



ACADEMY
OF ALAMEDA
MIDDLE SCHOOL

A Public Charter School Petition

Presented
Tuesday, October 27, 2009
to
Alameda Unified School District
Board of Education

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ASSURANCES

AFFIRMATIONS/ASSURANCES

The Academy of Alameda Board of Directors hereby certifies that the information submitted in this petition:

- Shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Sections 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)(1)].
- Shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of The Academy for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(O)].
- Shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)].
- Shall address all California State Content Standards for all core content areas in grade levels 6-8.
- Shall not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)].
- Shall admit all students who wish to attend The Academy of Alameda, except as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or his or her parents within the State. In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(C). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(A)-(B)].
- Shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 [actual or perceived disability (physical or mental), gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics] or color, medical condition, or sexual condition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)].
- Shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.
- Shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)].
- Shall ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools are required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to non-core, non-college preparatory teachers. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(l)].
- Shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- Shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D).

In addition, the information submitted in this petition will follow any and all other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to The Academy of Alameda, including but not limited to the following assurances:

- The Academy shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.
- The Academy shall on a regular basis consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs.
- The Academy shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities.
- The Academy shall comply with all applicable portions of the No Child Left Behind Act.
- The Academy shall comply with the Public Records Act.
- The Academy shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- The Academy shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- The Academy shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum number of school days.
- No child shall be required to attend The Academy nor shall any employee be required to work at The Academy.
- The Academy shall comply with Education Code Section 41365 (revolving loan fund) and all provisions of Education Code Section 47611 (State teachers Retirement System and Public Employees' Retirement System).

FOUNDING BOARD

FOUNDING BOARD¹

Edward O'Neil, PhD, MPA, FAAN, President –Edward O'Neil is a Professor in the Departments of Family and Community Medicine, Preventive and Restorative Dental Sciences and Social and Behavioral Sciences (School of Nursing) at the University of California, San Francisco. He also serves as the Director of the Center for the Health Professions, a research, advocacy and training institute which he created to assist health care professionals, health professions schools, care delivery organizations and public policy makers understand the challenges and opportunities of educating and managing a health care workforce capable of improving the health and well being of people and their communities. His work has focused on changing all dimensions of the US health care system through improved policy and leadership.

The Center for the Health Professions houses a number of initiatives that are designed to understand and address the issues facing health care and health professionals. The Center's programs include the Pew Scholars Programs in the Biomedical Sciences, the Robert Wood Johnson Executive Nurse Fellows Program, the California Health Care Foundation's Health Care Leadership Program, the Integrated Nurse Leadership Program, the Pharmacy Leadership Institute, the Health Workforce Tracking Collaborative, the LEADing Organizational Change Program and the Center for California Health Workforce Studies and the Clinic Leadership Initiative.

In 2008 he created O'Neil and Associates, LLC to assist organizations better understand the strategic challenges they face in a changing health care world and develop strategies and leadership competencies to succeed.

Dr. O'Neil served as the Executive Director of the Pew Health Professions Commission from 1989 through 1999; the Commission was a nationally recognized advocacy group focused on reform in health workforce issues. He has published numerous articles, chapters and books on his two principle areas of work: health care and leadership development. He is or has served as a consultant to the World Health Organization, Government of New Zealand, The Director's office of the National Institute of Health, the Genentech Corporation, National Institutes of Health, Rockefeller Foundation, Pew Charitable Trusts, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, California HealthCare Foundation, Blue Shield Foundation of California as well as a number of federal, state and institutional agencies. He holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Alabama and a Master's of Public Administration and Doctorate in History from Syracuse University. In addition he holds honorary degrees from New York Medical College, the Western University of Health Sciences and two other Universities. In 2003 he was elected to an honorary Fellowship in the American Academy of Nursing.

¹ See Appendix 1 for Founding Board Resumes.

William Schaff, Vice President – William Schaff is CEO and Senior Portfolio Manager, Phocas Financial Corp. Bill has extensive knowledge of US domestic equity markets. With over 20 years of experience investing in domestic capital markets with an extensive track record of superior active management in US value-oriented equities, Bill currently manages assets for major state pension funds in California, New York, Illinois, Ohio and Maryland as well as large US corporations. Bill has managed two 5-star Morningstar mutual funds during his tenure. Currently sub-advises a 4-star Morningstar mutual fund for Wells Fargo. In 2008, Bill managed three mutual funds, all in the top quartile ranked by Morningstar, Small Cap Value was ranked in the top 6th percentile, Large Cap Value was ranked in the top 23rd percentile and US Real Estate was ranked in the top 14th percentile of all domestic mutual funds by category. He is a board member of Docufide, Inc., a company focusing on the electronic delivery, management, and analysis of student academic records for K-12 schools, colleges, and state education agencies.

Lauren Do, Secretary—Lauren Do is a West End Alameda resident. A graduate of the University of San Francisco, she holds a Bachelor's degree in Communications. Her previous work experiences in government and non-profit sparked her interest in community involvement and she hasn't looked back since. Currently, Lauren has an award winning daily personal web log (blog) chronicling hyper-local political issues in Alameda and contributes to SFGate's blog In Alameda. Lauren recently stepped down from the Alameda Free Library Foundation Board of Directors, but was elected as a Board member for her local Homeowner's Association. With a husband, two kids, and four cats, Lauren attempts to juggle her growing list of obligations, but always feels as though she's not doing nearly enough.

Wilma Chan—William Chan is currently Vice President of Policy at Children Now, a national children's advocacy organization. Ms. Chan has been a strong advocate for children and families for over 35 years. She served as the first woman Majority Leader of the California State Assembly. She represented Oakland, Alameda and Piedmont in the State Assembly from 2000-2006. She won approval of \$100 million to expand State Preschool and fought successfully to maintain the state's Master Plan for college student access. She authored many groundbreaking bills including making California the first state to ban toxic flame retardants and implement a no-lead standard in drinking water pipes and fixtures. Ms. Chan authored historic legislation to end the practice of hospitals overcharging uninsured and underinsured patients and to cover California's 800,000 uninsured children. Prior to her election to the Assembly, Ms. Chan was elected twice as the first Asian American to serve on the Alameda County Board of Supervisors after completing a term on the Oakland Board of Education. Ms. Chan holds a BA in history from Wellesley College and an MA in education policy from Stanford University. She has two grown children and one grandchild.

She served as the Legislator in Residence at UC Berkeley during the 2006-07 academic year and taught political science on campus for two years. In addition, she serves on the California Medical Assistance Commission, a state commission that sets rates for hospitals. She has worked on healthcare projects in Alameda County, including an expansion of health services at the Peralta Community Colleges.

She has received numerous awards including:

- Champion for Children 2006, Children's Hospital Assn
- Legislator of the Year: CA Optometric Association, CA Nurse Practitioners (partial list)
- Hunger Fighter Award, CA Hunger Network
- Person of the Year, World Journal
- Best Newcomer, National Association of Social Workers
- Rising Star Award, CA League of Conservation Voters
- Top of the Class, CA Journal 2002

- Outstanding Public Service, CA School Employees Association
- Legislator of the Year, Oakland East Bay Democratic Club
- CA Freshman of the Year, American Assn. of University Women
- Paul Harris Award, Rotary International

Ardella Dailey—Ardella Dailey has over twenty five years’ experience as a supervisor, leader and manager in pre-school/child development, K-12 school districts, adult school and college teaching with a targeted focus on excellence and equity for all students. She has moved from classroom teacher and early childhood staff development trainer to administration roles in pre-school, elementary school and district office. She has held the following specific leadership roles: superintendent, assistant superintendent of educational services, elementary principal, pre-school director. In addition she has had supervisory roles in the areas of curriculum and instruction, assessment, technology, special education, finance, maintenance and facilities operations, human resources, employee relations and negotiations, English language development and professional development.

Judy Goodwin—Judy Goodwin was appointed as Principal of Chipman Middle School in June, 2009. She is responsible for directing the continued development and implementation of the learning culture at Chipman. Ms. Goodwin served as Principal of the K-8 program at Paden School from 2001 to 2006 and most recently as Principal of Lincoln Middle School from 2006 to 2009. Following her early career in public television she decided to pursue a career in education. She taught third through sixth grades in Hayward Unified School District for ten years. In 1998 she returned to public television for a brief period working in the Center for Life Long Learning at KQED San Francisco coordinating programs and developing materials for educators and reflecting on education reform. Ms Goodwin holds a Masters Degree in Educational leadership from California State University, East Bay and a Bachelors Degree in Radio, Television and Film from Long Beach State University.

Allyson Tilles—Allyson Tilles is a product of the California public school system. She attended elementary, junior and high schools in Southern California, and graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Architecture. She worked in the non-profit sector for seven years, before finding work with a private construction consulting firm. She now works for an investment management company based in Alameda. She and her husband Dean moved to Alameda in 1998 in large part due to the excellent reputation of the public schools there. Their two children, Luna and Craig, attended Franklin Elementary School and are now both Chipman Middle School students. She has been active in PTA and school fundraising projects since 2001.

Ron Whittaker—Ron Wittaker was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1961. At the age of 10, we moved to the suburbs where I attended both public and private schools. I attended M.I.T., majoring in Mechanical Engineering (& drinking beer). After working at I.B.M., I moved to California, switched vocations and became a manager at a number of well regarded restaurants. I live in Alameda with the lovely Kate Meade. We have 2 sons, Nate (8) and Hank (12). I have volunteered at Project Open Hand in San Francisco and am active in Alameda Little League and at both of my sons' schools. Currently I am employed as a regional manager at an environmental non-profit.

LEAD PETITIONERS

Monica Blea came to Chipman Middle School in 1997 and has worked with four principals. As Office Manager II, Monica is responsible for the smooth and efficient operation of the Chipman Middle School administrative office. She provides administrative assistance to the Principal, administrators, office and school staff and students by answering/screening phone calls, coordinate meetings and events, monitoring staff's time and attendance, managing the school's financial records and transactions, performing various management functions, handling confidential information, receives and responding to inquires and request, supervise three office staff, managing crisis situations and preparing correspondence and other written material. Monica's roles, responsibilities and resourcefulness in working with parents, community and public agencies have resulted in the implementation of the Community Enrichment Consortium in the school.

Katherine Crawford's experience in education includes teaching elementary, middle and high school. While Katherine has always been strong in the teaching of Math and Science, she has been an expert practitioner of reading intervention. Her skill at implementation earned her a role on the California Curriculum Commission, a position that requires the recommendation of the State Board of Education. While serving on the Commission, Katherine was elected as the Chair of The Commission where she presided over the most recent adoption of the new California ELA materials. Katherine has years of experience in educational reform including the development of a multi-age, self contained middle school program. In addition to curriculum and instruction, Katherine also has a deep understanding of master schedule and the budget and instructional ramifications of each decision. Currently, Katherine is a math coach working for the Alameda County Office of Education in the Alameda Unified School District.

Shannon Donohoe began teaching as a second career. After spending 5 years in business, she decided to follow her love of Science and commit to becoming a Science teacher. She has a special love for middle school students, and has only ever taught middle school for the past 10 years. Entering her 5th year of Chipman, she is attempting to spearhead a movement towards environmental understanding in the school atmosphere. When not teaching, she takes care of her young daughter and enjoys swimming and skiing.

Terri Elkin has been a teacher in AUSD since 1986. She has taught elementary, middle and high school. She has a National Board Certification in Early Adolescence Science and was the AUSD Teach of the Year in 2006-2007. She has been a middle school math coach and is currently the Teacher on Special Assignment in charge of Assessment for AUSD. In this position, she is committed to collaborating with administrators and teachers to effectively access and analyze data in order to inform changes in classroom practice that will improve student achievement. When not at work (when is that?), Terri spends time reading, hiking, traveling, and enjoying good food with good friends.

Tyler Fister is a 2nd year art teacher that aspires to be engaging, critical, and relevant to his students. Tyler has known about his want to teach art since high school. Because of an inspiring mentor artist/teacher, Tyler recognizes the importance of art to expand student's creative horizons. Tyler's goals for his art students are to have them make meaning out of everyday experiences, explore their identities, and become critically engage participants within their communities.

Judith Goodwin – see Founding Board bios above

Sheila Hewitt has been teaching 6th grade core at Chipman Middle School for 9 years. She has taught both Strategic and Benchmark Advanced levels of ELA. In addition to being a highly regarded teacher, Sheila has been a lead teacher in the implementation of the Prentice Hall ELA adoption, SIM Content Enhancement Routines and the elements of a Body-brain compatible learning environment. Sheila is one of the “most coachable” teachers according to external support providers she has worked with. She is dedicated to bringing the best possible education experience to all her students.

Elizabeth Ingram has been teaching for 16 years. As a trained Special Education teacher and professor of Special Education Law, Betsy has been the lead consultant and writer of The Academy’s petition. Betsy’s understanding of Response to Intervention (RtI) and the Content Literacy Continuum (CLC) have been integral to the full inclusion model of the school. Her expertise and understanding of students with special needs is extensive. Betsy is currently a teacher of FUSION. In her free time, Betsy rides hundreds of miles each week on her bicycle, including daily to work and spending time with her friend’s small children since hers are all grown. She also loves her dogs!

Sylvia Kahn has been in education for 20 years. She holds a multiple subject credential and a supplementary authorization in mathematics. Sylvia has taught 6th grade CORE, self-contained multi-aged 6-8, middle school intervention math and 5th grade. While in the classroom, Sylvia designed and implemented two very successful “schools within a school”/small learning community models. The most recent was BRAVO which was based on the model Integrated Thematic Instruction (ITI) by Susan Kovalik and Associates. Sylvia was hired to work for Susan as a presenter as well as has presented for the Consortium on Reading Excellence (CORE) and Association of California School Administrators (ACSA). Sylvia has been awarded the AUSD “Voyage to the Vision” twice and was a member of the BRAVO team when they were the first runners up in the Schwab “Teach Each” award. Sylvia was an AUSD Bay Area School Reform Collaborative reform coordinator and has done many jobs at both site and district office levels including: District Literacy Coach, AUSD SIM Coordinator, Chipman Title 1 Coordinator and Encinal High School Literacy Coach. Sylvia is a graduate of Paden, Chipman and Encinal High School and has spent her career dedicated to the schools that served her well as a child. Her two children are students at Paden and she looks forward to her son attending The Academy of Alameda next year.

Diana Kenney, Teacher on Special Assignment for Instructional Technology in September 2007, is no stranger to the District. In 1991 she began her teaching career as a Kindergarten teacher at Henry Haight School. For the following eight years, Diana taught grades K-3rd before becoming the Media Specialist at Franklin Elementary School. As Media Specialist she realized that the world and education was quickly becoming technology based and enrolled and received her Master’s degree in Leadership in Technology Education. Soon after, she helped write an EETT grant for middle school math intervention that was awarded \$775K. Diana took on the role as Technology Coach for both students and teachers for three years of the grant. After the grant expired, Diana was asked to join the Technology Services department as TSA for Instructional Technology. She serves as technology coach for both student and adult learners. Diana offers a variety of staff development on current technologies to all district employees. Diana is a Google Certified Teacher, Discovery Education Star Teacher and Discovery Blogger and is passionate about learning something new every day!

Andy Lee is a graduate of Carleton College where he was an English major after graduating from Berkeley High School Andy received his teaching credential from Cal State East Bay after student teaching at Chipman Middle School in Alameda. Andy is a fourth year teacher and was awarded the National Chess Master title the year he graduated from high school. Andy’s hobbies include piano, reading, ultimate Frisbee and chess.

Lori MacDonald has been in education since 1995, working in rural and urban schools in Rio Linda, North Highlands, Roseville, and Oakland. She has participated in school-site programs for homeless students, community outreach for second-language families, and after-school enrichment programs for neighborhood children. Lori's experience with Renate and Geoffrey Caine (brain/mind learning researchers) and Rick Stiggins (of Assessment Training Institute) influenced Lori's commitment to applying brain research in school settings and using assessment to maximize student learning. Lori has taught grades K-8 and recently served as director of family programs for a non-profit organization in San Francisco. Lori has a special interest in the role of music in education: she has played her guitar in each class she has taught and has been music director for school-site musicals. Lori holds a Bachelor of Arts in English, a multiple-subject teaching credential, a Master of Arts degree in Theology, and an administrative services credential. She has a son and a daughter with a combined total of 20 years of California public schools. They live in Alameda.

Laurel McCoy is a math teacher at Chipman Middle School where she models on a daily basis what it means to be a reflective professional who uses data to drive instruction and decisions. Laurel's deep understanding of what it means to be a lifelong learner can be seen in her regular examination of student achievement data and desire to be coached and provided feedback. She models instruction and accepts feedback that is a perfect example of what should exist in a Professional Learning Community. Laurel is a parent of a college student is a fan of international travel and education, is a graduate of Mills College and first generation college graduate. Prior to becoming a teacher, Laurel was an arts administrator.

Ed O'Neil –see founding board bios above

Kathy Passmore has been a middle school teacher for her entire career. While she has the credentials to teach high school, she just loves working with middle school students! She has a background in ELD but has most recently become a secondary literacy teacher. Kathy is a lead teacher in FUSION Reading and is currently a literacy coach. Kathy understands institutionalized racism and the responsibility we have to address the needs of a culturally diverse population.

Allyson Tilles–see founding board bios above

Gloria Tyler – Gloria Tyler serves as a Community Liaison and nine-year volunteer for Chipman Middle School. Gloria Tyler has spent the past 30 years as a full time volunteer at Chipman Middle School. While at Chipman, Gloria has been responsible for the design and implementation of programs including but not limited to a highly successful etiquette class. Gloria's roles, responsibilities and initiative have resulted in the formation of the highly anticipated CEC in the school.

Kirsten Zazo started her career in education for 12 years ago. She has had the privilege to work with elementary, middle, and high school students prior to leaving the classroom. Kirsten has now been out of the classroom as an administrator at Chipman Middle School for the past 3 years. Kirsten is deeply committed to equity and education and strives to help teachers deepen their instructional practices around standards based instruction, backwards planning and culturally relevant pedagogy. In addition to curriculum and instruction, Kirsten also has a strong understanding of master schedule, student placement, and budget. When not at her school site, she takes care of her 17 month old daughter and 4 and a half year old son.

ELEMENT 1: DESCRIPTION OF EDUCATION PROGRAM

MISSION

To give middle school students in Alameda an education of excellence – supporting their development through adolescence, equipping them for academic success in high school and beyond, and providing opportunities for students to establish themselves as lifelong learners and thus realize their power to affect the world.

