-workers. All employees will follow State and Federal law regarding alleged improprieties and adhere to the L.A. Leadership Academy's Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct will be developed by committee before the school's opening, and approved by the Board of Directors. The Code of Conduct shall include the prohibition of legal harassment including, but not limited to jokes, threats, put-downs, decorations, and innuendo related to gender, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation.

Paid leave. Each full-time employee will be paid for ten (10) paid days each year for illness, bereavement, or personal necessity, as defined by the Employee Handbook. Up to eight (8) unused days may be rolled over to the following calendar year. Full-time employees will also be paid for legal holidays per the annual calendar. The L.A. Leadership Academy will comply with all applicable state and federal laws including the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Work day and year. The contract year will include 180 days serving students directly, and a minimum of ten (10) paid staff development days. The work week will be 40 hours. Teachers will be required to be present for all instructional minutes according to their teaching assignment and for all staff meetings.

Process for staff recruitment, selection, evaluation and termination. See Element E.

Procedure for Monitoring Credentials: The LAUSD will serve in an advisory capacity regarding the processing of new credentials and credential renewals. Paperwork and fees related to credentialing will be collected and reviewed by the principal and then forwarded to the LAUSD. Following screening for accuracy and completion, the LAUSD will then forward the paperwork and fees to the California State Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The LAUSD will send notification to the Executive Director of the L.A. Leadership Academy six months before the renewal date for the L.A. Leadership Academy teaching staff.

Grievance Procedures. An employee will first discuss any complaint with the Executive Director. The Executive Director and the party with the complaint will engage in good faith efforts to resolve the complaint. The good faith effort will include problem identification, possible solutions, selection of resolution, timeline for implementation, and follow-up. A written summary of the good faith effort will be included in the personnel file.

If the good faith effort does not resolve the complaint, the employee will submit a written complaint to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will schedule a hearing at a time and place mutually convenient, but in no event later than 35 days from the submission of the written notice and after notification to the employee. Board members who are interested parties will excuse themselves from the grievance proceedings.

A decision as established by a majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors' hearing the grievance 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 practicable. Any additional proceedings will be completed as soon as practical. The decision of the Board of Directors will be final. If the attempt to resolve the grievance through the hearing process is not successful, the employee is entitled recourse to professional mediation.

If the grievance is a complaint of discrimination, a preliminary hearing will take place within 24 hours.

Due Process. All staff members will have due process rights that include:

- The right to just cause discipline and dismissal
- The right to mediation and a fair hearing if necessary
- The right to appeal before a free state arbitrator (offered to small school districts).
- The right to binding arbitration conducted by a paid arbitrator.

Initiation of a lawsuit is not a right of due process.

ELEMENT L: ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES

No student is required to attend the Los Angeles Leadership Academy. Students living within the attendance area of the Los Angeles Unified School District who choose not to attend the L.A. Leadership Academy will have the same alternatives as other students residing in the district. These students may attend other district schools or pursue an inter-district transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of their district or county of residence.

ELEMENT M: EMPLOYEE RETURN RIGHTS

District union employees who are offered employment and who choose to work at the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will be given unpaid charter school leave from LAUSD with return rights for the duration of their charter. Return rights would be offered with neither a loss nor gain of status or seniority with LAUSD, at the salary and benefit rate in current use by the district for employees in the same classification who remained with the district. L.A. Leadership Academy employees who have left permanent status employment in the district to work at the L.A. Leadership Academy shall have the right to return to a comparable position in LAUSD and shall continue to earn service credit in the district during their tenure at the school. All provisions pertaining to leave and return rights for district union employees will be granted to certificated and classified employees in accordance with current collective bargaining agreements.

ELEMENT N: DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The intent of these dispute resolution processes is to:

- Resolve disputes within the Los Angeles Leadership Academy pursuant to the school's policies.
- Minimize the oversight burden on the Los Angeles Unified School District.
- Ensure a fair and timely resolution to disputes.
- Frame a charter renewal process and timeline so as to avoid disputes regarding renewal matters.

Internal Disputes. The Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Leadership Academy will adopt policies and processes for airing and resolving internal and external disputes. Dispute resolution policies and procedures will be printed in the School Handbook. The purpose of these policies and procedures is to have school community members resolve issues in-house in an amicable and fair manner whenever possible and to avoid contacting the Board of Education and the District unnecessarily. School community members include students, teachers, staff, parents, members of the Board of Directors, volunteers, partners, parties contracted for services, and collaborators.