VISION

The formation of The Academy of Alameda Middle School, serving students in grades 6-8 in the city of Alameda, is the result of a vision shared by parents, educators, and community members of Alameda who believe that a world-class education should be available to all students, and that all students are capable of academic excellence and full participation in their community and beyond regardless of race, economic status, or gender. Current research in the areas of assessment usage, equity principles, body-brain compatible learning environments, and professional learning communities has impacted education reform in America, driving a shift from models in which only some can succeed to models in which all students can achieve success. Drawing from this research, Academy founders have developed a program based on research-validated approaches to ensure all students have the opportunity to become self-developed, academically successful and socially responsible within a student body that is truly heterogeneous. These approaches include:

ON-GOING ASSESSMENT FOR STUDENT LEARNING

The Academy is committed to the powerful use of on-going assessment in classroom settings to inform students and teachers of each student’s progress toward rigorous and relevant learning objectives. This reflects a fundamental departure from the traditional use of assessments as a way to measure one student’s ability against another, and a step toward the “new mission” of more equitable education systems in a 21st-century world. As Rick Stiggins from the Assessment Training Institute writes:

The role of schools has changed. Schools previously sorted students from the highest to the lowest achievers. But now schools have evolved into places where all students are expected to meet increasingly rigorous academic standards. This change is driven by the accelerating technical and ethnic evolution of our culture and the corresponding need for *all students* (not just those at the top of the achievement distribution) to become competent lifelong learners. Our assessment practices historically have been designed to promote accountability by separating the successful from the unsuccessful learners and by highlighting their differences. However, given the new mission of ensuring universal competence, assessments now must support the learning of all students so that all can succeed at meeting standards. . . . We have emerged from the era of comparing students with other students based on achievement to a time when we compare student performance to pre-set standards; and now we ask, who has and has not met standards?²

² Rick Stiggins, “Assessment for Learning: A Key to Motivation and Achievement,” *EDge*, Phi Beta Kappa International 2.2 (Nov-Dec 2006): 3.

To master rigorous academic state standards, students in the 21st-century must develop the meta-cognitive skills necessary to ensure maximum learning of information, skills, and concepts. Students must know for themselves 1) what they are studying and why, 2) what mastery of specific learning looks like, 3) how they are progressing relative to mastery, and 4) what they need to do to master learning objectives. This can best be accomplished in a standards-based program where on-going assessments are intentionally used in planning and instruction.³ The ability of students to assess their own progress toward very clearly defined learning goals is the hallmark of standards-based education and the foundation of numerous successful education reform programs in the United States.⁴ As students are given clear processes for achieving mastery of grade-level standards in all curricular areas and are taught to assess themselves toward mastery of standards, they have a greater chance of hitting desired academic targets, receiving extra support when needed, and moving beyond to broaden their learning once the standard is achieved. Further, teachers need tools to approach academics from a standards-based, student-led classroom assessment base. To that end The Academy will adopt the school-wide use of the Strategic Instruction Model that includes tools for planning, instruction, and on-going assessment, and strategies for use in intervention so all students will be able to master standards.

BUILDING A PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

The Academy is committed to a focus on student learning. As teachers and administrators at The Academy consider the results of frequent assessments conducted in classrooms, they will themselves be engaged in an on-going cycle of learning. Using the work of Rick and Becky DuFour's *Professional Learning Communities*, teachers will constantly be asking three simple questions: "What do students need to know? How will we know if they've learned it? What will we do if they haven't?" Teachers will look at data to determine if students are learning, modify instructional practices to ensure students are progressing, and take responsibility for the learning of all students in The Academy, offering expertise to each other and growing in knowledge of the practice and art of teaching. This professional flexibility and willingness to try innovative teaching strategies to maximize student learning exemplifies the teachers at The Academy of Alameda.

The founders of The Academy of Alameda have a vision for a school where academic rigor is the norm in every classroom -- where every student is engaged and academic work is made relevant to his or her life, where students are able to define the standards they are seeking to master and delineate what they need to do to achieve mastery, and where the students engage respectfully and honestly with each other and with other adults. The founders of The Academy have a vision for creating a middle school where students will become self developed, academically successful, and socially responsible young people who can make solid choices about their futures and who have the skills and access to resources to fully participate in a 21st-century world.

CREATING A BODY-BRAIN COMPATIBLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The Academy is committed to creating an optimal learning environment for its middle school students, capitalizing on the natural developmental task of middle schoolers to be social creatures who find themselves acceptable to their peer community, and who possess brains with great capacity for learning. Our goal is to create a school where respect is palpable, and thus, a place where students are using their energies for long-term learning and not merely survival. Because students desire so much to fit in with

³ Judith Arter, Jan Chappuis, Stephen Chappuis, Rick Stiggins, *Assessment FOR Learning: An Action Guide for School Leaders*, 2d ed. (Portland: ETS/Assessment Training Institute. 2005).

⁴ For example see Aspire Schools "Curriculum and Instruction" and "Assessment" at www.aspirepublicschools.org.

their peers in middle school, they often spend a lot of energy figuring out how to conform to the various subcultures represented by the student body, and how to navigate class time so as to avoid embarrassment. The school culture at The Academy will be intentionally formed using the nine elements of a Body-brain Compatible learning environment, including the use of Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines, helping to ensure The Academy is a safe, welcoming, supportive place. Students will know that they belong, not because they can morph themselves to fit in, but because the school values the uniqueness of each person. Students will learn to support their peers in multiple ways, contributing to the good of the whole even as each is pursuing his or her own academic excellence. This culture of high respect will allow students' brains to function optimally. Other elements of Body-brain compatible learning environment research will inform multiple decisions about the school, including campus aesthetics (paint colors, plants, furniture), schedules, uniforms, class formations, etc., so that every aspect of the school is intentionally designed to maximize learning.

Through strategic focus in these areas, the founders of The Academy of Alameda seek to create a middle school that exemplifies the current vision for successful national middle-grades education reform held by many.⁵

“Whatever It Takes”

The Academy of Alameda has designed its school-wide program with the explicit intention of helping all students in its anticipated school population succeed, *whatever it takes*⁶. By utilizing methods in education reform that have proven effective in underperforming schools over the past several years, The Academy is committed to making sure all students reach grade-level academic proficiency and obtain skills to meaningfully participate in their communities and the world by the time they matriculate to high school. This ambitious goal for all Academy students will be achieved as we join forces with other successful schools who have implemented innovative education programs that share the following attributes:

- Clarity of purpose
- Collaborative culture
- Collective inquiry into best practice and current reality
- Action orientation
- Commitment to continuous improvement
- Focus on results
- Strong [leaders] who empower teachers
- Commitment to face adversity, conflict, and anxiety
- The same guiding phrase: “Whatever It Takes.”

⁵ “The truly high-performing middle-level school embodies the intersection of academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, social equity, and organizational structure. It is not difficult to find middle-level schools that excel in one of the four areas of high performance. However, it is extremely difficult to find schools that excel in all four.” The National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform. Available at: <http://www.mgforum.org>.

⁶ Richard DuFour, *Whatever It Takes*. 113-148.

HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS / RESEARCH BASE

Several research-verified approaches undergird the educational approach at The Academy. The primary areas of research in education that we have drawn from, while distinct, have influenced each other and share a common vision and understanding about developing sustainable educational systems that can raise student achievement and maintain higher levels of learning for all students. These commonalities include ongoing use of formative and summative assessments in classrooms to inform both teachers and students in student progress toward mastery of standards, connecting student results with teacher practice, school-wide effort to look at data and modify approaches so that all students are learning, and an intentional effort to educate the whole child. This research includes but is not limited to the following:

Assessment for Learning/Assessment Training Institute⁷ – The Assessment Training Institute provides research and tools to promote the shift from students as passive recipients of knowledge to active participants in learning through the use of “student-involved” classroom assessment. The approach developed by ATI forms the basis for a standards-based education program. The Assessment for Learning (AFL) approach emphasizes “both accuracy—generating dependable information about student learning—and use—using assessment results to promote student motivation and learning.”⁸ AFL requires teachers to ask three important questions: Why are we assessing? What are we assessing? And How are we assessing?⁹ This clear focus allows teachers to direct students toward mastery of standards and creates a learning environment where students are empowered to learn.

Professional Learning Community (PLC)¹⁰ – The work of Rick and Becky DuFour helped shift the focus in education from teaching to learning, encouraging educators to hold themselves accountable for student achievement results.¹¹ The work of PLCs revolves around three key questions: What do we want students to learn? How will we know when they’ve learned it? What will we do when students are not achieving? At The Academy, all staff will participate in ensuring ALL students are achieving, committing to constant examination of data and practices, and to functioning as a “community” (not as isolated teaching units) so that all students will benefit from a choreographed program of planning, best-practices instruction, assessment, intervention and enrichment. This sort of comprehensive, school-wide, frontal approach to ensure *achievement for all* underlies all PLC-led schools and accounts for many of them receiving United States Department of Education Blue Ribbon Awards for raising student achievement in schools with true heterogeneity in terms of socio-economic status, race, and former academic performance levels.¹²

Body-Brain Compatible Learning Environment¹³ – BBC is an instructional design model offered by Susan Kovalik and Associates. The nine elements of a Body-Brain Compatible environment ensure that the

⁷ Rick Stiggins, *Student-Involved Assessment FOR Learning*, 5th ed. (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, Inc., 2008).

⁸ Judy Arter, “Classroom Assessment For Student Learning (CASL),” Perspective on the JCSEE Student Evaluation Standards (Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association, San Diego, CA, 2009).

⁹ Stephen Chappuis and Rick Stiggins, “Finding Balance: Assessment in the Middle School Classroom,” *Middle Ground, the Magazine of Middle Level Education*, v. 12 number 2 (2008).

¹⁰ Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour and Robert Eaker, *Revisiting Professional Learning Communities at Work* (Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press, 2008).

¹¹ This is a departure from decades of belief that achievement was the function of the student and not impacted by what the teacher did in a classroom. See *Whatever It Takes; How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don’t Learn*. Richard DuFour et al. (Bloomington, Indiana: National Education Service, 2004), 17-20.

¹² Ibid. 117-148.

¹³ Ann Ross and Karen Olsen, *The Way We Were . . . The Way We CAN Be: A Vision for the Middle School* (Susan Kovalik & Associates, 1995), II-2.

school is a safe and productive place that supports academic achievement through long-term learning and encourages development of the whole child and his/her relationships. The Academy will develop and implement Body-Brain Compatible elements necessary for a safe and enriched learning environment. These include: absence of threat, enriched learning environment, immediate feedback, focus on mastery, the multiple intelligence theory by Howard Gardner, and consistent routines, practices and language.

Education is an environment and a process that can be enriched or not enriched and therefore affects brain health. To the extent that an educational environment – or other settings – becomes rote and passive, brain reserve will not be as developed and the overall health benefit for a brain will not be as great. It is the responsibility of all educators, therefore, to expose themselves and their students to novel, complex, and enriched environments on a daily basis. Studies suggest that the earlier in life a person is exposed to an enriched environment, the greater the benefit to brain health, even late into life.

Learning is an opportunity that can be enhanced, stifled or diminished.¹⁴ The Academy, through the explicit and intentional application of the elements of a Body-Brain Compatible learning environment, will enhance the opportunities necessary for students to make connections between disciplines¹⁵ and provide the foundation necessary for long-term learning to take place – the development of life-long learners.

Strategic Instruction Model (SIM)¹⁶ – from the Center for Research on Learning, at the University of Kansas in Lawrence (KU-CRL) the Content Enhancement Routines are utilized in all grade level content courses. Teachers trained in Content Enhancement are trained to focus on and prioritize which concepts and skills must be taught to mastery. The KU-CRL research supports the use of Content Enhancement with students at all ability levels. The SIM Content Literacy Continuum is a framework of supports at five levels of increasing intensity that meet the varying needs of high, average and low achievers. Levels One and Two are for all students, while levels Three, Four and Five address the needs of those students who struggle with learning.

Rigorous & Relevant Framework¹⁷ – Researchers at the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) have developed a system to ensure curriculum, instruction and assessment are used to design learning that is rigorous and relevant to all students. This system is based on the matrix of 1) a Taxonomy (based on Bloom’s) that outlines a path of higher order thinking in keeping with the brain’s natural need for more complex thinking; and 2) a scale of application, so that students are constantly challenged to apply their learning to their immediate context (in class), other academic contexts (other content areas), and their lives. As the ICLE research states, “While the low end [of the application scale] is knowledge acquired for its own sake, the high end signifies use of that knowledge to solve complex real-world problems and to create unique projects, designs, and other works for use in real-world situations.”

Understanding By Design¹⁸ – Created by Jay Wiggins and Grant McTighe, Learning by Design advocates the *intentional* planning of instruction and assessment by beginning at the end: what students are expected to learn. This “Backwards Planning” is an essential part of the Learning by Design work and an indispensable component to standards-based education. The key elements of Backwards Planning are: identify desired results, determine acceptable evidence, plan learning experiences and instruction.

¹⁴ Attributed to Susan Kovalik, as relayed by AUSD BBC Consultant Director of Students Tannowitz.

¹⁵ See Appendix 2 for example of The Rigor/Relevance Framework. *International Center for Leadership in Education*. 2008.

¹⁶ University of Kansas, Center on Research for Learning, <https://www.ku-crl.org>.

¹⁷ The Rigor/Relevance Framework, 2008. *International Center for Leadership in Education*, Dr. William R. Daggett, President. See <http://www.leadered.com>.

¹⁸ Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding by Design* (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, Inc., 2006).

Equity Education – Maintaining the assertion that “All Students Will Learn,” the faculty and staff of The Academy of Alameda will use the Equity Principles throughout all curriculum and staff-development. This will include: a shift from Equality (input)-based principles to Equity (outcome)-based principles; a rejection of identifying some students as “at-risk,” and a willingness to acknowledge and repair an outmoded system that slotted students into an unquestioned spectrum of achievement categories from “low” to “high;”¹⁹ a shift from color-blindness to self-examination and understanding of our own racial identities and biases.

Key resources that inform our commitment to equity include but are not limited to:

Glen Singleton, *Beyond Diversity*²⁰ –

- Teachers learn to reflect on how race has an impact on education.
- Teachers learn to reflect on how their own biases and life experiences affect students in the classroom.
- Gives teachers a vocabulary for discussing race and racism with colleagues and students.

Content Literacy Continuum²¹ – The SIM Content Literacy Continuum is a framework of supports at five levels of increasing intensity that meet the varying needs of high, average and low achievers. Levels One and Two are for all students, while levels Three, Four and Five address the needs of those students who struggle with learning. This approach parallels an RTI model for addressing the needs of all students.

STUDENTS TO BE SERVED

The Academy of Alameda seeks to serve students in Alameda who would otherwise attend what during the 2009-2010 school year is known as Chipman Middle School, a group of students that: 1) represents a heterogeneous population (29% African American; 26% Asian; 14% White; 17% Hispanic/Latino; and 4% other); 2) has a significant number of students receiving free or reduced lunch; 3) has subgroups that are scoring below proficient on the CSTs and have traditionally been underserved in education; 4) has students whose past academic performances have spanned from below basic to advanced.

THE ACADEMY OF ALAMEDA’S PROJECTED ENROLLMENT

The Academy will reach its maximum capacity of 725 students by the 2012-2013 school year. Projected grade-level enrollment is as follows:

Grade	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
6	200	250	250
7	200	225	250
8	200	200	225
Total	600	675	725

¹⁹ “All are born with capacity – enhanced, stifled, or diminished,” Susan Kovalik.

²⁰ “Beyond Diversity: A Strategy for De-institutionalizing Racism and Improving Student Achievement,” <http://www.pacifieducationalgroup.com>.

²¹ B. Keith Lenz, Barbara J. Ehren, and Donald D. Deshler, “The Content Literacy Continuum: A School Reform Framework for Improving Adolescent Literacy for All Students,” University of Kansas, *Center for Research on Learning*, <http://smarttogether.org/pdf/CLCarticleFinal.pdf>.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN EDUCATED PERSON IN THE 21ST-CENTURY

Our stated mission, “To give middle school students in Alameda an education of excellence – supporting their development through adolescence, equipping them for academic success in high school and beyond, and providing opportunities for students to realize their power to affect the world” – guides all aspects of our program as we take responsibility for empowering our students for full, successful participation in a 21st-century global economy. Our commitment to prepare students for success will be reinforced in explicit school guidelines of conduct in the classroom, in the schoolyard, and in the larger community, so that our students will grow into young people who are:

Self developed – who take ownership and responsibility for their own learning, dispositions, actions, and growth; who are able to take risks; who understand their various strengths and learning styles and seek to use strengths and develop weaknesses; who are highly organized and able to transfer organizational structures across the disciplines and in life outside school; who have the ability to self-assess.

Academically successful – who can demonstrate achievement at or above grade-level standards, and can apply critical thinking skills across content areas and in life; who know how to ask for and receive help so learning can occur; who can self-assess and take steps to master standards; who are able to learn more after standard has been mastered when appropriate.

Socially responsible – who are aware of their particular gifts and abilities and are able and willing to participate in their community (school and beyond); who are able to apply given skills to social settings so collaboration can occur; who understand the impact one has not only on others’ “feelings” but on others’ learning as well. In this ever-changing world, students need to be lifelong learners so they are able to adapt and change to respond to global needs.

Responsible consumers and communicators of information – who are able to seek out, evaluate and effectively use information, as well as communicate in a multimedia society; who are able to use technology for the good of the whole; who are able to balance the use of technology with other forms of recreation, and with imagination, so the brain can develop to its full capacity; who have access to the most up-to-date applications and systems for maximum learning opportunities.²²

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN & CURRICULUM

The instructional design and curricular base of The Academy of Alameda can be understood using four headings: Readiness, Rigor, Relevance and Relationship. Each of these lenses provides a needed vantage point for guiding students toward self-development, academic success and social responsibility.

READINESS

Based on the Body-Brain research, all students need to be ready to learn: each day, for every big unit of study, for each lesson. At The Academy, we will have systems in place to ensure each child is ready to learn:

Physically: We will have breakfast available and brain-healthy snacks in the morning so no student is hampered in his/her learning because of hunger. We will prepare the campus and classroom

²² See Appendix 2a for “Technology Integration” plan.

environments with colors and furniture that are conducive to learning for middle schoolers.²³ We recognize the physical need to move to support readiness to learn. It is crucial to keep oxygen flowing to the brain so learning can occur.

While there is debate about the efficacy of school uniforms on student achievement, The Academy is committed to the concept of school uniforms because of their equalizing force and, thus, their contribution to readying students to succeed. Uniforms will benefit students of the Academy in the following ways:

- Cost consciousness: allows students from within a broad socio-economic spectrum to share equally in being adequately dressed for school
- Continuity of school procedures: school-wide dress codes are more easily enforced with uniforms
- Allows students of The Academy to be easily identified
- Supports the academic culture of the school

Academically: Our instruction will be based on best-practices, which means we will provide students plenty of “being-there” experiences (which provide background information for students) to *prepare* them to learn unknown concepts. “Being-there” experiences are opportunities intentionally provided for students to leave the classroom for a real world location. This allows students bodily experiences to which they can refer as they study specific units back in the classrooms. This would be the twice weekly visit to Crab Cove to support a unit on ecosystems or a yearly trip to the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum to support the study of ancient civilizations.

We will “tap prior knowledge” and include “anticipatory sets” in our lessons. We are committed to making sure students are “ready” to learn when they walk into any Academy classroom. Further, we will provide intervention for students who need extra help to succeed in mastering grade-level standards, including the following: FUSION reading each day and additional math instruction during the day. FUSION reading will be in addition to grade-level courses in ELA, not instead of the traditional program. We will provide testing workshops for all students who have not yet reached “proficient” or “advanced” on the CSTs. These will occur in multi-week-long workshops during afterschool enrichment and access opportunities. Any student who has been identified as Far Below Basic, Below Basic or Basic will have access to this course at no additional cost.

Emotionally: By implementing the Life Skills and Lifelong Guidelines, The Academy will foster a school culture where students’ emotional well-being is paramount to academic success.²⁴ Students at The Academy will understand how the brain works and how to take care of themselves and others’ emotional needs so that long-term learning can take place.

²³ Dr. William R. Daggett, Jeffrey E. Cobble, and Steven J. Gertel, “Color in an Optimum Learning Environment,” *International Center for Leadership in Education*: <http://www.leadered.com>. 2009.

²⁴ Robert Sylwester, *A Biological Brain in a Cultural Classroom* (Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press, Inc., 2000), 22-44.

Life-long Guidelines

Trustworthiness – To act in a manner that makes one worthy of trust and confidence.

Truthfulness – To act with personal responsibility and mental accountability.

Active Listening – To listen attentively and with intention to understand.

No Put-Downs – To never use words, actions, and/or body language that degrade, humiliate, or dishonor others.

Personal Best – To do one's best given the circumstances and available resources. When you are doing your Personal Best, it can be described by using the language of the Lifeskills.

Lifeskills

Integrity: To act according to a sense of what's right and wrong

Initiative: To do something, of one's own free will, because it needs to be done

Flexibility: To be willing to alter plans when necessary

Perseverance: To "keep at it"

Organization: To plan, arrange, and implement in an orderly way; to keep things ready to use

Sense of Humor: To laugh and be playful without harming others

Effort: To do one's best

Common Sense: To use good judgment

Problem Solving: To create solutions for difficult situations and everyday problems

Responsibility: To respond when appropriate, to be accountable for one's actions

Patience: To wait calmly for someone or something

Friendship: To make and keep a friend through mutual trust and caring

Curiosity: A desire to investigate and seek understanding of one's world

Cooperation: To work together toward a common goal or purpose

Caring: To feel and show concern for others

Courage: To act according to one's beliefs despite fear of adverse consequences

Pride: Satisfaction from doing one's personal best

Resourcefulness: To respond to challenges and opportunities in innovative and creative ways

BODY/BRAIN COMPATIBLE (BBC) LEARNING

All humans are born with capacity and are capable of infinite possibility. Throughout our lives, we have experiences that will enhance, diminish, or stifle our capacity. Middle school students arrive with varying degrees of developed capacity depending on the experiences and opportunities they have been afforded or denied. All humans continue to have opportunities to enhance their capacity. The Academy will use the Body-brain Compatible elements as identified by Susan Kovalik as the organizational lens for using the science of the brain to inform our practice as educators. As the science of understanding the brain evolves, so too will the work of The Academy.

All schools staff will be trained in and will support the implementation of the nine elements of a BBC learning environment:

BBC 1: Absence of Threat/ Nurturing Learning Environment

Absence of threat means more than just feeling safe. Real or perceived threat, social, physical and emotional, is determined by the individual via their own unique circumstances and personality. Absence of threat means that a student feels welcome, included, heard, connected to peers and adults, valued, important, smart, and safe enough to express his/her feelings about topics that have meaning to him/her. The environments of the classrooms influence the entire school.²⁵ Teachers work together to influence their own classrooms and thus affect the entire school environment. At the core of a threat-free, nurturing learning environment are positive, supportive relationships. These ensure that students are ready to learn because many of their emotional needs have been met.

The goal of a “threat-free” whole-school environment is student achievement. Its successful outcome requires that:

- Staff, students and community work together to create a positive school environment
- Staff agree to a shared set of strategies, procedures and routines they will implement and support so students can move from class to class, year to year and throughout the school with the expectation of consistency and continuity
- Staff, students and community acknowledge that African American and other students of color who are struggling in a world dominated by white privilege have experiences which influence their interaction with the school environment which need to be acknowledged and honored
- Staff, students and community agree that students need a forum and procedure to ensure feelings that emerge in home, school and the community can be expressed and validated so they can focus their attention on attaining skills and knowledge necessary for successfully navigating their teen and adult lives
- Staff, students and community recognize the unique needs of students having difficulty fitting in and work to orchestrate an environment that supports the acceptance and respect deserved by all individuals
- Staff, students and community who have experienced the privilege of being in social or academic situations where they are part of the top positions of a power structure will learn empathy and responsibility for their own actions

²⁵ Many tools for creating a threat-free classroom can be found in: Jeanne Gibbs, *Tribes: A New Way of Learning and Being Together* (Sausalito: Center Source Systems, 2006).

BBC 2: Meaningful Content

“...When meaning is reached, ‘learning’ occurs automatically and simultaneously.”²⁶

Meaningful content is relevant to students’ lives and conceptual, not just rote learning. Concepts are rich in patterns that the brain can investigate, explore, compare and contrast to make deeper meaning. “Although what constitutes ‘meaningfulness’ is unique to each learner, there are several factors which contribute significantly to making something meaningful for each and every learner.”²⁷ This occurs when content:

- Is from real life, natural world around us
- Depends heavily upon prior experience
- Is age-appropriate and thus understandable
- Is rich enough to allow for pattern seeking as a means of identifying/creating meaning
- Can be used by the learner now

While there is much content that must be covered so that students have the academic foundation necessary to be able to both attend an institution for post secondary education as well as be relevant in the work force, it is essential that teachers identify the many ways to make teaching the standards creative, useful and meaningful for a diverse population of students.

BBC 3: Choice

Developmentally, adolescents want to fit in, belong, and not stand out as “different.” It is important to recognize this social need while understanding that people have different ways of processing information and solving problems. All humans have strengths on which they rely for different uses. Choice in a BBC learning environment affords all students opportunities to explore their learning and discover ways to demonstrate mastery of standards. Choice is by design and includes the understanding of Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences²⁸ and the use of Blooms Taxonomy for Questioning²⁹.

The teacher plays an important role in maintaining the element of choice in order to maximize student learning. As Frank Smith writes, “The most difficult kind of thinking is that which is imposed on us by someone else...”³⁰ The ability to write a paper in response to a topic, prompt, etc., is essential. The ability to read in all content areas and participate in a discussion must be mastered. Choice is about supporting students so that their natural strengths are valued while also insuring that we are pushing them in other areas with the goal of academic success for all.

BBC 4: Adequate time

The brain is a pattern seeking device and looks for “hooks” to hang new information on so that it can make meaning based on prior knowledge or experience. In terms of the pattern-seeking and program-building nature of the brain, adequate time is not a luxury: it is a prerequisite for students to be

²⁶ Frank Smith, “Insult to Intelligence: The Bureaucratic Invasion of Our Classrooms,” in *The Way We Were . . . The Way We CAN Be: A Vision for the Middle School* (Susan Kovalik & Associates, 1995), II-21.

²⁷ Ann Ross and Karen Olsen, *The Way We Were . . . The Way We CAN Be: A Vision for the Middle School* (Susan Kovalik & Associates, 1995) II-20.

²⁸ Howard Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice* (New York: Basic Books/Harper Collins, 1993).

²⁹ Benjamin S. Bloom, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* (New York: Longman, 1956).

³⁰ Frank Smith, “To Think,” in *The Way We Were . . . The Way We CAN Be: A Vision for the Middle School* (Susan Kovalik & Associates, 1995), II-25.

academically successful. When students are *given time* to construct meaningful patterns in ways that are rigorously structured, learning can be complex, layered and applied to students' lives.

Adequate time is needed to get the job of learning done well, to accomplish mastery and to fully understand the connections among prior learning and learning yet to come. When teachers move onto a new concept without students having mastered what was taught, the lesson students learn is that the standard is "not that important".

BBC 5: Enriched environment

An environment is said to be "enriched" when it reflects a particular current unit of study and is devoid of old clutter or anything that distracts the brain from the task-at-hand – long term learning. "When we are exposed and engaged with stimuli that is novel and complex we utilize our cortex, the area of the brain where brain reserve occurs."³¹ An enriched environment provides the space to allow physical, emotional and social needs to be met, and helps create readiness to learn. An "enriched" environment is a class which:

- Offers an enjoyable atmosphere that promotes exploration and the fun of learning
- Allows the student to be an active participant rather than a passive observer³²
- Provides each class with a broad-based reference library; trade books, other current reference materials, etc.
- Eliminates clutter; avoids distraction and over stimulation
- Changes bulletin boards, displays and materials frequently; always stays current with what is being studied at the moment.
- Buys only a few textbooks for teacher resource and spends money on being-there experiences, immersion and hands-on materials for students
- Schedules guest speakers to support content on a regular basis³³

It is the responsibility of all educators to expose themselves and their students to novel, complex, and enriched environments on a daily basis. Studies suggest that the earlier in life a person is exposed to an enriched environment, the greater the benefit to brain health, even late into life.³⁴

BBC 6: Collaboration

Collaborating with others allows us to examine our own thinking while expanding our knowledge base. Collaboration in an academic setting provides opportunities for students to develop both social and academic skills that will be foundational to their success in life. Some students prefer to work alone and are very uncomfortable in groups, while some students thrive in situations that have a "social" quality to them and need these opportunities to process verbally in order to make meaning. A "collaborative" environment means space and opportunity for both individual work and work with others (something needed for life-long success) will be available.

³¹ Paul D. Nussbaum, Ph.D. "Building a Brain Health Environment in the School," *International Center for Leadership in Education*: <http://www.leadered.com>. 2009.

³² This list comes from Marian C. Diamond, "What are the Determinants of Children's Academic Success and Difficulties," (from a presentation sponsored by the Harvard Children's Initiative, Feb. 5, 1999).

³³ Ross and Olsen, *The Way We Were*. The "Guidelines for creating an enriched environment" are from page II-33.

³⁴ Dr. William R. Daggett, and Dr. Paul D. Nussbaum, "How Brain Research Relates to Rigor, Relevance and Relationship," *International Center for Leadership in Education*: <http://www.leadered.com>. 2009.

BBC 7: Immediate Feedback

The brain has a hard time forgetting something meaningful that has been learned. Therefore students need immediate feedback about their progress so they can consider their next steps. Feedback must be not only immediate but accurate and must come in a variety of forms including quick verbal encouragements, reinforcements or corrections as well as more thoughtful written comments from their teachers. Students also need to be taught how to give and receive feedback for themselves and others; both self- and peer- reflection/feedback are powerful mechanisms for student engagement and learning.

BBC 8: Mastery/Competence

Learning consists of two important components: extracting meaning from confusion and developing useful programs. At stake are two questions: “What do students understand?” and “How can students use what they have learned?”³⁵ In a standards-based program, these questions are directed to the student’s mastery of academic standards for each grade, as well as the other essential and incidental learning that supports students becoming self-developed academically success, and socially responsible people. To prepare student s for long-term learning, teachers consider this two-fold aspect to learning: making meaning and apply learning. Assessments must help teachers determine if meaningful patterns and depth of understanding have been developed and stored in a student’s long-term memory.

BBC 9: Movement to Enhance Learning

Motor skills are fundamental to learning. “Physical activity is good not only for the heart, but also for the brain, feeding it glucose and oxygen and increasing nerve connections, all of which makes it easier for children of all ages to learn.”³⁶ Movement for the sake of movement is not enough. Learning can and must be enhanced through movement because when the brain is forced to relocate itself in space, cerebral activity is increased. “Movement with intent” means that teachers intentionally incorporate bodily kinesthetic action daily in the classroom.

RIGOR

The rigor in the instructional program and curriculum at The Academy stems from two areas: California Content Standards and the Knowledge Taxonomy.³⁷ The California Content Standards are rigorous grade-level goals for student learning. They include building a knowledge base within each discipline (ELA, Math, Science and Social Science), developing skills, and thinking critically. By learning the requisite information and skills in each subject area, students are able to move to the more advanced task of thinking critically and are able to support their thinking with evidence. Mastery of these standards gives students proficiency during any particular academic year, and also increases the likelihood that a student will achieve academic excellence in their following year of study as the standards spiral, extending content to a higher level each year.

Along the same lines, the use of a Knowledge Taxonomy in planning units of study around the standards ensures that students are moving from basic acquisition of knowledge through analysis, and finally to

³⁵ Leslie Hart, “Human Brain and Human Learning,” in *The Way We Were . . . The Way We CAN Be: A Vision for the Middle School* (Susan Kovalik & Associates, 1995), II-46.

³⁶ From Newsweek Article, February 19, 1996, as quoted in “Nine Brain-Compatible Elements That Influence Learning,” by Susan Kovalik and Associates on <http://www.hope.edu/academic/education/wessman/unit5/braincompatible.htm>.

³⁷ See Appendix 3 for sample of California Content Standards, and Appendix 2 for Knowledge Taxonomy from Rigor and Relevance Framework.

evaluation. As the learning progresses “up” the rigor spectrum, “Students have the competence to think in complex ways and to apply their knowledge and skills. Even when confronted with perplexing unknowns, students are able to use extensive knowledge and skill to create solutions and take action that further develops their skills and knowledge.”³⁸ Attaining this level of rigor will be invaluable for success in all academic settings in the students’ future.

Through the school-wide use of the Strategic Instruction Model (SIM), teachers will be able to prioritize the standards to be taught and how they are going to move students through the levels of knowing. SIM’s use of graphic representations that can be used in any classroom gives students patterns for their thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation, etc.). This use of graphics to help student “think about their thinking” across the disciplines has been a highly successful method of helping students achieve academic proficiency and advanced levels of critical thinking.³⁹

The use of a coaching model will provide teachers with another set of eyes whose purpose is to support teachers in their instruction, assessment and refinement of their practice. SIM coaching will support teachers in all content areas with the goal of building the site’s own Professional Developers. Math coaching will take place daily through the use of a “SIMI 2” trained coach who will support both math teachers and the special education teachers who “push in” to content area classes. Coaching will also come from work through the Professional Learning Community and outside expertise in identified areas such as: Body-brain compatible learning environments, Backwards Design, assessment training, etc. This on-going coaching and training will help ensure the high level of academic rigor at The Academy.

In implementing a rigorous academic program, The Academy is committed to preparing students not only for life-long learning, but for the specific rigors of a college-preparatory high school program should a student desire to pursue that path. Students will be able to move into A-G course work having gone through their middle school years at The Academy.

RELEVANCE

Part of learning within a 21st-century context is being able to make sense of what has been learned and applying new learning. Learning thus becomes relevant to the student in several ways: 1) the student is able to apply new learning within a given discipline (for example: new skills in how to find primary sources for research and cite them using footnotes helps a student produce a research paper in Writing). 2) the student is able to apply new learning to other disciplines (the student can now find primary environmentalists to inform a science project and can write her findings in a paper with proper notation). 3) students are able to apply new knowledge to their lives outside of school that are somewhat predictable (perhaps writing an article for a magazine); and 4), students are able to apply new knowledge to situations in their lives that are not predictable (working with adults on writing a grant proposal to support a newly envisioned program for the school). The academic program of The Academy is built on the goal of empowering students as much as possible to apply their learning to their actual lives - their lives at school, their hobbies, their extracurricular activities, their social outreach, etc. The Academy will maximize student learning by making it relevant in several ways, including but not limited to:

Use of SIM. By using SIM content enhancement routines throughout the school, The Academy maximizes the opportunities for students to make connections between the disciplines. This is a very powerful

³⁸ Rigor and Relevance Framework, quadrant D.

³⁹ Dr. Don D. Deshler and Dr. Jean B. Schumaker, *High School Students with Disabilities: Strategies for Accessing the Curriculum* (New York: Corwin Press, 2006). Chapter 4: “Teaching Adolescents to be Strategic Learners.”

learning mechanism because students are freed from trying to figure out each teacher's different tools and approaches and is able to internalize graphic representations of learning and use them in any discipline.⁴⁰ School-wide, students will see continuity as all teachers use common Course and Unit Organizer, FRAME and Concept Mastery teaching Routines.

Multi-disciplinary units. The Academy will fortify student ability to apply learning across the curriculum through multi-disciplinary courses, where teachers from various disciplines collaborate to create one unit based on standards from their respective content, for example, history and art, music and math, or writing and career technical education. A Social Studies teacher might work with the music and ELA teachers to create a student performance that includes storytelling, song and music from to describe what they have learned.

Incorporation of Library/Multi-Media Center. The library will function as a venue for student and expert work and not simply a repository. Authors will come to speak and conduct workshops. Visual artists will show their works and give talks. Students will have poetry readings and book groups. Musicians will give concerts. The Drum Corp will have lessons for elementary school students. The walls will be filled with student and adult art, including paintings, drawings, watercolors, photographs, oils, reliefs, and sculptures. The library/multi-media center will be a teaching center, where students, educators and community members can come to learn, participate, showcase work, and imagine future projects. Having such a venue for students increases the likelihood that their class work will be viewed by them as "relevant." Their work is not only for their own achievement but for the betterment of the community. Students will have the opportunity to prepare projects and performances in various classes as means of demonstrating mastery of content standards. These projects and performances will be displayed and performed in public forums to which community members (parents, friends, others) will be invited. Further, as part of our vision for incorporating art, music, literature and other student-projects into our library/multi-media venue, we will seek someone to run this venue with expertise in areas that may include but are not limited to publishing so that projects from students and teachers may be used to showcase the work of The Academy.

RELATIONSHIP

The Academy is committed to maximizing the learning opportunities for all students. We recognize the need for students to feel safe with and connected to peers and adults at school in order for learning to occur. Further, students need to feel that their hard work, both academically and socially, is recognized. To this end, The Academy of Alameda will implement:

- Student- and Staff- demonstrations of the Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines are recognized and affirmed (through giving of certificates and target talk reinforcing the behavior). Lifelong Guidelines and Lifeskills of focus will be presented in a variety of formats every day. This may include skits, choral response, multi-media presentation, etc. to support the "looks like, sounds like, feels like" habits of mind that must be developed.
- Academic growth is celebrated (through mini-showcase of student work – reading, performance, demonstration)

⁴⁰ Janis A. Bulgren and Jean B. Schumaker, "Teaching Practices That Optimize Curriculum Access," chapter 3 in Dr. Don D. Deshler and Dr. Jean B. Schumaker, J. B., *High School Students with Disabilities: Strategies for Accessing the Curriculum* (New York: Corwin Press, 2006).

- Involvement in the school and community is recognized and appreciated through acknowledgement in many forms such as a public award, school-wide applause, special privileges, etc.
- Staff, students and community work together to present information and celebrate the school's success in ways that can be seen on the stage in public each day.

Advisory Class each Wednesday where:

- Students are with a cohort and an adult leader to explore and examine the students' academic and social growth through the use of an advisory rubric containing advisory standards that correspond to the school's mission and vision
- Relationships of trust can be built, providing students with both peers and adults who can help the student manage and solve problems through the year-long cohort that builds community and establishes a sense of belonging
- Students develop a relationship with an adult ally who can help mediate large-scale issues if necessary when challenges of navigating middle school during one of the most developmentally difficult periods of life arise
- Advisory may grow into the vehicle for year-long social outreach projects which will begin through the identification of either a school- or community- project based on class interest

Family and Local Community Engagement:

The Academy is committed to engagement not only of the students who are enrolled in the school, but the families each student represents and the communities in which the students live. We will seek to meet the needs of *and* ask for participation from students, families and the community so that The Academy may become a vibrant place where mutual assistance is given and received. Using a "Full Service Schools" model,⁴¹ The Academy's engagement with families and the community may include:

- Parent Connection – Research shows that school involvement from parents and others that focuses on students' academic lives positively impacts academic achievement.⁴² At The Academy, parents will be provided strategies for how best to support their students academically. This will be done by showing parents how to ask open ended questions, how to have dialogues that push their student's thinking and to encourage discussions around the day's lessons. This support will allow parents to participate academically with their child without having to be experts or well versed in a subject. All parents who attend will be able to ask their child about any assignment in a way that requires thoughtful response from the student, thus pushing students to "think about their thinking."