Until the Board of Directors adopts policies and procedures for airing and resolving disputes, the following guidelines will be used:

1. The parties involved will first discuss and attempt to resolve the issue before proceeding further.
2. If the conflict cannot be resolved with discussion, the parties involved will ask a peer to help resolve the dispute.
3. If peer conflict mediation does not resolve the situation, the parties involved will ask one of the following persons to serve as mediator, or, if mutually agreeable, as arbitrator:
 - Students will ask a teacher or administrator
 - Teachers will ask another teacher or an administrator
 - Administrative staff will ask a teacher, another administrator, or the Chair of the Board of Directors
 - Clerical or other staff will ask an administrator
 - Parents will ask another parent, the chair of the Parent Advisory Council, or the Executive Director
4. All L.A. Leadership Academy faculty, staff, administrators, parents, Board of Directors, will sign pledges to resolve disputes via this dispute process or its replacement. These members of the school community will not contact the LAUSD or Board of Education regarding a conflict at the L.A. Leadership Academy before using and documenting all of the relevant procedures listed above.
5. The LAUSD and Board of Education agree to inform the L.A. Leadership Academy Board and/or Executive Director if they are contacted regarding a conflict at the L.A. Leadership Academy and to refer the involved parties to the Dispute Resolution Process before taking further action. The District agrees not to intervene or become involved in the dispute unless the dispute has given the District reasonable cause to believe that a violation of this charter or related laws or agreements has occurred, or unless the L.A. Leadership Academy Board has requested the District to intervene in the dispute.

Disputes Between the LALA and the LAUSD. The staff and governing board members of the L.A. Leadership Academy and LAUSD agree to attempt to resolve all disputes regarding this charter pursuant to the terms of this section. Both will refrain from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute resolution process.

The L.A. Leadership Academy will respond within three weeks of the receipt of any written inquiry from LAUSD. In the event of a dispute between the L.A. Leadership Academy and LAUSD, the staff and governing board members of the school and of the District agree to first frame the issue in written format and refer the issue to the LAUSD charter school office and the administrative staff of the L.A. Leadership Academy. In the event that LAUSD believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter, this will be specifically noted in the written dispute statement.

The administrative staff of the L.A. Leadership Academy and the LAUSD charter school office will informally meet and confer within four weeks of delivery of the written documentation of the issue, to attempt to resolve the dispute, to attempt to resolve the dispute. In the event that this informal meeting fails

to resolve the dispute, both parties will identify two governing board members from their respective boards who will jointly meet with the LAUSD charter school office and administrative staff of the L.A. Leadership Academy within four weeks of the original meeting, to attempt to resolve the dispute. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the LAUSD charter school office and administrative staff of the L.A. Leadership Academy will meet to jointly identify a neutral, third party arbitrator. The format of the arbitration session will be developed by the LAUSD charter school office and administrative staff of the L.A. Leadership Academy, and will incorporate informal rules of evidence and procedure unless both parties agree otherwise. The findings of the arbitrator will be non-binding, unless the governing boards of the L.A. Leadership Academy and LAUSD jointly agree to bind themselves.

Oversight, Reporting, Revocation, and Renewal. The LAUSD may observe or inspect or observe any part of the L.A. Leadership Academy's operations. The District may charge 1% of public funds, excluding funds secured by the charter school on its own behalf and restricted funds designated solely for specific purposes (e.g. Title 1, CSR, Staff Development), for actual costs of oversight not covered under the Mandated Cost Reimbursement program.

The L.A. Leadership Academy will outsource many services not retained from LAUSD. Mutually agreed upon fees must be in place prior to the charter-requested service. If available the L.A. Leadership Academy may obtain on a fee-for-service basis the following services from LAUSD:

- School police (including filing theft reports, alarm monitoring, and support during times of emergencies)
- Student health and human services (including access to school mental health and suicide prevention services, support from the crisis team, and access to audiology services)
- General counsel (assistance with CCR reviews)
- Services related to state/federal mandated reporting requirements
- Fingerprinting and criminal record processing
- Processing of emergency credentials
- Bilingual fluency testing
- Non-stock requisition processing
- Rubbish disposal
- District purchasing contracts
- Environmental health/safety consultation
- Field trip transportation
- School mail
- Student information system
- Food services

LAUSD agrees to receive and review the annual fiscal and programmatic audit and annual performance report as specified in Element I.

The charter granted pursuant to this petition may only be revoked by LAUSD if the district finds that L.A. Leadership Academy did any of the following:

- Committed a material violation of any conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in this Petition.
- Failed to meet or pursue the student outcomes identified in this Petition.
- Failed to meet generally-accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.
- Violated any provision of law

Term of the Charter. This Charter, upon approval of the State Board of Education, is granted for a five-year period commencing July 1, 2001 and ending June 30, 2006. The L.A. Leadership Academy Board may request from the LAUSD Board an amendment of the Charter at any time prior to expiration. The Charter may be renewed for one or more renewal periods, not to exceed five years at a time. The L.A. Leadership Academy will present requests for renewal no later than six months prior to the expiration of the Charter, in accordance with LAUSD policy. Prior to the renewal process, the LAUSD will contract an independent third-party jointly identified by L.A. Leadership Academy and LAUSD to perform a school evaluation based upon the school's measurable goals and terms outlined in this Charter. At the time the Charter renewal is submitted, L.A. Leadership Academy and LAUSD will establish a mutually agreeable timeline to complete

the renewal process. The LAUSD Board agrees to hear and render a decision as specified in the Education Code Section 47605.

ELEMENT O: LABOR RELATIONS

The L.A. Leadership Academy shall be deemed the exclusive public school employee of the employees of the L.A. Leadership Academy for collective bargaining purposes under the Education Employment Relation Act (EERA). The scope of representation shall include discipline and dismissal of charter school employees.