⁴¹ Ashleigh Collins, MA, Kristin Anderson Moore, Ph.D., and Renee Paisano-Trujillo, "Implementing School-based Services: Strategies from New Mexico's School-based Health and Extended Learning Services," in *Practitioner Insights Research-to-Results*, 2009-01, January 2009, 1-6.

⁴² Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp, "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement," *Annual Synthesis of the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools*, 2002, available at <http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf>. Key findings of this 214-page study include: 1) "Programs and interventions that engage families in supporting their children's learning at home are linked to higher student achievement." 25. 2) "Parent and community involvement that is linked to student learning has a greater effect on achievement than more general forms of involvement. To be effective, the form of involvement should be focused on improving achievement and be designed to engage families and students in developing specific knowledge and skills." 38. 3) "Programs that successfully connect with families and community invite involvement, are welcoming, and address specific parent and community needs." 43.

- “Community Empowerment Consortium (CEC),” – a program consisting of services that address: Lessons of Life Cycles, Substance Abuse (Recognizing the Symptoms, family support), Financial Planning and Banking, Home and Restaurant Etiquette, Order of Introductions, Employment, Affordable Housing, Tenant Integrity, Healthy Eating, Exercising, Tax Preparation, Cell Phone Etiquette and more. This program, which has been in development at Chipman Middle School, will be run by community volunteers throughout the day and year based on need.
- The Boys and Girls Club of Alameda – The Boys and Girls Club will partner with The Academy to offer several opportunities for our students. These may include: After-school athletic programs, During-school facilities that support the Physical and Nutritional Sciences program that meets the California State Standards that The Academy is committed to providing, After-school programs that support positive peer interactions and activities, The Teen Club, Career Classes, Outdoor Recreation, Environmental Education, Providing a venue for special Academy events.
- Partnership with the West Alameda Business Association – The Academy will pair groups of students with business professionals in a reciprocal relationship. Students will provide support to businesses and through this “outreach” they will in turn build relationships, learn about careers, learn organizational skills and gain wisdom.
- Girls Incorporated of the Island City⁴³ – The Academy will partner with Girls, Inc. of Alameda to support academic success and social competency. Students will participate in the programs offered through Girls, Inc. of Alameda during the after school program.
- “Expert” helpers - during the school day and beyond, both on campus and off, highly qualified experts from the community will share skills and experiences with students.

ACADEMIC FOCUS

The academic focus of The Academy of Alameda will revolve around three big ideas: Standards, Support and Stretch. Several key educational paradigms influence the way we approach these crucial categories, overlapping and strengthening the overall academic program. These paradigms include Assessment for Learning, Professional Learning Communities, and the Strategic Instructional Model (SIM).

STANDARDS

In compliance with NCLB requirements that states develop achievement standards for students, California has written grade-level content standards for grades K-12 in ELA, Math, Science, Social Science, Physical and Nutritional Education, and Art. These standards follow a developmental timeline and build on each other from year to year, increasing in rigor and relevance. State-adopted text books have been written with the standards as a guide, and the California Standardized Tests which students take annually measure student mastery of these state standards. However, attending schools in states where standards have been printed and text books published and high-stakes assessment administered does not mean that students are receiving a “standards-based” or “standards-aligned” education.

⁴³ See Appendix 4 for Letters of Collaboration from The Boys and Girls Club, Girls, Inc., and WABA.

There are several essential components to a genuine standards-aligned education. The following components of a standards-aligned approach will form the foundation for the education program at The Academy of Alameda.

STARTING WITH THE STANDARDS

There are two crucial components of a standards-based education:

- **Backwards Design**

Standards-based programs “start with what the students need to know.” Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe’s program “Understanding by Design” has become the industry norm. A key facet of Understanding by Design is the concept of Backwards Design, which includes the following steps: **Identify desired results, Determine acceptable evidence, Plan learning experiences and instruction.**⁴⁴

Within this basic approach are crucial steps that, when implemented, allow students to 1) develop an understanding of themselves as students; 2) achieve mastery of standards and develop critical thinking skills; and 3) make connections between content areas *and* between what is learned in school and their real lives.

- **Assessment FOR Learning**

Equally important is the use of on-going assessment FOR student learning⁴⁵. As standards are presented and taught, students are given various formative assessments, the results of which they themselves can analyze to determine the progress they are making. This use of assessment *to inform the student* is crucial for enabling students to make strategic decisions about how to reach mastery *and* to motivate them to keep trying as they see a clear target and clear means of arriving at their desired learning destination. Judy Arter of the Assessment Training Institute states:

“We want to use the classroom assessment process to keep students making productive decisions about their own learning. Students respond productively when, upon seeing assessment results, they say:

- I understand these results
- I know what to do next to learn more
- I can handle this
- I choose to keep trying

The counterproductive response, on the other hand, leaves the student saying:

- I don't understand these results
- I don't know what to do next
- I'll probably never get it anyway
- I give up

We regard attention to the emotional dynamics of assessment as crucial to sound classroom assessment practice. If students are essential decision-makers, it behooves us to consider what information they need, in what form, and at what time, to make productive decisions about their own learning.”⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, *Understanding by Design* (Upper Saddle River: Pearson, 2005).

⁴⁵ Rick Stiggins, *Student-Involved Assessment Student Learning*.

⁴⁶ Judy Arter, “Classroom Assessment For Student Learning (CASL),” 5-6.

STEPS OF A STANDARDS-BASED APPROACH

1. Identify essential standards to be mastered.

Several methods speak to this first step. In *Understanding by Design*, teachers prioritize grade-level content standards within three concentric categories: in the center are “Big Ideas and Core Tasks;” in the next circle outward, “What is important to know and do,” and in the outside category, “What is worth being familiar with.”⁴⁷ In SIM, teachers use the Unit Organizer to consider and prioritize Critical Content which they phrase as “big questions.”⁴⁸

There are many standards within each content area, and all will guide the instruction and experiences to which the students are exposed, but not all can be taught to the same depth. Through intentional focus on essential standards, teachers guarantee that students are spending their academic energy engaged in learning the most important content.

2. Rewrite standards in student-friendly language.

This becomes the students’ “learning objective” or “target,” the thing students are trying to “hit.” The standard is introduced at some point near the beginning of a learning unit and referred to regularly. Students know at all times the standard they are trying to master and therefore have some “buy in” for exerting energy in their own learning. They are not simply trying to “finish chapter 12,” for example.

3. Design or locate assessments (both formative and summative) that accurately measure the standards being taught.⁴⁹

Formative assessments can be as simple as teacher observation or as formal as a quiz. But all are to be used by teachers to inform instruction (and some by student to inform learning – see #5 below) – formative assessments are data-providing evidence of mastery.

4. Plan instruction and experiences that allow students to learn the standard.

Here, teachers will be using best-practices of differentiation and multiple learning styles, so each child has optimal likelihood of mastering the standard. This will often include development of a rubric (sometimes with students) that gives clear guidelines for what mastery and progress toward mastery looks like. (The instruction and experiences will include use of various resources: text books, primary sources, field trips, labs, films, workshops, experts, etc.)

5. Incorporate classroom-based assessment *FOR* student learning.

Students need to periodically “check in” with the teacher and themselves to see how they are progressing toward mastery. This student *assessment for learning* helps students decide what their next steps will be as they seek to master the standard. This clarity empowers students to keep moving forward as they work hard to learn.⁵⁰

6. Allow for extra support and “stretch.”

Depending on student progress, teachers need to plan for students not making sufficient progress, and for those who master a standard during particular units of study. See “Stretch” section below.

⁴⁷ See Appendix 5, Wiggins and McTighe, *Understanding by Design*, 71.

⁴⁸ See Appendix 6 for sample of Unit Organizer.

⁴⁹ See Appendix 7, from Assessment Training Institute, “Matching Achievement Targets and Assessment Methods” rubric. ATI, 2003.

⁵⁰ Judy Arter, “Classroom Assessment FOR Student Learning (CASL).”

7. Determine student progress by use of summative assessments.

Student mastery of a standard can be more accurately determined by analyzing evidence obtained later in the learning unit. After students have practiced (through in-class work and at-home work) and had time to assess their progress and make adjustments so they are progressing toward mastery, then they can show the teacher they have mastered the standard by completing “summative” assessments. These assessment (tests, final projects, demonstrations, products) form the basis for the final “reporting out” on student achievement (or “grading”).⁵¹

8. Consider (with student input) possible intervention options for students who did not master a standard.

Through the use of on-going assessment of student progress toward mastery of standards, teachers and administrators are able to determine quickly when a student is in need of support beyond the interventions the teacher is providing within the regular classroom. With a tiered intervention system in place (Content Literacy Continuum: see below under “Support”), students are able to receive extra help so they are able to master grade-level standards.⁵²

The Academy will implement these eight components in its Standards-based approach. Students will always know:

- the standard they are trying to master
- what mastery looks like
- what is needed to achieve mastery – steps student needs to take
- where they are relative to mastery of the standards

In this way, students will become academically successful and be able to demonstrate their academic abilities in various ways, including success in high-stakes assessments.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

Given the multifaceted dimensions of the standards-based education program, and knowledge of the evidence linking student achievement to how teachers teach⁵³, staff at The Academy will need a process to evaluate the efficacy of the strategies and approaches they are implementing in their classrooms and some means of adapting instruction given what their data reveal. Therefore, a climate of collective inquiry and action research will be cultivated at The Academy so that teachers will be in a continuous cycle of: 1) posing questions about their instruction and how well students are learning desired skills, knowledge and dispositions; 2) gathering data from students; 3) reflecting on the data and their own experiences in the classrooms; and 4) deciding on the next course of action, i.e. changes in strategies.

The Academy’s structured Professional Learning Community will be based on the work of Rick and Becky DuFour, who believe that “No school can help all students achieve at high levels if teachers work in isolation. Schools improve when teachers are given the time and support to work together to clarify essential student learning, develop common assessments for learning, analyze evidence of student learning, and use that evidence to learn from one another.”⁵⁴ Professional Learning Communities exist as catalysts for action. We will seek to develop strategies and ideas to build on strengths and address weaknesses in that learning. Our aim is to implement strategies that work – to do better as we learn

⁵¹ Ken O’Connor, *How to Grade for Learning* 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks: Corwin, 2009).

⁵² At The Academy, this tiered intervention system will be the Content Literacy Continuum. See Appendix 8.

⁵³ Ronald Gallimore, Bradley A. Ermeling, William M. Saunders, Claude Goldenberg, “Moving the Learning of Teaching Closer to Practice: Teacher Education Implications of School-Based Inquiry Teams,” *The Elementary School Journal*, (2009): 109-5.

⁵⁴ Professional Learning Community “A Big-picture Look at PLC,” Learning Tree Solutions at <http://www.allthingsplc.info>.

more from each other and outside professionals. Together we will analyze the impact of strategy changes to discover what was effective and what was not. Our PLC work is results oriented. The effectiveness of The Academy's education program components will be assessed on the basis of results rather than intentions.⁵⁵

The Academy teaching staff will meet bi-monthly (after school hours) to engage in action-research cycles of inquiry weekly during common planning time. Specifically, teachers will be gathering evidence of student progress toward grade-level standards including student completion of teacher-designed tests, benchmark assessments, writing samples, interview notes, and performance evaluations. This evidence of learning will be compared with data from other teachers. Teachers will reflect on their explicit instructional methods, sharing, for example, the essential questions of a unit organizer co-constructed with students, formative assessments used to gauge progress or lesson organizer routines. Teachers will look at their student data with the intent of improving achievement where students are underperforming through changes in the teacher's instructional, intervention, communication, and planning approach. With the help of colleagues, teachers will examine their practice around a certain lesson/teaching-of-standard to examine possible causes of low achievement on the part of some students. They then determine a new course of action, implement the new strategy targeting improvement, and return to the Professional Learning Community group with the results. In this way, the causes for student underperformance are constantly examined in light of teacher practice and teachers are engaged in the process of continual learning.⁵⁶

SUPPORT

The brain is a pattern-seeking device.⁵⁷ All students, from those who are strong and able to demonstrate mastery to those who are significantly below grade level, make meaning through patterns. The Academy will provide the necessary academic support and structures so that those who are advanced will continue to grow academically and those who struggle will have the skills necessary to reach grade level standards. Through the school-wide implementation of the Strategic Instruction Model, including Content Enhancement Routines and Teaching Strategies, all students will be provided with the tools and instruction necessary to support learning.

THE SIM CONTENT LITERACY CONTINUUM — A CONTINUUM OF SCHOOL ACTION

The SIM Content Literacy Continuum (CLC) is a framework of supports at five levels of increasing intensity that meet the varying needs of students who have been deemed high, average and low achievers. Levels One and Two are for all students, while levels Three, Four and Five address the needs of those students who struggle with learning. This approach parallels the Response to Intervention (RTI) model for addressing the needs of all students.⁵⁸

Level 1: Ensure mastery of critical content.

Content Enhancement Routines (CER) are used by all content teachers. Planning, instruction and assessment are tied to grade-level standards.

⁵⁵ Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker and Gayle Karhanek, (2006). *Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work* (Bloomington: Solution Tree, 2006) 2–4.

⁵⁶ Richard DuFour, et al. *Revisiting Professional Learning Communities at Work*, 169-225.

⁵⁷ Leslie A. Hart, *Human Brain and Human Learning*, 60.

⁵⁸ See Appendix 9 for overview of RTI.

Collaborative teacher planning and analysis of data are supported by CERs.

Level 2: Weave shared strategies across classes.

Appropriate learning strategies are embedded into content courses.
The intensity of strategy instruction is adjusted for content classes.

Level 3: Support mastery of shared strategies for targeted strategies.

Students are placed in small group, intense strategy instruction classes based on multiple data sources.
Students are also in core content classes.

Level 4: Provide more intensive intervention for those who need work on basic literacy elements.

Students are placed (based on multiple data) in small group, basic skill instruction classes (e.g. Corrective Reading or FUSION) to develop basic skills necessary for accessing learning strategies.
Students are also in core content classes.

Level 5: Deliver more intensive clinical options for those who need it.

Students are placed (based on intensive assessment) in clinical settings to develop basic language skills needed to access content. Generally, this level is taught by speech therapist and/or special education teachers and will align with students' IEPs. Students at this level are also in core content classes.

STRATEGIC INSTRUCTION MODEL (SIM)

Strategic Instruction Model (SIM) from the Center for Research on Learning, University of Kansas in Lawrence (KU-CRL), provides both a recommended instructional structure and a research validated set of instructional tools to ensure high quality strategic instruction for today's diverse student population. The SIM Content Literacy Continuum (CLC) is a framework for structuring content instruction and skill intervention on a continuum that increases in intensity as student needs increase. The SIM tools, Content Enhancement Routines and Learning Strategies, support the work of The Academy by providing a research validated approach to insuring that teachers are clear about what everyone must know, what most students should know, and what some students will want to know as they prepare for success in an ever changing world. Additionally, SIM provides staff with tools designed to help students needing intervention to make dramatic progress toward grade-level standards.

CONTENT ENHANCEMENT ROUTINES (CER)

Content Enhancement Routines are used by teachers to teach curriculum content to academically diverse classes in ways that all students can understand. Content Enhancement is an instructional method that relies on using powerful teaching devices to organize and present curriculum content in a way that makes it easier-to-learn, make connections between content areas and think critically about essential questions. Teachers identify content that they deem to be most critical (based on the standards) and teach it using a powerfully designed routine that actively engages students with the content. All Academy planning will begin with the standards, and critical content will be identified to support the mastery of those standards.

Content Enhancement is a way of teaching an academically diverse group of students in which four conditions prevail:

- Both group and individual needs are valued and met.
- The integrity of the content is maintained.
- Critical features of the content are selected and transformed in a way that promotes learning for all students.
- Instruction is carried out in a partnership with students.

There are several different types of routines that maximize student achievement:

- Teaching routines for planning and leading learning; for example: Course and Unit Organizer
- Teaching routines for exploring text, topics and details; for example: “Framing” and LINC.S.
- Teaching routines for teaching concepts; for example: Concept mastery and Concept Comparison
- Teaching routines for increasing student performance; for example: Recall Enhancement and Question Exploration.

LEARNING STRATEGIES

Learning strategies are designed to create strategic learners who can meet grade-level demands. Generally, learning strategies require intensive teaching, often in smaller group settings. A learning strategy is a person's approach to learning and using information. Learning strategies are used by students to help them understand information and solve problems. Students who do not know or do not use good learning strategies often participate passively and ultimately fail in school. Learning strategy instruction focuses on making the students more active learners by teaching them how to learn and how to use what they have learned to solve problems and be successful.

The Learning Strategies Curriculum has the necessary breadth and depth to provide a well-designed scope and sequence of strategy instruction. The curriculum is divided into strands, or categories of skills. One strand addresses how students acquire information. It includes strategies for learning how to paraphrase critical information, picture information to promote understanding and remembering, ask questions and make predictions about text information, and identify unknown words in text. A second strand helps students study information once they acquire it. It includes strategies for developing mnemonics and other devices to aid memorization of facts as well as strategies for learning new vocabulary. These strategies help prepare students for tests. A third strand helps students express themselves. It includes strategies to help students write sentences and paragraphs, monitor their work for errors, and confidently approach and take tests.

No single strategy is a panacea. For example, different reading strategies help students figure out what a word is, comprehend what they're reading, acquire vocabulary, and understand the structure of text. All of these strategies are essential for a well-integrated, balanced reading program. Likewise, an array of strategies in other areas is necessary for student success.

The University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning has taken several strategies and bundled them into a program called FUSION. FUSION Reading is a course offering for those students who are below grade level in reading as measured by the CST, AimsWeb fluency, GRADE assessment and any other necessary assessments for determining need. The FUSION reading program has been very successful in AUSD when the conditions for delivery with fidelity to the program are available, including class size ratio limits, student access to grade level content, and completion of the Integration portion of the program. Alameda High School and Encinal High school have seen double digit gains on the CST in ELA for students with like scores for comparison.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ See Appendix 10 for data on academic achievement results in AUSD High Schools.

STRUCTURE FOR SCHOOL-WIDE SUPPORT

Special Education teachers, rather than being assigned a group of students for whom they are responsible, will instead be assigned to specific teachers. By co-teaching along with the content area teachers, all students who struggle, those with IEPs and those without, will receive help from both a content expert and a learning strategies expert. Over time, the content area teacher will also become a strategies expert and the special education teacher will become adept at the content. This reciprocal form of supporting students will have exponential benefits as it builds the skills of students and teachers alike. In an ELA class, students may receive extra help with sentence writing strategies while working to master the grade-level standard of writing a persuasive essay. In a course 1 math class, students who need extra support after direct instruction will be provided small-group instruction that re-teaches the day's math concept, focusing on multiple ways to understand the content. Special Education staff will be trained in and able to support and offer in-class intervention for all students regardless of where they fall within the Content Literacy Continuum (CLC).

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WHO STRUGGLE IN READING

Students struggle in reading in two important ways:

Those who have a difficult time with the actual task of reading — These students lack fluency, academic vocabulary and the comprehension associated with their lack of both. To close these gaps, students must be taught explicitly how to decode multisyllabic words, make meaning from text and how to think like a reader. At The Academy, all students who are in need of this type of explicit reading instruction will be given additional reading instruction every day using a research validated program (FUSION). Knowing that students who struggle must experience acceleration while being provided intervention, this course will be in addition to a full day of rigorous, standards based, heterogeneous instruction. Further, all teachers will have an understanding of the specific strategies being taught so that are able to embed and “cue” students in core content classes.

Those whose data does not indicate the need for a reading intervention course but are not academically successful as measure by standardized assessments — There are a variety of reasons that these students struggle. Some have fluency but lack the academic vocabulary necessary to access grade level content. Some are able to handle the content reading in specific subjects but do not have the varied skills necessary to make meaning in other content areas.⁶⁰ These students are going to be able to handle grade level academic text in all content areas through the explicit, intentional and school-wide regular use of embedded SIM strategies and the use of Content Enhancement Routines including but not limited to, Course Organizer and Unit Organizer, FRAME and Concept Mastery.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WHO STRUGGLE IN MATH

Students struggle in math for several reasons:

Those who have gaps in their content knowledge — they lack foundational skills or the conceptual understanding necessary to handle the rigors of grade level content. These students will be provided a full hour of grade level math instruction daily. In addition, these students will participate in the “Access Math” course that has dedicated time for skill building, providing multiple ways for students to master skills that they were previously unable to master.

⁶⁰ Karen M. Feathers, *Infotext, Reading and Learning* (Markham: Pippin Publishing, 1993).

Some have difficulty because they need they need more time and/or alternative methods of instruction with the grade level content — In the regular education math classes, teachers will demonstrate multiple methods for problem solving as well as provide daily opportunities for re-teaching to those who need extra support. In addition, through participation in the “Access Math” course, students will be given further opportunities to explore various methods of problem solving and be provided with adequate time to make meaning at his or her rate. In addition, students will be encouraged to make connections in mathematics through the grades (as math progresses from concrete to conceptual) by using manipulatives such as:

- the use of fraction bars and base ten blocks
- the use of algebra tiles and graphic calculators
- use of graphic calculators and *geometers sketch pad* (software program)

Some simply lack a vision of themselves as mathematicians and without a belief in their abilities — they do not apply themselves when the learning is difficult. Based on The Academy’s understanding of Body-brain compatible learning, all students need the opportunity for math to be meaningful and to experience themselves as mathematically powerful. For those students needing extra support in this area, the “Access Math” course will provide opportunities for healthy competition, exposure to real life mathematicians and fun.

In addition, through the use of MATHCOUNTS, The Academy will provide students in “Access Math” opportunities to master and excel in a standards-based program. *“To secure America’s global competitiveness, MATHCOUNTS inspires excellence, confidence and curiosity in U.S. middle school students through fun and challenging math programs. ..., MATHCOUNTS is providing today’s students with the foundation for success in science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers.”*⁶¹

Students who are enrolled in Math Intervention as their “elective” during the school day will be given priority spaces in The Academy’s after-school enrichment program.

STRETCH

All students will need opportunity to “stretch” their learning at various times because the brain is constantly seeking to grow by advancing to more challenging problems⁶². There are also certain situations when students will need intentional opportunities to stretch, such as when students have mastered identified standards in the classroom prior to completion of a unit of study or when student come to school having already mastered certain standards. “Stretch” opportunities may include:

- More in-depth critical thinking projects – a research project that results in a biography of a historical figure or a science experiment conducted on a topic of interest
- Pure Reading – Every student in the school will participate in a 50 minute reading class designed to improve their reading and *critical thinking* skills in all content areas (see Master Schedule and description below)
- Advanced literature studies that extend to Pure Reading – a comparison of two different authors, a critique of ideas from non-fiction text on global warming, etc.
- Technology application and demonstration – a multi-media presentation that demonstrates the water cycle so that elementary students can learn from middle school aged students

⁶¹ Mathcounts Competition Program, “2009-2010 School Handbook,” <https://www.mathcounts.org>.

⁶² Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D., *Mindset*.

- Library/Multi-media Center presentation development (to be used during “Showcase Nights” events(details below) – a short animated film that shows the difference between monotheism and polytheism
- After-school enrichment and access classes such as “Math Circles,”⁶³ film appreciation, watercolor art, Drum Corp, etc.

⁶³ Berkeley Math Circle: "The purpose of the Berkeley math Circle and the Bay Area Mathematics Olympiad is to increase the quality and quantity of students who become mathematics educators and researchers, or who simply love and use mathematics in their studies, work and daily activities," at: <http://mathcircle.berkeley.edu>.

MEANS TO ACHIEVE ACADEMIC PROGRAM GOALS

MASTER SCHEDULE: SUPPORTS READINESS, RIGOR, RELEVANCE AND RELATIONSHIP

The Master Schedule of The Academy reflects the commitment elucidated in our mission, vision and program components. It is a hybrid schedule that makes use of the advantages of different types of scheduling. The entire day on the campus of The Academy is intended to support student development, maximize student learning, and promote responsible student participation in the school and beyond. Key components of the Master Schedule include:

- Increase in instructional minutes for both ELA and Math
- Pure Reading for 50 minutes daily
- FUSION
- “Access Math”
- Community Opening daily
- Block scheduling in Social Studies and Science
- Rather than having approximately 180 students, Social Studies and Science teachers will have only 90 students per semester, thus allowing for better student support
- Physical and Nutritional Science program
- Elective program that may include: visual and performing arts, world languages, digital media, career exploration⁶⁴
- Ability to make use of community for “being-there” experiences
- Students face different courses at different times of day during the week so that optimal learning time (morning) is available for each course
- Weekly advisory

INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES⁶⁵

- The Academy will provide 180 days of instruction, five more than required by charter law
- The Academy will provide between 71,159 and 75,535 instructional minutes per school year, exceeding the charter school required 54,000 minutes in grades 4-8.
- These minutes reflect the scheduling of eight modified days when students would attend school from 8:15-12:10. These days will be used for staff development to support the mission of the school.
- The Academy after school Access, Opportunity and Enrichment programs will provide 2.5 hours per day of extra learning time. Students who attend for the full time every day will receive an additional 750 minutes of school per week.

⁶⁴ *California Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards Grades Seven Through Twelve*, California Department of Education, 2006.

⁶⁵ See Appendix 11 “Instructional Minutes Summary Sheet 2010-2011.”

Hour	Monday	Tuesday	Thursday	Friday	Monday	Tuesday
8:15-8:30 Community Opening	8:15-8:30 Community Opening	8:15-8:30 Community Opening	8:15-8:30 Community Opening	8:15-8:30 Community Opening	8:15-8:30 Community Opening	8:15-8:30 Community Opening
8:35-9:25 Pure Reading	8:35-9:25 Pure Reading	8:35-9:25 Pure Reading	8:35-9:25 Pure Reading	8:35-9:25 Pure Reading	8:35-9:25 Pure Reading	8:35-9:25 Pure Reading
9:28-10:28	English	Elective/ Math intervention	Physical and Nutritional Education	Social studies/ science	Social Studies/ Science	Math
10:31-11:31	Math	English	Elective/ Math intervention	Physical and Nutritional Education	SocialStudies/ Science	Social Studies/ Science
11:34-12:34	Social studies/science	Math	English	Elective/ Math intervention	Physical and Nutritional Education	Social Studies/Science
12:34-1:14 Lunch	12:34-1:14 Lunch	12:34-1:14 Lunch	12:34-1:14 Lunch	12:34-1:14 Lunch	Elective/ Math intervention	12:34-1:14 Lunch
1:17-2:17	Social studies/science	Social studies/science	Math	English		Physical and Nutritional Education
2:20-3:20	Physical and Nutritional Education	Social studies/science	Social studies/science	Math	English	Elective/ Math intervention
Total instructional minutes	6 hours 25 minutes	6 hours 25 minutes	6 hours 25 minutes	6 hours 25 minutes	6 hours 25 minutes	6 hours 25 minutes
Changes	No elective	No PNS No prep for teacher	Only one hour social studies/science	Only one hour social studies/science	No math	No English / 2 preps for teacher
3:30-6:00	CST course Electives Tutoring	CST course Electives Tutoring	CST course Electives Tutoring	CST course Electives Tutoring	CST course Electives Tutoring	CST course Electives Tutoring

WEDNESDAY option 1

Hour	Wednesday
8:15-8:30	Community Opening
8:35-9:25	Pure Reading
9:28-9:58	English
10:01-10:31	Math
10:34-11:04	Social studies/science
11:07-11:37	Physical and Nutritional Education
11:40-12:10	Elective/math intervention
12:10-12:50	lunch
12:53-1:53	Advisory
1:55-3:55	PLC
Total instructional minutes	6 hours 25 minutes – 50 minutes
Changes	All courses 30 minutes
3:30-6:00	Access/Opportunity/Enrichment

WEDNESDAY option 2 A Day

Hour	Wednesday
8:15-8:30 Community Opening	8:15-8:30 Community Opening
8:35-9:25 Pure Reading	8:35-9:25 Pure Reading
9:28-9:58-10:31	English
10:34-11:04-11:37	Math
11:40-12:10	Physical and Nutritional Education
12:10-12:50 lunch	12:10-12:50 lunch
12:53-1:23	Physical and Nutritional Education
1:25-2:25 Advisory	Advisory
Total instructional minutes	6 hours 25 minutes
2:30- 4:30	PLC
Changes	All courses 1 hour every other week
2:30-6:00	Access/Opportunity/Enrichment

WEDNESDAY option 2 B Day

Hour	Wednesday
8:15-8:30 Community Opening	8:15-8:30 Community Opening
8:35-9:25 Pure Reading	8:35-9:25 Pure Reading
9:28-9:58-10:31	Social studies/science
10:34-11:04-11:37	Elective/math intervention
11:40-12:10	Advisory
12:10-12:50 lunch	12:10-12:50 lunch
12:53-2:25	Advisory
1:30 – 3:30	PLC
Total instructional minutes	6 hours 25 minutes
Changes	All courses 1 hour every other week
1:30-6:00	Access/Opportunity/Enrichment

“DROP ROTATION SCHEDULE”

The master schedule provides the vehicle for supporting readiness, rigor, relevance and relationships. Using a “Drop Rotation Schedule” for all courses (except Morning Opening and Pure Reading), students will be scheduled into a six-course program. Courses will include, Math, English, Social Studies, Science, Physical And Nutritional Science and Electives (or extra math support). Over seven days, students will attend all six classes at different times during the instructional day (Wednesday is not in the cycle and has a set schedule). This cycle provides the blocks of time necessary for rigorous instruction and building relationships with students which ultimately increases academic success. Students’ energy levels and ability to concentrate is different throughout the day. The “cycle” rotation allows students to be at their best in all courses throughout the week. The morning opening will set the tone for the day, supporting emotional readiness by bringing the school community together as one and providing opportunities to focus on the Lifeskills and Lifelong guidelines and celebrating students’ success.

INNOVATIVE SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES BLOCKS

Through the semester courses which are Science and Social Studies, students will receive a two hour block of instructional time four times per cycle. This extended time will allow students to participate in activities that bring relevance to the learning through “being-there” experiences, guest speakers, and hands-on, project-based learning that is standards aligned. Because students will take Science and Social Studies for one semester for extended time, teacher contacts (the number of students assigned to a teacher in any given teaching period) will decrease thus further supporting the ability to create more in-depth relationships with students.

PURE READING⁶⁶

Reading specialist Karen M Feathers writes, “We know that reading is best taught when integrated into all subject areas, that learning how to read never stops, and that reading instruction need not take time from learning of content.”⁶⁷ The Academy is committed to continuing to develop each student’s reading ability. This will be done both in English Language Arts classes and Pure Reading.

Pure Reading is daily dedicated time for reading. Using multiple measures (CST, AimsWeb fluency, GRADE, teacher recommendation and other comprehension assessments) students will participate in a 50-minute course designed to support their reading needs. Those students who are identified as “intensive” readers will receive Corrective Reading. Those who are identified as “Strategic” will participate in the SIM, FUSION Reading program. Those who are “Benchmark/Advanced” will participate in seminars that have instructional (standards) and content foci.

These seminars will be multi-age and focus on a variety of genres and topics that support student engagement of text in meaningful ways. Examples of Pure Reading seminars might include: African American female authors, a comparison of two novels, Ethics, a study of current writings on space exploration, etc. Students will rotate through multiple seminars each year. With every teacher participating in Pure Reading, The Academy will be able to provide smaller teacher to student ratios for those who are in Corrective Reading or FUSION. Those courses will not exceed 15 students. All students are “grouped for mobility,” meaning at any time, based on multiple measures, students would be moved to a more appropriate placement should the Pure Reading course they are in not meet their instructional needs.

OVERVIEW OF PURE READING

Reading Level	Pure Reading Time	English Language Arts
Intensive	Corrective Reading	General ELA Class
Strategic	FUSION	General ELA Class
Benchmark/Advanced	Interest-based Seminars	General ELA Class

⁶⁶ This term was coined by current Chipman Middle School principal Judy Goodwin.

⁶⁷ Karen M. Feathers, *Infotext, Reading and Learning*, 10.

MATH PATHWAYS

The Academy will provide multiple pathways for students to enter advanced math courses. The courses we will offer include:

- “Access Math” (see above section: “Students Who Struggle in Math” for description)
- Course 1
- Course 2
- Algebra
- Geometry

6th graders may take either Course 1 or Course 2 depending on current math ability (as determined through multiple measures including 5th-grade teacher recommendation, report cards, CSTs, parent and student input, etc.). Likewise, 7th graders will have a choice of taking either Course 2 or Algebra (again, determined through multiple measures). Students who excel in Course 1 in 6th grade may move to Algebra in 7th. 8th graders will be in either Algebra or Geometry. All students will be challenged and supported in their progress toward mastery of math standards. As they grow and advance in their skills, students will be offered flexibility in determining their math course for each year.

MODIFIED WEDNESDAYS

Every Wednesday, the schedule will be modified to support both “Advisory” groups (see below) for students and teachers and “Professional Learning Communities” for school staff. There are two potential scenarios for this day, the final form of which will be determined by Academy founders. The first, Wednesday option 1, has students attending each class for 30 minutes providing one day per week when students see every teacher. This day may be used for assessments, feedback, and student focus on their own learning through self assessments and analysis of class rubrics. The second, Wednesday option 2A and B, is based on an alternating Wednesday schedule where students would attend three of five classes each week. Students would be released at 2:25 every Wednesday.

Staff development, Professional Learning Community and school-wide collaboration will take place every Wednesday. Therefore, there may be limits to the after-school program on Wednesdays.

At first, this schedule may seem tricky for students. However, with Morning Openings each day and the daily schedule always visible in strategic locations, students will quickly internalize what it means when they are asked, “what is your Day 3 like?”

ADVISORY

Advisory occurs once a week on Wednesdays for one hour and includes all students and teachers. Students meet with their Advisory teacher in a grade-level cohort throughout the school year. The cohort will be guided by Advisory Standards/Student Outcomes Matrix which focuses on The Academy’s school-wide student goals of Self-Development, Academic Success and Social Responsibility. Monthly units will be built around the advisory standards. For example, in September, students might explore, “What is The Academy and how do I fit in?” Through various activities such as reading articles, watching film clips, researching topics, participating in group discussion, and writing in self-reflection journals, students will engage in the units in meaningful ways. During the year, units may include social outreach projects that are open to the students’ interests, ideas, desires and imagination and which the students will develop and execute. These outreach projects will be highlighted at the Showcase Nights conducted throughout the school year, giving students the opportunity to share their projects and the people whose lives have been touched by the efforts of The Academy students.

Advisory is modeled after the medical communities “case management” structure where a patient’s often complex medical treatment is attended to by many specialists but overseen by one case manager to ensure the treatment is coordinated and that no details “fall through the cracks.” At The Academy, the point person, the “Advisor,” oversees the educational experience of a finite number of students. The “educational experience” is defined by how the student is doing at school: socially, academically and emotionally. The Advisor acts as the student’s “agent/liason/trusted adult” that every child needs when navigating middle school.

THE SCHOOL DAY AT A GLANCE⁶⁸

School begins every day at 8:15 in the multi-purpose room for Community Opening. There is a focus on Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines including funny skits performed by staff and students to make sure that everyone knows what the Lifeskills look like, sound like and feel like. There are announcements about important information that all students and their families will need to know. Community Opening is positive, fast- paced and sometimes filled with surprises.

After Community Opening, students are given five minutes to move to Pure Reading. As with Community Opening, every student in the school has Pure Reading for 50 minutes every day from 8:35-9:25.

Pure Reading ends at 9:25 every day and students have three minutes to move to their next class. The remainder of the day (Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays) makes use of the “cycles.” There are six days in a cycle but since Wednesday does not cycle, it takes seven days to repeat what is referred to as “Day 1.” For example, if Monday is the first day of “cycle 1,” i.e. Day 1 of the 6 day cycle, and a student has English first hour (9:28-10:28), he or she will have English second hour (10:31-11:31) on Day 2. Accordingly, they will have English one “hour” later each day until the following Tuesday (Day 6 on their cycle) when they have a “skip English” day. Every student takes six courses in addition to Pure Reading (which include English, Math, Science/Social Studies, Elective/Access Math, Physical and Nutritional Education), but has only five “classes” each day except for Wednesdays.

AFTER SCHOOL

The Academy is committed to offering a rich and engaging after-school program. This program may include opportunities for students to increase needed academic skills as well as explore areas of interest. After-school courses may include:

- Demystifying the CST – unlocking the mysteries of standardized test taking
- Dance / Drum Corp
- Digital Media
- Tutoring help
- Cooking / Gardening
- Homework Support⁶⁹
- Yearbook / Speech
- Voice / Debate
- Music appreciation / Art

⁶⁸ See “A Day in the Life Of” in Appendix 12.

⁶⁹ Students at The Academy will be provided the supports necessary to ensure that all students have ample time and space to complete homework in a timely manner.

CURRICULUM: SUPPORTS READINESS, RIGOR, RELEVANCE AND RELATIONSHIP

Several overarching research-verified approaches form the curricular base of The Academy, supporting our commitment to a rigorous and relevant standards-based program. These approaches work in conjunction with each other, some focusing more on instructional concerns, some on use of materials, and others on student differences. These approaches include: Multiple Intelligences, Cooperative Interaction, Spiral Curriculum, Non-linguistic Representation, and Backwards Planning⁷⁰. The highly refined approaches allow for maximum student engagement, systematic learning of increasingly complex concepts and skills, demonstration of mastery in varied ways, and application of learning in various contexts and across the curriculum.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS:

The Academy is committed to offering students direct and explicit instruction in English Language Arts *and* providing sufficient time for students to read and write. We are committed to using instructional models -- including Readers' and Writers' Workshop -- which allow for: 1) direct instruction on innumerable topics such as vocabulary, grammar, genre structure, point of view, character development, etc. (in writing) and inference, theme, character analysis, structure of expository prose, etc. (in reading); 2) creativity and student choice to maximize student engagement; and 3) opportunities for differentiation of instruction so students requiring extra support receive additional instruction and practice and those requiring stretch are given guidance on projects. The English Language Arts curriculum of The Academy will support our overall approach and may include:

Research Base

- Nancy Atwell, *In the Middle* (workshop model)
- Isabelle Beck, *Bringing Words to Life*⁷¹

Content

- California State Content Standards, *Reading and Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*⁷²

Resources

- *Inquiry By Design* (workshop model)
- Teacher -prepared Course/Units using SIM Content Enhancement Routines⁷³
- FUSION Reading⁷⁴
- Fountas-Pinnell, *Guiding Readers and Writers* (workshop model)
- SDAIE Strategies

⁷⁰ Howard Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice*. Spencer Kagan, *Cooperative Learning* (San Clemente: Kagan Cooperative Learning, 1994); Robert J. Marzano, Debra J. Pickering, and Jane E. Pollock, *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement* (Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2001); Wiggins and McTighe, *Understanding By Design*, respectively.