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS**Hold Harmless/Indemnification**

The L.A. Leadership Academy shall hold harmless and indemnify the District, the Board of Education, its officers and employees, from every liability, claim or demand which may be made by reason of:

1. Any injury to person or property sustained by the L.A. Leadership Academy's officers and employees or by any person, firm, or corporation employed directly or indirectly by it in connection with its function as a charter school.
2. Any injury to person or property sustained by any person, firm or corporation caused by any act, neglect, default, or omission of the L.A. Leadership Academy, its officers, employees or agents.
3. The furnishing to or use by L.A. Leadership Academy of any copyrighted or uncopyrighted composition, or patented or unpatented invention.

The L.A. Leadership Academy at its own expense and risk shall defend all such legal proceedings resulting from the above described activities which may be brought against it and/or the District, the Board of Education, its officers and employees, on any such liability, claim or demand, and satisfy any resulting judgments that may be rendered against any of them.

Budget

The proposed three-year budget including start-up costs and cash flow is included in the appendix. The L.A. Leadership Academy will adopt the direct funding model as provided for in AB544. All state and federal public revenue will be deposited in the L.A. Leadership Academy account in the Los Angeles County Treasury. Any funds still flowing through the LAUSD will be transferred via journal voucher entry within ten(10) working days of the first of the month for the prior month's revenue. The L.A. Leadership Academy will serve as its own fiscal agent for all public and private grants, funds and gifts awarded now and in the future. Any monies accrued from deposits or investments will be used to support the instructional program.

Attendance Accounting and Student Information Systems

The L.A. Leadership Academy will keep daily records of attendance and complete official state registers on a monthly basis. Required reports will be submitted to the LAUSD, LACOE and California Department of Education in a timely manner. The L.A. Leadership Academy will use the Student Information System (SIS) maintained by LAUSD to facilitate delivery of information in a timely manner.

Facility

The L.A. Leadership Academy will be housed at the Immanuel Presbyterian Church at 668 Catalina Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90010 beginning July 1, 2001.

Food Service Program

The L.A. Leadership Academy will provide its own food service program that will be operated in compliance with all state and federal regulations. In accordance with the Federal Lunch Act, eligible students will be provided breakfast and lunch free or at reduced rates. The District may be contracted to verify student eligibility and apply to the state on the school's behalf. Cafeteria staff will obtain Food Handler's Certificates.

Amendments

Any amendments to this Charter shall be made by the mutual agreement of the boards of the L.A. Leadership Academy and the Los Angeles Unified School District. Material revisions and amendments shall be made pursuant to the standards, criteria, and timelines in Education Code Section 47605.

Integration Funds

When accepting Integration funds, L.A. Leadership Academy will comply with the District's Court-Ordered Integration policy set forth in *Crawford vs. Board of Education, City of Los Angeles*. The policy applies to all schools within or schools chartered through the Los Angeles Unified school District (LAUSD).

After submission of the required the ethnic survey information, the type of class-size reduction will be determined during the first year of operation. If Integration funding is appropriate, either Predominantly Hispanic, Black, Asian and Other Non-Anglo (PHBAO) or Desegregated Receiver school teacher to pupil norming ratio will be approved for the first year of operation. If L.A. Leadership Academy wishes to reduce class size to a lower ratio, Court-Ordered Integration funds cannot be used and the funding source must be identified. Additionally, as documentation for initial and yearly funding, both Budget Services and Financial Planning Division and the Specially Funded and Parent/Community Programs Division will continue to use the information listed below:

- Norm Day Classification
- Total School Enrollment
- Number of Students by Grade Levels
- Number of Students by Ethnicities and Grade Levels
- List of Register-Carrying Teachers in Classrooms
- List of All Certificated Personnel
- List of Emergency Credentialed Teachers
- Unfilled Classroom Teacher Positions
- Fiscal Year-End Financial Report
- Number of Students Living Outside LAUSD Attendance Area

Integration compliance will also include appropriate record-keeping within L.A. Leadership Academy's budget line items to ensure that the Court-Ordered Integration funds are used specifically as designated, e.g., number and cost of class-size reduction position(s). L.A. Leadership Academy will provide to LAUSD all requested information using District forms, including ethnic survey and Parent Conferences Program documentation.

Any modification to the Court-Ordered Integration Program must first be approved by the Specially Funded and Parent/Community Programs Division of LAUSD.

Severability

The terms of this Charter contract are severable. In the event that any of the provisions are determined to be unenforceable or invalid for any reason, the remainder of the Charter shall remain in effect, unless mutually agreed otherwise by the Los Angeles Unified School District and the L.A. Leadership Academy Board. The LAUSD and L.A. Leadership Academy agree to meet to discuss and resolve any issues or differences relating to invalidated provisions in a timely, good faith fashion.

Communications

All official communications between the L.A. Leadership Academy and Los Angeles Unified School District will be sent via First Class Mail or other appropriate means to the following addresses:

Los Angeles Leadership Academy	Los Angeles Unified School District
3580 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1760	450 N. Grand Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90010	Los Angeles, CA 90012