⁷¹ Isabel Beck, *Bringing Words to Life*, (New York: Guilford Press, 2002). Beck offers theory and practice on teaching students to develop academic vocabulary that can be used across the disciplines.

⁷² California Department of Education, 2007.

⁷³ See Appendix 13 for samples, description, and data of SIM Content Enhancement Routines.

⁷⁴ See Appendix 14 for samples of SIM FUSION Reading Components.

MATH:

The Academy is committed to the on-going training and support for math content, lesson design and assessment for teachers, so that students have access to experts who are constantly building their own knowledge based on current theories of mathematics. Students will develop a conceptual understanding of math as opposed to learning rote steps to a correct answer. To develop a conceptual understanding, students begin with concrete learning, and move systematically through semi-concrete instruction and eventually are able to use algorithms to solve complex grade-level math problems. The Math curriculum of The Academy will support our overall approach and may include:

Research Base

- Isabelle Beck, *Bringing Words to Life*
- Visual mathematics for conceptual learning –including the use of manipulative

Content

- California State Content Standards, *Mathematics Content Standards for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*⁷⁵
- Area Models through the grades
- Equivalent Forms of One through the grades
- Developing Relational Thinking Using Bar Models⁷⁶

Resources

- Teacher -prepared Course/Units using SIM Routines⁷⁷
- Problem solving strategies – examples include Lane County Curriculum
- State-adopted text as instructional tool
- SDAIE Strategies

SCIENCE:

The Academy is committed to developing students who are able to think scientifically: who can look at a problem, offer a solution, test their ideas, and draw conclusions from their tests. This requires the creation of classrooms where inquiry into big-picture issues -- such as “What is matter and how are things in this world connected?” -- frames the work students do. Students in science classes at The Academy will not simply memorize the periodic table (although important information such as this will be learned and understood): students will be able to analyze problems posed, use tools they have been taught, and develop a scientific understanding of the world. Given the prime location of The Academy campus to the shores of the San Francisco bay, science classes will be conducted often at near-by sites so that students can have hands-on access to real-life science, thus grounding their study in bodily experiences which maximizes long-term learning.⁷⁸ The Science curriculum of The Academy will support our overall approach and may include:

Research Base

- Isabelle Beck, *Bringing Words to Life*

⁷⁵ California Department of Education, 2006.

⁷⁶ See appendix 15 for examples of Relational Thinking Bar Model, Area Models and Equivalent Forms of One.

⁷⁷ See appendix 13 for SIM Math CE routine

⁷⁸ Leslie Hart, *Human Brain and Human Learning* (Village of Oak Creek: Books for Educators, 2002), 86.

Content

- California State Content Standards, *Science Content Standards for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*⁷⁹

Resources

- Teacher -prepared Course/Units using SIM Routines
- State-adopted text as instructional tool
- Hands-on learning to local sites – including Crab Cove, community garden, the grocery store, Tech Museum, Exploratorium, etc.
- Science labs for investigation using UC Berkeley FOSS, earth, physical and life science curriculums
- State-adopted text as instructional tool
- Hands-on learning to local sites
- SDAIE Strategies

SOCIAL STUDIES:

The Academy is committed to engaging the imagination of its students in an in-depth and open-ended investigation into humanity through the ages in order to inspire students to better understand their own lives in the 21st century. Students will be confronted with big questions (“What is Freedom?” “What is the relationship between power in a society and wealth,”), given tools to conduct historical research (primary resources, maps, vocabulary, note-taking skills, etc.) and guided in their exploration of major periods of human history. Students will be able to communicate their new learning in a variety of ways, from writing to speaking to multi-media presentations, and will be tasked with the complex job of forming opinions of history, defending their positions, and applying these views to their own lives and the community in which they live. The Social Studies curriculum of The Academy will support our overall approach and may include:

Research Base

- Isabelle Beck, *Bringing Words to Life*

Content

- California State Content Standards, *History-Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*⁸⁰

Resources

- Teacher -prepared Course/Units using SIM Routines⁸¹
- State-adopted text as instructional tool
- Teachers Curriculum Institute (TCI)
- SDAIE Strategies

PHYSICAL AND NUTRITIONAL EDUCATION:

The Academy is committed to developing strong students – academically, socially, and physically. To this end, we will offer many opportunities for students to 1) increase their overall physical health through exercise and healthy eating; 2) engage in multiple physical activities so that each student can find an area of expertise (basketball for some, sprinting for others, jumping rope for some, dancing for others; and 3) develop an understanding of the intricate connection between the body, the brain and the human

⁷⁹ California Department of Education, 2000.

⁸⁰ California Department of Education, 2000.

⁸¹ See Appendix 13 for SIM Social Studies CE example.

capacity to grow and succeed. The Physical and Nutritional Education curriculum of The Academy will support our overall approach and may include:

Research Base

- Isabelle Beck, *Bringing Words to Life*

Content

- California State Content Standards, *Physical Education Model Content Standards for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*⁸²

Resources

- Teacher -prepared Course/Units using SIM Routines
- SDAIE Strategies

PLAN FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ACADEMICALLY LOW ACHIEVING

ORGANIZATION

The academic program at The Academy of Alameda will benefit students deemed “academically low-achieving” in many ways. First, our intentional creation of an aesthetically pleasing school environment (clean, psychologically-stimulating colors, plants, signage/murals) and expectations for student aesthetic-sensibilities (uniforms, dress code) will give low-achieving students an optimal setting in which to learn – inspiring and with minimal distractions. Second, the highly organized structure of the school (SIM routines and strategies in all classes; common procedures in all classes; school-wide use of Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines; clearly defined learning objectives in the form of grade-level standards; clearly defined steps for student progress toward mastery given in every class) will provide conditions that maximize brain capacity. Third, best-practices of instructional methods such as group work, differentiation, re-teaching, multiple methods of instruction based on multiple intelligences, and flexible time, will allow low-achieving students to learn grade-level standards based on individual need. And finally, motivational components of the academic program of The Academy will help low-achieving students by increasing their motivation to push themselves when the disequilibrium of new learning occurs. These motivational components include recognition of student use of the Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines during Community Opening, performances (Showcase Nights), and acknowledgment by adults on campus of all students’ capabilities to be serious learners regardless of race, gender, disabilities, background, or language.

FOCUSED SUPPORT

Academy will ensure that all students who could either benefit from mathematics or reading support class or are identified as academically low achieving (based on multiple measures⁸³ including the CST, fluency, formative and summative assessments, grades, teacher/counselor recommendation, and parent request) are provided the supports necessary to increase their academic performance. In addition, through the Content Literacy Continuum, all content area teachers will be trained in the practice of both cuing students to use their strategies and the actual embedding of strategies into their teaching. All students will benefit from this very specific,

⁸² California Department of Education, 2007.

⁸³ See Placement Matrices in Appendix 16.

targeted focus on instruction. The Academy will notify all parents/guardians of those students identified as being below grade level and placed in reading intervention (for example: Corrective Reading or FUSION) and/or math access.

PURE READING/INTERVENTION

Through the offering of “Pure Reading,” every student will take a course that is designed to meet their instructional needs. For those students who are academically low achieving in reading, this course, called FUSION (Kansas University, Center for Research on Learning) will have a small student-to-teacher ratio that will not exceed 15:1 with 10-12:1 being the optimum size. This course will include the use of FUSION reading and be delivered for a minimum of 50 minutes per day until the student is ready to move to a different level based on need. While FUSION reading is done during a “reading” period, it is to support content literacy – the ability to read at grade level in all curricular areas. The curriculum for the FUSION course comes from the program itself with the researchers working closely with The Academy staff to make adjustments necessary as they arise. Students will take this course for one full year with a second year (FUSION 2) course available for those students who need an extra year of application with grade level materials.

MATH INTERVENTION

For those students who are below grade level in mathematics, we will provide an additional course that is designed to support the skills that they are missing/learning in their grade level course but will not be a repetition of the same thing nor will it be based on homework. The curriculum for the mathematics course will be chosen from the CDE, SBE approved intervention materials (including manipulatives, multiple ways to solve problems, interactive technology-based support) and will be directly tied to the current grade-level standards. Students will have an opportunity to enter and exit from the math support class quarterly.

In addition to the mathematics and FUSION support class, we will offer a variety of before and after school hours for all students including but not limited to homework club and tutoring. During the after-school program, students whose CST scores in ELA and or Math are between the range of Basic and Far Below Basic will participate in a course that “demystifies the CST” so that as students are progressing academically they are learning the strategies of test-taking. This will give students greatest chance of demonstrating mastery of the standards as measured by high stakes assessments like the CST.

SPECIFICS

The combination of these specific offerings in conjunction with the overall program of The Academy will ensure that all students, including those who struggle, have access to multiple opportunities for academic growth.

How students will be identified:

- CST
- Grades
- Teacher/staff recommendation
- Parent request
- Teacher recommendation
- Ongoing assessment throughout the year (teacher observations, formative and summative assessment)

How parents and others may be involved:

- Math University Night
- Parent education on academic support
- SST meetings
- Parent conferences

How students will be served in English/Language Arts:

- Pure reading daily
- FUSION reading daily
- CST coaching
- Corrective Reading when necessary
- Access to grade-level content daily and assessed using grade-level standards
- FUSION and Content Enhancement (SIM) teacher coaching monthly
- Heterogeneous ELA courses
- Homework support at school
- Rigor and relevance in all courses
- Affirmations
- School-wide culture of success
- Focus on mastery and accountability with teacher/parent/student communication
- Highly qualified teachers with adequate professional development, time for collaboration, coaching, and reflective practice including calibration and data analysis
- Best practices articulated throughout grade levels/courses
- Regular collaboration between support teachers, course teachers, and tutors
- Alternative assessments
- Counseling for success, academic strategies, Lifelong Guidelines and Lifeskills

How students may be served in Math:

- Math coach
- Access to grade-level content daily and assessed using grade-level standards
- Heterogeneous math courses
- Required conceptually-based support classes
- Homework support at school
- Organizational support and math notebook support
- Rigor and relevance in all courses
- Affirmations
- School-wide culture of success
- Specific strategies to support building successful math identity
- Connect to post-secondary (college and career) goals
- Focus on mastery and accountability with teacher/parent/student communication.
- Highly qualified teachers with adequate professional development, time for collaboration, coaching, and reflective practice including calibration and data analysis
- Best practices articulated throughout grade levels/courses
- Regular collaboration between support teachers, course teachers, and tutors
- Alternative assessments
- Counseling for success, academic strategies, Lifelong Guidelines and Lifeskills
- Math mentors
- Peer tutoring

The Academy will use multiple measures (formative and summative assessments, teacher observation, parent feedback, student self-reflection, etc.) to continually monitor and, when necessary, modify student program placement to meet student need.

PLAN FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ACADEMICALLY HIGH ACHIEVING

The Academy is committed to challenging its entire student body to achieve at each student's highest potential.

EXTENSION

The academic program at The Academy of Alameda will benefit students deemed "academically high-achieving" by providing them with rigorous and relevant learning opportunities throughout the school day and opportunities to develop projects that extend beyond grade-level standards and fortify higher-order-thinking skills.

Students with a particular talent or interest will be encouraged to develop these interests with teachers in the classroom and experts from the community. In addition to rich academic instruction, The Academy will provide extensive enrichment/access programs in the hours before, during and after regular school hours. The core curriculum will provide ample opportunity for gifted students to be challenged and expand their knowledge and skills when the standard has been mastered.

CHALLENGE

Students will be challenged in all content areas through a standards based program that makes use of on-going formative assessments to guide teacher instruction and assessment for learning to provide each student with the information necessary to understand his or her own mastery of the standards and beyond. During Pure Reading for example, a 6th grader who reads and comprehends at an advanced level will be provided daily opportunities to work in a multi-age, interdisciplinary Readers' Workshop. All teachers will be trained in assessment methods that allow them to continuously monitor students and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students at all levels.

Periodic Showcase Nights will be additional venues for students to demonstrate advanced understanding and mastery across different content areas. While some students may do a poetry recitation, others may perform a dance that they choreographed, a short play that they wrote or an original score on the cello.

Showcase Nights will be held at least three times per year. These events will be student-designed and student-led. The Showcase Night will be held throughout the school, making use of traditional classrooms, expandable rooms, multi-purpose rooms, multi-media/media center, etc. depending on the medium being presented. For example, students who are presenting a skit may want to use the stage while students who are performing a musical number may want to use the multi-media center. In addition, social outreach projects being done by advisory groups will be reported on and opportunities for community members to get involved will be presented. This may happen through a PowerPoint presentation, informational booth, displays of photos and letters of recipients, either in the quad areas, the multi-media center, or a large classroom.

SPECIFICS

The combination of these specific offerings in conjunction with the overall program of The Academy will ensure that all students, including those who have historically been high academic achievers, have access to multiple opportunities for continued academic growth.

How students will be identified:

Students will be identified as Gifted through multiple measures including but not limited to: GATE testing in the 3rd grade, two consecutive years of scoring ADVANCED on the CSTs in ELA and or Math, teacher recommendation, student self-identification.

How parents and others may be involved:

Students who have been identified as Gifted will be responsible for involving their parents or guardians and others in the experiences provided through our Showcase Nights, supporting interest-based clubs, participation in “being-there experiences”, etc.

How students may be served:

Students will be served through access to a rigorous and relevant educational program with opportunities for “stretch” in all content areas.

PLAN FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS

The Academy will meet all applicable legal requirements for English Learners as pertains to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, ELD and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, re-classification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirement. The Academy of Alameda will implement policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding ELs and the rights of students and parents.

The design of the EL program at The Academy is based on current research in the educating English Learners which postulate the following:

- Some English Learners have literacy in their primary language and therefore possess literacy skills that are transferable to English
- Some English Learners are struggling readers in their primary language and therefore they need literacy intervention
- All English Learners need English Language Development
- All English Learners need as much immersion in English as possible
- All English Learners need to be supported so that they are exited from ELD courses as soon as possible

How students will be identified:

- Home Language Survey – The Academy will administer the home language survey upon a student’s initial enrollment into the Charter School
- CELDT Testing
- All students who indicate that their home language is other than English will be CELDT tested within thirty days of initial enrollment and at least annually thereafter between July 1 and October 31 until re-designated as fluent English proficient.

The Academy will notify all parents of its responsibility for CELDT testing and of CELDT results within thirty days of receiving results from publisher. The CELDT shall be used to fulfill the requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act for annual English proficiency testing.

How parents and others may be involved:

- Math University Night
- Parent education on academic support
- Materials made available in primary language for parents in advance

How students may be served:

All EL students will have access to a rigorous and relevant education program and opportunities for ELD instruction depending on their levels as measure through multiple measures including but not limited to the CELDT.

All certificated teachers will have satisfied state requirements to use ELD and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) techniques to meet the needs of English language learners. Depending on multiple measures including but not limited to CELDT levels, students will be provided access to content and strategies to support the goal of exiting EL classification as soon as possible. During Pure Reading, “newcomers” will be provided appropriate strategies and skill-development techniques instruction

Daily English Language Development (ELD) Lessons will be provided to lead students to English achievement as quickly and efficiently as possible, and to develop English listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency. ELD instruction will be linked to the core curriculum and will be content-based at all proficiency levels. Instructional materials will be focused on communicative competence and academic achievement. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills will be emphasized. ELD instruction will offer opportunities to extend language skills through critical thinking, problem solving, expressing ideas collaboratively, and developing conclusions based upon reason and evidence.

How student progress/reclassification may be monitored:

Classification of a student as proficient in English will include multiple criteria including but not limited to:

- Assessment of language proficiency using an objective assessment instrument including, but not limited to, the California English Language Development Test or CELDT
- Participation of the pupil’s classroom teachers and any other certificated staff with direct responsibility for teaching or placement decisions of the pupil to evaluate the pupil’s curriculum mastery
- Parental opinion and consultation, achieved through notice to parents or guardians of the language reclassification and placement including a description of the reclassification process and the parents opportunity to participate
- Comparison of the pupil’s performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance and basic skills based upon the performance of English proficient pupils of the same age that demonstrate to others that the pupil is sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in a curriculum designed for pupils of the same age whose native language is English
- The Student Oral Language Observation Matrix will be used by teachers to measure progress regarding comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar usage

PLAN FOR SERVING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Academy of Alameda understands that the school will have the obligation to serve students with exceptional needs and that the school, pursuant to applicable state and federal law, must ensure that all of its students have access to a free and appropriate public education. Under these laws, the school has various options on how to deliver special education and related services either as 1. An arm of the charter-granting agency, 2. An independent local education agency or 3. As a charter SELPA.

During its first year of operations, the school intends to function as a “public school of the local education agency that granted the charter” for purposes of providing special education and related services pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b). During each school year, in which the school operates as an arm of AUSD for special education purposes, the school understands that it is required to contribute an equitable share of its charter block grant funding to support district-wide special education instruction and service costs. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47646(b), the district shall provide the school with funding and/or services reasonably necessary to ensure that all students with exceptional needs who attend the school are provided a free and appropriate education. In addition, The Academy will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, including 613(a)(5)’s provision that LEAs are required to provide services and funding for children with disabilities in charter schools that are public schools of the LEA in the same manner in which services and funding are provided to children with disabilities in other schools in the LEA.

PROVISIONS AND SERVICES

The Academy of Alameda shall annually and in good faith negotiate and enter into a written agreement to more clearly identify the specific desired mix of special education funding and services to be provided. The school shall enjoy reasonable flexibility to decide whether to receive services, funding, or some combination of both pursuant to Education Code Section 47646(b). As noted below, the school anticipates that during its first year of operation, most special education services would be provided by district staff. If the volume or scale of activities related to assessment, individualized education plan (IEP) development, and/or delivery of the special education and related services is sufficient, the school may seek to assume responsibility for directly providing and managing these functions with its own staff, with appropriate adjustments to the mix of funding and services provided under the terms of Education Code Section 47646(b). The Academy will work with the AUSD to identify students who may have needs requiring special education services.

STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM

The school also plans to implement a “student success team” (SST) model to the maximum extent feasible to attempt to meet all student needs within the regular instructional setting prior to referral for formal assessment for special education purposes. Such teams will typically consist of the student’s teacher(s), a school administrator, the student’s parent/guardian, and others. The team will oversee development of plans to meet students’ needs, if possible, without referral to assessment for special education needs. The team will monitor students’ progress.

REFERRAL AND ASSESSMENT

In the event that formal interventions provided through the SST are not successful, the Academy would seek to secure a formal and appropriate assessment conducted by qualified staff. The school initially anticipates that these assessments would be conducted by the staff that performs such services for the

district. If this assessment identifies that the student has exceptional needs and requires special education and/or related services under the terms of applicable special education law, the Academy anticipates working with appropriate district staff to convene and conduct an individual educational plan (IEP) team meeting or meetings.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLANS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

The Academy of Alameda would participate actively and as appropriate in planning and conducting the IEP team meetings and processes. Student plans will ensure the “least restrictive environment” and mainstreaming techniques will be utilized. The school would commit to implementing all special education and related services called for by the IEP in partnership with the district and/or SELPA. The Academy understands that student progress toward the goals specified in the IEP would be monitored regularly, and formally reviewed by the IEP team on at least a triennial basis.

DUE PROCESS

In the event of a due process claim to enforce provisions of applicable special education law, the Academy of Alameda is committed to working in cooperation with the district to the maximum extent permitted under law to respond to and defend the Academy and the district in the process.

SECTION 504 SPECIAL NEEDS

The Academy of Alameda understands that its students may have exceptional needs that are not governed by the terms of the federal special education law (IDEA) but who may require accommodations or services pursuant to the terms of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and that the school will be responsible for planning and implementing any such accommodations or services.

RIGHT TO PURSUE LEA STATUS

As noted above, the Academy initially anticipates functioning as an arm of the district for purposes of special education. The school shall also retain the right to pursue independent local education agency (LEA) and/or special education local plan area (SELPA) status pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a) and the district shall not hinder or otherwise impede the efforts of the school to do so. In the event that the school opts not to establish independent LEA and/or SELPA status, it shall remain an arm of the district for special education purposes as required by Education Code Section 47641(b), and shall continue to receive funding and services pursuant to the terms of this section and any related annual agreements.

ELEMENTS 2 AND 3: MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES AND METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

The program vision for The Academy of Alameda is ambitious because we believe all students are capable of high academic achievement. The founders are in agreement with Michael Fullan who states, "We will see greater advancement in student achievement in the next decade than in the previous three combined."⁸⁴ Successful methods for raising student achievement for *all* students have been developed as a result of longitudinal studies from the past 30 years. The program of The Academy is based on this proven research. The student and school-wide measurable outcomes and methods of assessment is included below.

USE OF DATA

The Academy of Alameda is committed to the on-going use of data to inform our program in all areas. Our staff is committed to establishing frequent means of gathering student data so strategic decisions about instruction and student needs can be made.

The Academy of Alameda may use many data samples including but not limited to:

- Student progress toward mastery of content standards
- Student self-assessment of Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines
- Student Surveys /
- Parent/Community Surveys
- Participation Rates
- "Teacher Practice" Data
- Student Achievement Data
- Teacher Observation
- CSTs
- AimsWeb Oral Reading Fluency Assessment
- Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation: formative and summative assessments (Pearson Publishing)
- Attendance/Truancy/Tardy Rates
- Demographic Data

Data may be used in the following ways:

- For academic intervention
- For grouping and regrouping
- To determine which students have mastered standards and are ready for "stretch" opportunities
- To guide instruction and inform teacher practice

⁸⁴ Michael Fullan, "Large-scale reform comes of age," in *The Journal for Education Change*, 2009:10. 101-113.

- To guide PLC, Action-research application
- To report out on student achievement
- To establish School-Wide Goals
- To make budgetary and staffing decisions
- To guide staff development

STUDENT GOALS: SELF DEVELOPED, ACADEMICALLY SUCCESSFUL, SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE

Measurable Student Outcome	Method of Assessment
STUDENT WILL BE SELF DEVELOPED	
Student can assess their own progress toward content standards	Student self-assessments in combination with content area standards-based rubrics
Student is able to use SIM Content Enhancement Routines in any class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher observation • Participation in co-construction • Product resulting from use of Routine
Student can recognize their own use of Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines	Student self-assessments using Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines Matrix
Student is able to solve problems with peers without school consequences	Referrals, suspensions, expulsions
STUDENT WILL BE ACADEMICALLY SUCCESSFUL	
Student scores Proficient or Advanced on CST	CSTs
Student demonstrates mastery of standards in English/Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formative and Summative Assessments • Teacher-produced Assessments aligned to standards • Teacher Observation • Projects / Performances / Portfolios • CSTs
Student demonstrates mastery of standards in Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formative and Summative assessments • Teacher-produced Assessments aligned to standards • Teacher Observation • Projects / Performances / Portfolios • CSTs

Measurable Student Outcome	Method of Assessment
Student demonstrates mastery of standards in Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formative and Summative Assessments • Teacher-produced Assessments aligned to standards • Teacher Observation • Projects / Performances / Portfolios
Student demonstrates mastery of standards in Social Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formative and Summative Assessments • Teacher-produced Assessments aligned to standards • Teacher Observation • Projects / Performances / Portfolios
Student demonstrates mastery of standards in Physical and Nutritional Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formative and Summative Assessments • Teacher-produced Assessments aligned to standards • Teacher Observation
Student is able to think critically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in debate • Communication of ideas and opinions verbally and in writing • Application of learning to new contexts
Apply learning across disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Multidisciplinary Portfolio • Performances at Showcase Nights
Successfully meets requirements of NCLB Scores "Proficient" or "Advanced" in ELA and Math (and Writing subtest for 7 th grade)	CSTs
STUDENT WILL BE SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE	
Student can use Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines (LS/LLGs) at school	Community Opening participation Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines Awards Observation of student behavior
Student can apply LS/LLGs outside of school	Student Self-assessment Student participation in "giving back" opportunities
Student can use technology in appropriate ways	Demonstration of proper internet etiquette Self monitoring

SCHOOL-WIDE GOALS

Measurable School-wide Outcome	Method of Assessment	Timeline
On-going Use of Assessment FOR Student Learning in all classrooms	Classroom Observation Student Self Assessments Student Interviews	Begun beginning of year 1. Fully implemented by end of year 2.
Creation of Professional Learning Community	Staff Participation PLC Goals and student achievement data	Begun beginning of year 1. Fully implemented by end of year 3.
Establishment of Body-brain Compatible Learning Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Lifeskills and Lifelong Guidelines in every classroom • Use of SIM Routines in every classroom • Use of School-wide procedures in every classroom and in all areas of school (office, media center, cafeteria, etc.) 	Begun beginning of year 1. Fully implemented by end of year 3.
Attainment of NCLB Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)	CST	Year 1 and each subsequent year.
API of at least 800 Schoolwide and for all significant subgroups	CST	By end of year 3 and each subsequent year.

ELEMENT 4: GOVERNANCE

“The governing structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.”

--California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(D)

LEGAL ASSURANCES

The Academy of Alameda will comply with the Brown Act and Government Code 1090. Members of The Academy of Alameda’s Board of Directors, any administrators, managers or employees, and any other committees of the school shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards and AUSD’s Charter School policies and regulations regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

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

EVIDENCE OF THE SCHOOL AS A NON-PROFIT PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION

The Academy of Alameda has applied for status as, and will function according to all legal and ethical standards related to, a non-profit public benefit corporation. A copy of our approved Articles of Incorporation are included⁸⁵

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Academy of Alameda will be governed by a Board of Directors who will maintain active and effective governance of the school. Along with an effective reporting structure and attendance at regular monthly meetings, the Board will set evaluative measures in place that monitor the effectiveness of the School Director/Executive Director as well as the educational programs of the school. Further, the Board will establish a Governance Committee, which will oversee the recruitment and orientation of qualified Directors to insure the organization’s viability over time, and will establish an evaluation process to assess its efficacy on an annual basis. The selection of Founding Board Members was initiated by the school’s founding team based on the skills necessary to open a new school. Each member of the founding team was carefully chosen for his/her dedication to education, service to the community, and their professional skill set. This committed Founding Board has the skill sets and experiences that together will enable The Academy of Alameda to be fiscally sound and academically strong. If chartered, all Founding Board Members will transition to the Governing Board. Board members, other than the executive director, will serve for a minimum three (3) year term. Board members can be re-elected for a maximum of three (3) 3-year terms by the majority vote of the current Board. If a current Board member resigns during their elected term or at the end of their term, a prospective replacement list of at least two candidates will be put forth by the nomination committee established by a majority vote of the Board. The Board of Directors will be comprised of a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 elected Board members, as well as the Executive Director. As leaders of the organization, members of the Board

⁸⁵ See Appendix 16 for Articles of Incorporation

will be responsible for maintaining awareness of leading educational issues and learning practices through continuing education and educational conferences.

In addition, in accordance with Education Code Section 47604(b), the authority that grants the charter to a charter school to be operated as a nonprofit public benefit corporation shall be entitled to a single representative on the Board of Directors of the nonprofit public benefit corporation.

The Board also helps insure effective organizational planning by approving long-range goals and annual objectives, monitoring the general policies such as health and safety, fundraising, and overseeing that school resources are managed effectively.

The Academy of Alameda posts meeting notices at the school and in the community in advance of all Board meetings to be held monthly in accordance with the Brown Act. The school distributes agendas to parents of students and in the community. All meeting minutes are recorded and published for all stakeholders to view.

The Board of Directors has legal and fiduciary responsibility for The Academy of Alameda. The Board of Directors will maintain active and effective governance of the school. Along with an effective reporting structure and attendance at regular monthly meetings, the Board will set evaluative measures in place that monitor the effectiveness of the School Director/Executive Director as well as the educational programs of the school. Further, the Board will establish a Governance Committee, which will oversee the recruitment and orientation of qualified Directors to insure the organization's viability over time, and will establish an evaluation process to assess its efficacy on an annual basis.

The Board is also responsible for providing fiscal accountability by approving and monitoring the budget. The Board also helps ensure effective organizational planning by approving long-range goals and annual objectives, monitoring the general policies such as health and safety, use and maintenance of facilities, fundraising, and ensuring that school resources are managed effectively.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors of The Academy of Alameda may include but are not limited to:

1. Adopting, evaluating and updating Charter School policies consistent with the law and the Charter School's mission. Including the upholding and ensuring of the schools mission.
2. Providing direction to the administration pursuant to established policies.
3. Involving the community, parents/guardians, students and staff in developing a common vision for Charter School which is focused on learning and achievement and is responsive to the needs of all students.
4. Maintaining accountability for student learning by adopting Charter School's curriculum and by monitoring student progress.
5. Hiring and supporting the Director so that the vision, goals and policies of Charter School can be effectively implemented.

6. Conducting regular and timely evaluations of the Director based on the vision, goals and performance of Charter School, and ensuring that the Director holds Charter School personnel accountable.
7. Adopting a fiscally responsible budget based on Charter School's vision and goals, and regularly monitoring the fiscal health and sustainability of the School.
8. Ensuring that a safe and appropriate educational environment is provided to all students.
9. Consulting with the Director on his or her recommendations and acting upon them.
10. Exercising control of Charter School in accordance with the State and Federal Constitution, and applicable laws and regulations.
11. Following the adopted grievance or complaint procedures contained in Charter School policies to address parent, community or third party complaints or employee grievances and/or complaints.
12. Providing adequate housing, equipment, supplies and other facilities for the operation of Charter School.
13. Hearing communications, written and/or oral, from citizens and organizations on matters of administration, finance, organization, policy and program.

Each individual Board member shall:

1. Keep learning and achievement for all students as the primary focus.
2. Recognize and respect differences of perspective and style on the Board and among staff, students, parents and the community.
3. Act with dignity and understand the implications of demeanor and behavior.
4. Keep confidential matters confidential.
5. Participate in professional development and commit the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader.
6. Understand the distinctions between Board and administration roles, and refrain from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the Director and staff.
7. Comply with legal responsibilities related to conflicts of interest.
8. Understand that authority rests with the Board as a whole and not with individuals.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Parents will be encouraged and facilitated to form a Parent Teacher Organization to be responsible for parent involvement in school activities, fund raising, and advising The Academy Board of Directors on any and all matters related to the strengthening of the Charter School community. In addition, they will be encouraged to participate with the community wide efforts of the PTO. PTO will be active in coordinating the parent volunteer program.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Academy of Alameda strives to have a school culture where parents and families are embraced as partners in the education of each child. In addition to the role of parents on The Academy Board of Directors and parents will be expected to contribute a minimum of 20 hours per family, per academic year to the Charter School. The Executive Director/Executive Director shall maintain a comprehensive list of volunteer opportunities including but not limited to the following: volunteering in the classroom/school (including at home assistance); tutoring, lunch monitor, garden coordinator, attending parent-teacher conferences; attendance at meetings of the following school bodies: the Charter School Board of Directors (as member or observer), or any applicable Parent group functions; participation in the planning of, or attendance at, fund raising or Academic/Arts Events; or, other activities.

Strategies to insure that parents are involved at this level include:

- Invitations to attend monthly Board meetings and additional Board meetings as they are scheduled
- Information updated on "Schoolloop"
- Posting of Board agendas in the school's main office
- Posting of Board meeting minutes in the school's main office
- Midyear Parent Satisfaction Survey
- End-of-Year Parent Satisfaction Survey

We will work with our CEC (defined in element 1) and PTA to develop and adopt a comprehensive parent involvement plan, and may revise this plan annually in an effort to continually strengthen the role of parents as supporters of the school's mission.

Prior to admission all parents/guardians are encouraged to attend an orientation, and required to sign a non-binding contract indicating they understand The Academy philosophy, program and outcomes, and accept the responsibilities as set forth. Contracts for parents/guardians of all students require their involvement in and support of their child's educational experiences. The contract commits a parent/guardian to:

- Discuss with their student the learning that took place each day, always asking what standard was being taught and or reinforced in each class and what his/her progress is towards mastery of that standard
- Maintain positive and effective communication with the teacher and staff.
- Insure that their child attends school on a regular basis and arrives on time.
- Enforce the school code of conduct with their child (i.e. wearing the uniform).

- Enroll their child in academic enrichment programs (before or after school) if the school deems it necessary.
- Attend, coordinate, support, etc. at least two parent workshops or events during the school year.
- Volunteer at the school.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Academy will work closely with established community based organizations in the Alameda and the greater Bay Area to provide students the opportunity to contribute to their community and insure community participation thus maximizing the relationships and resources available to students and families. The community-based organizations that The Academy may work with include, but are not limited to:

- Girls, Inc.
- Alameda Boys and Girls Club, Inc.
- Mastic Senior Center
- West Alameda Business Association (WABA)
- Berkeley Repertory Theatre
- Alameda Welfare Council
- Meals on Wheels of Alameda

STAFF AND STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

While The Academy teachers and students will not serve as members of the Board, the school will provide opportunities for their involvement in the school's governance. Like The Academy parents, teachers and students will be invited to monthly Board meetings and provided documentation of Board actions, will complete satisfaction surveys designed to measure the school's effectiveness and areas for improvement, and may be included or consulted by Committees of the Board as appropriate. Teachers and students will also be encouraged and invited to present at Board meetings in order to give the Board insight into the school's educational program.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CHARTER

Any amendments to the charter school's bylaws, or the bylaws of a "parent" nonprofit corporation, that affect or impact the charter or school operations must be approved through the District's petition amendment process.

ELEMENT 5: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS

“The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school.”

-- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(E)

The Academy of Alameda is committed to selecting a group of professionals that share the educational philosophy of the school and are committed to the education of all children. All personnel must commit to the mission and vision of the school. Employees’ job descriptions and work schedules will be reviewed and modified as necessary to meet the needs of the school and its students.

ASSURANCES

The Academy of Alameda shall be nonsectarian in its employment practices and all other operations. The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, sex, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or disability. All employees shall be fingerprinted and receive a background clearance in accordance with Education Code Section 44237 prior to commencing employment with the Charter School.

EXECUTIVE TEAM

The Board of Directors of The Academy of Alameda will determine the most effective and efficient administrative structure possible to run the school based on budget, enrollment, school needs, etc. The Administrative structure includes an Executive Director (ED) and other members of an executive team that may include but are not limited to the following positions:

- Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Standards and Assessment
- Director of School and Community Relations and alternative funding
- Director of Students
- Director of Operations

This team will collaborate with the ED in the implementation of school-wide policy and administering the day-to-day operations of the Charter School. All members of the Executive Team will be responsible to the Board of Directors who will provide input to the ED regarding the Executive Team to determine whether it needs to be altered in order to fulfill the school’s mission and goals as expressed in this charter.

Members of the Executive Team at The Academy of Alameda should possess experience/qualifications in the following: entrepreneurial passion, demonstration of success as instructional leaders, a deep understanding and commitment to educational reform, skill in hiring and supervising personnel, and technological and data -analysis experience. The administrative team should also possess a comprehensive education vision that is consistent with the school’s mission, vision and educational program.

EXECUTIVE TEAM QUALIFICATIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS

Executive Director

The ED will have authority to execute and oversee administration of the policies established by The Board of Directors of The Academy of Alameda. The ED will be selected, hired, evaluated, and when necessary, replaced by the Governing Board in accordance with the Board's bylaws and any applicable employment agreement. The ED's performance evaluation will be conducted in a closed session of the Governing Board. At the end of each school year, the Governing Board, along with the ED, will set professional goals and create employment evaluation criteria for the following year.

Criteria for Executive Director position may include:

- Administrative Services Credential
- Teaching credential
- Minimum of seven years classroom teaching experience
- Master's Degree preferred
- Strong problem analysis and problem resolution at both a strategic and functional level
- Proven leadership skills with the ability to attract, develop and inspire a team; exceptional ability to bridge and enhance cooperative working relationships
- educational vision for and experience with low-income and/or minority children, demonstrated ability in program design and/or development, entrepreneurial ability, and interest and commitment to educational reform

The Executive Director duties may include but are not limited to:

- Report to the Board of Directors
- Develop an evaluation of educational program
- Develop a strategic facilities plan
- Develop a strategic operational plan
- Develop and implement a student recruitment/outreach plan.
- Develop a Community Relations plan
- Have direct oversight and supervision of the staff, recruitment and hiring
- Oversee the following efforts by others:
 - Educational Leadership
 - Finance
 - Facilities
 - Technology
 - Administration/Human Resources
- Have the shared responsibility of hiring and dismissing (with cause) all other employees according to the mission, philosophy, and obligations of the school as spelled out in the charter
- Monitor teacher common planning time
- Assist with student discipline as necessary.
- Represent school at meetings/forums
- Assist in writing grants, facilitating fundraising, and/or obtaining loans
- Help parents organize parent support center and meetings
- Represent school with the Alameda Unified School District

DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT

The Academy of Alameda's goal is to have this position by the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year at the latest. The Executive Director, along with the Board of Directors, will recruit and select the Director

of Curriculum, Instruction, Standards and Assessment. The primary focus of the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Standards and Assessment will oversee the school-wide focus on standards based instruction with the use of assessment. The Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Standards and Assessment will focus on curriculum and instruction by working with the entire staff through the use of classroom observation and feedback, Professional Learning Communities, teacher leader support, new staff support and data collection and analysis. In addition to leading the school community academic work, the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Standards and Assessment will also serve as an additional resource to keep parents informed and involved.

Criteria for Curriculum, Instruction, Standards and Assessment position may include:

- Teaching Credential
- Master's Degree preferred
- Ability to communicate successfully with teachers, parents, administrators and students, bilingual preferred
- Computer literacy
- Cultural sensitivity and experience working in a multicultural setting
- Experience in collaborative leadership
- Successful at including a variety of adults in planned activities
- Knowledge of school system and school reform efforts
- Ability to advocate for children and parents
- Ability to handle conflict in a fair, just and open manner
- Good organizational skills
- Ability to work with a variety of individuals/groups, being welcoming and inclusive to all parents community members and staff.

Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Standards and Assessment duties may include but are not be limited to:

- Communicate regularly with the administration, staff and Board of Directors around instruction, assessment/data, staff development, etc.
- Provide assistance with grant writing
- Promote, organize, and support activities that will enhance communication between parents/community and teachers and other school staff
- Organize and facilitate staff meetings, professional development and parent education opportunities
- Work with teacher leaders and classroom teachers by conducting walk-throughs, observations and feedback and data support to inform instruction
- Coordinate of the development of all rubric and matrices
- Attend meetings such as advisory councils and community forums
- Conduct written evaluations of parent meetings and parent education workshops
- Organize and lead teacher workshops and in-service.
- Work with all department to insure standards aligned lessons, assessments and communication with students and families
- Coordinate all C&I decisions including selection and purchase of materials and or PD
- Coordinate and lead discussions on formative and summative assessments in all content areas – focus on ELA and Math

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND ALTERNATIVE FUNDING

The Academy of Alameda's goal is to have this position by the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year at the latest. The Executive Director along with the Board of Directors will recruit and select the Director of School and Community Relations and alternative funding. The primary focus of the Director of School and Community Relations and alternative funding will be to create a positive sensitive environment for parents to participate in their child's education. The Director of School and Community Relations and alternative funding will implement strategies that will result in strong school/home rapport, communication, and support. This position will be responsible for identifying funding alternatives and putting the necessary teams in place for securing those funds. In addition the Director of School and Community Relations and Alternative Funding will also serve as an additional resource to keep parents informed and involved.

Criteria for Director of School and Community Relations and Alternative Funding position may include:

- Bachelors degree, or equivalent from another country, or two years experience working a similar capacity in the Community or in a school
- Ability to communicate successfully with teachers, parents, administrators and students, bilingual preferred
- Computer literacy
- Cultural sensitivity and experience working in a multicultural setting
- Experience in collaborative leadership
- Successful at including a variety of adults in planned activities
- Knowledge of school system and school reform efforts
- Ability to advocate for children and parents
- Ability to handle conflict in a fair, just and open manner
- Good organizational skills
- Ability to work with a variety of individuals/groups, being welcoming and inclusive to all parents community members and staff

Director of School and Community Relations and alternative funding duties may include but are not limited to:

- Communicate regularly with the administration and staff, keeping them informed of community concerns/issues
- Grant writing
- Promote, organize, support and encourage parent participation/community partnerships activities that promote student achievement and are linked to instructional goals.
- Promote, organize, support activities that will enhance communication between parents/community and teachers and other school staff.
- Organize and facilitate parent meetings and parent education workshops
- Identify local community agencies and business that are willing to provide services to the school and facilitate their involvement with the school with a focus on a "Full Service" model being developed for the site
- Attend meetings such as advisory councils and community forums
- Conduct written evaluations of parent meetings and parent education workshops

DIRECTOR OF STUDENTS AND/OR DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Selection of a Director of Students and will be based on proven experience in business and financial management, and on educational vision. The Director of Students will:

- Report to the Executive Director
- Oversee school facilities
- Provide fiscal oversight
- Prepare credentialing paperwork and monitor processing
- Organize and support teacher common planning time
- Oversee student discipline with the support of the Executive Director
- Oversee the day-to-day operations of the school
- Receive bids from and contract with outside service providers
- Support teacher workshops and in-service
- Be a liaison and advocate for all outsourced services and contracts, including but not limited to SELPA, Title 1, and food services
- Collaborate on grant writing
- Represent school at meetings/forums
- Assume management of the school as needed
- Work with students and Advisory Groups
- Participate in PLC
- Support school culture: problem solving, counseling, behavior plans, etc.

INSTRUCTIONAL TEAM

CERTIFICATED STAFF

Selection of teachers will be based on their teaching experience, the degree of subject matter expertise, their ability to demonstrate classroom instructional capabilities including building and maintaining relationships with students and their families, their fit with the philosophy of The Academy, and their ability to carry out the school's mission.

The Academy will comply with all law regarding its personnel: Teachers will meet all requirements for employment as stipulated by the California Education Code section 47605(l). Primary teachers of core, college preparatory subjects (i.e. English language arts, math, science, history/social science, and special education) will hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in a non-charter public school would be required to hold. All teachers and instructional staff will be highly-qualified as defined by No Child Left Behind. The Academy will adhere to all requirements outlined by No Child Left Behind with respect to teachers and paraprofessional employees. Appropriate records of credentials held by The Academy teachers and supporting documentation will be monitored and maintained by the school administration. Credentials will be monitored annually in compliance with state and federal law. The school will maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and they will be readily available for inspection.

The Academy of Alameda shall comply with Education Code Section 47605(l), which states in pertinent part:

Teachers in charter schools shall be required to hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. These documents shall be maintained on file at the charter school and shall be subject to periodic inspection by chartering authority. All teachers will be required to hold a CLAD certification or an equivalent recognized by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Accordingly, a teacher of core academic subjects must have:

Criteria for Certificated Teacher positions may include:

- A bachelor's degree
- A State credential or have an Intern Certificate/Credential for no more than three years while actively working toward completion of their State credential
- Demonstrated core academic subject matter competence, as evidenced through CCTC's, approved subject matter examination or by completing the California High Objective Uniform State Standard of Education ("HOUSSE")
- Knowledge of child development; specifically of the emotional, physical and developmental needs of adolescence
- Knowledge of learning theories and curriculum development with an emphasis on Body-Brain Compatible learning and standards based planning and assessment.
- Understanding of the need to use data, both formative and summative to drive instruction
- Experience working in an environment dedicated to a collaborative approach
- Professional manner and appearance
- Ability to effectively communicate with the school's stakeholders
- Willingness to accept input and feedback regarding professional growth and performance
- Good organizational skills
- Openness to innovative and creative approaches to meeting educational goals
- Good rapport with students and their parents
- Proficiency with technology and computers
- Ability to differentiate instruction
- Coachable

Certificated Teacher duties may include but are not limited to:

- Provide standards-based, rigorous and meaningful instruction
- Provide continual formative and summative assessment of student progress and maintain records.
- Continually evaluate classroom performance to meet the needs of students
- Provide a Body-Brain compatible learning environment that reflects and facilitates the academic program
- Provide peer assistance to fellow teachers
- Continually seek professional growth through professional development, professional learning community and coaching
- Have, at a minimum, basic experience with educational technology and participate in growth opportunities to enhance ability to incorporate technology into the learning environment
- Actively strive for continuous and open communication with parents and community members.
- Maintain regular, punctual attendance

CERTIFICATED SUPPORT

All professional non-teaching personnel shall possess the appropriate credentials for specific positions such as Pupil Personnel Services credential for Counselors, a Professional Clear credential for Director of Students and Coordinators, or an appropriate California state license for a school psychologist.

Candidates for these positions are required to have evidence of professional training and/or experience. A Bachelors degree is required. Desirable qualifications would include a Masters or higher degree with full clear credentials/licenses for the appropriate field.

The Governing Board may need to place exceptions to the above qualifications for hiring non-teaching certificated staff in special circumstances such as counselors from other states who possess adequate professional training and are qualified to receive a California credential within a reasonable amount of time after being employed. The Governing Board will hire certificated personnel and administrators whom they deem qualified for the sought after positions.

Criteria for Certificated Support positions may include:

- Teaching credential
- Minimum of five years classroom teaching experience
- Administrative Services Credential or Pupil Personnel Services credential

GUEST TEACHERS (SUBSTITUTES)

A list of day-to-day guest teachers will be established and a list of those qualified will be maintained. All absences will be filled in-house if possible.

OPERATIONS PERSONNEL

Operations personnel, including office staff, plant maintenance staff, instructional aides and support staff, serve in support roles to keep the Charter School operating efficiently. The Executive Team, in consultation with the staff, will maintain job descriptions and qualifications for all non-teaching, classified positions. Office staff will demonstrate competency in communication, use of the computer and office equipment, emerging technologies that support the school and the ability to interact appropriately and decisively with the school community. Job-specific competencies such as record-keeping, filing, inventory and typing will be determined based on specific clerical needs, as developed by the school administrative assistant.

Plant staff will demonstrate competency in communication and the ability to follow a schedule developed by the plant manager to maintain assigned areas of buildings and grounds in a clean, sanitary, and safe condition. Support staff who provide instructional assistance are required to possess a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) and one of the following: completion of 60 semester units or 90 quarter units from a recognized college or university, possession of an associate or higher degree, from a recognized college or university, or receipt of a passing score on a to be determined Instructional Assistance Test. Support staff will comply with NCLB. These job descriptions and qualifications will be reviewed and approved by the Governing Board.

SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

School Support Staff will be selected by the Executive Team on an application-and-interview basis in consultation with parents and other staff members. Selection will be based on the ability to perform the job duties for that position. Office personnel duties may include, but not be limited to:

- Ensuring “best practices” for a 21st-century school operations
- Compiling data
- Filing reports
- Enrolling students
- Managing/monitoring office operations
- Ordering and purchasing office and classroom supplies, and vendor management
- Developing and implementing clerical and administrative procedures for daily school operations
- Preparing correspondence, reports, bulletins, files, forms, memorandums, and performing other clerical and administrative duties as assigned
- Bilingual translation and communication with parents and community

NON-CERTIFICATED STAFF

The Charter School shall seek non-certificated candidates that embrace the mission and vision of The Academy and are flexible and able to work collaboratively with administrators, students, faculty, staff, and parents. Non-certificated staff candidates must possess adequate professional training and/or experience. Non-certificated staff members, must exhibit the following minimum qualifications:

- Adequate professional training and/or experience
- Any and all licenses or certifications necessary to perform the responsibilities of the position
- Positive references

CUSTODIAL/MAINTENANCE SERVICES

The Academy’s goal is to have a campus that is clean, aesthetically appealing and conducive to lifelong learning. To accomplish these goals, The Academy reserves the right to contract with companies, including AUSD to provide identified services. The successful bid shall enter into a contractual agreement for a designated period of time. The contract(s) that will be needed are to perform the following:

- Campus beautification in addition to what the students and community provide
- Facilities maintenance and repairs
- Maintain restrooms
- Maintain grounds, cleaning and necessary gardening
- Support school wide recycling program logistics

HIRING/SELECTION PROCESS

The Academy of Alameda Board of Directors and hiring team will review the qualifications of candidates that wish to apply for employment at the school. Individuals who wish to apply for a position will be required to submit a resume and an Academy employment application. Staff at The Academy will review all submissions and determine which candidates are best suited for the school based on their qualifications. The Academy Board of Directors and identified staff will conduct interviews with

candidates and notify each person of their status once a decision is made. Candidates who are offered employment will receive written notice from The Academy of Alameda.

Initially, teachers are selected by the Executive Director and the Board of Directors, with support from an advisory council. After the first year, the process will be refined to include more staff. Selection is based on teaching experience, the degree of subject matter expertise, and ability to demonstrate classroom capabilities including but not limited to classroom management theories and techniques, depth of understanding of the standards in their content area, knowledge of assessment and the use of data to inform instruction, understanding of and commitment to a coaching model, etc. Teacher candidates will demonstrate how they will provide a quality curriculum and a strong classroom environment. Experience working with low income students is a strong qualification for employment. The Academy of Alameda will strive to recruit teachers holding a CLAD credential with experience in scaffolding techniques and performance based instruction. Teachers will need to be well versed in SDAIE and English Language Development (ELD) techniques.

The Academy is committed to supporting its staff and teachers by providing constant opportunities for professional growth and development, including but not limited to weekly collaboration time, outside and peer coaching, formal Professional Learning Community format. The School believes that one of the best methods for professional development consists of learning from others facing similar situations. The Academy will foster a collaborative school environment whereby teachers will be given a chance to interact on a regular basis to perform a variety of development activities. Such activities include lesson plan development around the standards, student achievement strategies, and general student related discussions between teachers. All teachers will be encouraged to seek assistance from The Academy staff or other teachers throughout the year. The Academy of Alameda desires to create an open environment where teachers feel part of a team and are able to trust each other for various school related issues.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

The Academy of Alameda will work with AUSD Human Resources to insure that all required background checks, including fingerprinting and drug testing, according to existing California state law are on file.

The Academy of Alameda will adhere to AUSD policy pertaining to the safety and health of all employees and students. All employees must furnish or be able to provide:

- Medical clearance for communicable diseases and Mantoux tuberculosis (TB).
- Fingerprinting and the service fee to the Department of Justice for a criminal record check. Applicants will be required to provide a full disclosure statement regarding their prior criminal record.
- Documents establishing legal status.

ELEMENT 6: HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

“The procedures that the school will follow to insure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237.”

-- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(F)

The health and safety of the The Academy of Alameda students and staff is high priority for the school. The school will follow all required safety regulations including emergency policies and procedures. The Academy of Alameda will comply with all health and safety laws and regulations that apply to non-charter public schools, including those required by CAL/OSHA, the California Health and Safety Code, the EPA and the Healthy Schools Act. The Academy of Alameda will operate as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace. A school safety plan will be developed and kept on file for review. School staff will be trained annually on the safety procedures outlined in the plan. The school will adopt a set of health, safety, and risk management policies that address the following:

FACILITY

The Academy of Alameda will be housed in facility that have received state Fire Marshal approval, meets Alameda City Building Codes, meets the federal American Disabilities Act (ADA) access requirement, and that have been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer who has determined that the facilities present no substantial seismic safety hazard. The school will work with AUSD to maintain on file readily accessible records documenting such compliance.

The charter school shall occupy facilities that comply with the Asbestos requirement as cited in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40CFR part 763. AHERA requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.

Dependent on the facility lease requirements, The Academy of Alameda will hire staff or outsource maintenance/custodial duties and operational functions including major and minor repairs, pest control, landscaping and gardening to vendors qualified to perform such functions.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

Employees and contractors of the Charter School will be required to submit to a criminal background check and finish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1. New employees not possessing a valid California Teaching Credential must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Director of the school shall monitor compliance with this policy and report to the Charter School Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. The Board President shall monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the Director. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

IMMUNIZATIONS, TUBERCULOSIS TESTING, AND SCREENING

All enrolling students and staff will provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment in non-charter public schools. Records of student immunizations shall be maintained, and staff shall honor County requirements for periodic Tuberculosis (TB) tests as required by Education Code Section 49406.

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

All enrolling students will have screening of vision, hearing, and scoliosis to the same extent as would be required if the pupils attended a non-charter public school.

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

Students requiring prescription medications and other medicines during school hours will be accommodated. Parents must bring medication to the office in the original containers, with the name of the prescribing physician, the name of the student, and dispensing instructions. Parents will complete the appropriate form authorizing school staff to administer medication. Designated staff will put medications in a locked cabinet or refrigerate as needed for medications requiring refrigeration. Designated staff will log times for administering medications for each student and will establish a tickler system to insure that medications are dispensed at the appropriate times. Designated staff will call students to receive medications at the appropriate times. In cases where medications are long-term prescriptions, designated staff will provide parents with one week's notice to alert them that additional medication is needed. The Charter School will adhere to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Academy of Alameda shall adhere to an Emergency Preparedness plans specifically to designed to meet the needs of the school site and in accordance with AUSD policies and will be updated accordingly.

FIRE DRILLS

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

Once at the designated evacuation site, teachers and other staff will insure that all students find their respective teachers. Teachers will then take roll to insure that all students are accounted for. The names of any missing students will be given to the office personnel and the administrative staff will attempt to locate missing students. Students will remain with their teachers at the designated evacuation site until the administrative staff gives the “all clear” signal.

DISASTER DRILLS (I.E. EARTHQUAKE)

Disaster drills will be conducted at least once a trimester. Students will be made familiar with AUSD approved routines. These drills will be practiced in accordance with AUSD policy. All drills will be concluded with an “all clear” announcement on the intercom, or a visible signal from the administrative staff.

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

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

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

BOMB THREATS

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

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

If an immediate evacuation is not warranted, the administrative staff will notify teachers to inspect their room for any suspicious materials or unknown packages, without alarming students. All unassigned staff

will report to the office for assignments such as searching offices, bathrooms, and all other common areas, including outdoor facilities.

EVAUATION PLAN

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

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

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

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

COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICES AND PROCEDURES

The Charter School is committed to providing a school that is free from sexual harassment, as well as any harassment based upon such factors as race, religion, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. The Charter School will abide by AUSD's comprehensive policy to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about sexual discrimination or harassment at the Charter School (including employee to employee, employee to student, and student to employee misconduct). Misconduct of this nature is very serious and will be addressed in accordance with the AUSD sexual harassment policy.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

All non-certificated and certificated staff will be mandated child abuse reporters and will follow all applicable reporting laws, the same policies and procedures used by the District.

The Academy of Alameda will adhere to the requirements of California Penal Code Section 11166 regarding child abuse reporting. The Academy of Alameda staff must report to the proper authorities if they suspect the following occurring to a student:

- Sexual assault
- Neglect
- Willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment
- Cruel or inhuman corporal punishment or injury
- Abuse in out-of-home care

The reporting person need only “reasonably suspect” that abuse or neglect has occurred. The reporting person does not have to prove abuse.

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

All suspected cases of child abuse will be brought to the Executive Director and/or proper authorities. A written report of the situation will be completed and the Department of Children Services will be immediately notified. If necessary, the Alameda Police Department will be informed of the situation as well. The reporting person will be responsible for providing all the necessary information and child abuse reports to the Department of Children Services and/or Alameda Police Department since he/she will be most knowledgeable of the situation.

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

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Employees will be encouraged to report any workplace injury, accident, to their supervisor as soon as possible, regardless of the severity of the injury or accident. If medical attention is required

immediately, supervisors will assist employees in obtaining medical care, after which the details of the injury or accident must be reported.

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

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

EVIDENCE OF INSURANCE

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

The Academy of Alameda shall be responsible at its own expense for defending any claims, liabilities, or legal proceedings brought against the charter school by any person or entity. The Academy of Alameda is an incorporated public entity acting as a separate legal entity. The Academy of Alameda has complete liability for all actions of the school and its employees in the performance of their duties. The Academy of Alameda further indemnifies and holds harmless AUSD, ACOE, and CDE of any present or future liability for the charter school's actions.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

The charter school shall occupy facilities that comply with the Asbestos requirement as cited in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40CFR part 763. AHERA requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.

ELEMENT 7: RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

“The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted.”

-California Education Code 47605(b) (5) (G).

The Academy of Alameda will make every effort to recruit students of various racial and ethnic groups in order to achieve a balance reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of AUSD. The Academy of Alameda will conduct orientation meetings prior to the opening of each school year to inform interested parents and students on what the school has to offer. Outreach meetings will be held in several locations of Alameda including but not limited to elementary schools and at the school site in order to insure all students in the area have an opportunity to attend the school. Open houses and school tours will be conducted on a regular basis during the school year as well.

The Academy of Alameda will develop promotional and informational material (i.e. a school brochure, flyers, a website, and advertisements for local media) that is easily transmittable to all of the various racial and ethnic groups represented in the district. Promotional and informational materials will be distributed in a variety of community settings to a broad range of community groups, agencies, neighborhood youth organizations, social service providers, churches, grocery stores, public libraries, and legislators that serve the various racial, ethnic, and interest groups represented in the district. Materials in languages other than English, such as Spanish and Cantonese, will be distributed in order to reach the limited English proficient populations that exist in the area. Should the language base of the community require, we would accommodate additional language needs for outreach purposes. Interested students will be subjected to the admission procedures detailed in Element 8.

The founders are developing an outreach plan to address the dissemination of information to students of all backgrounds with the goal of achieving a racial and ethnic balance reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the District. This Outreach plan shall be evaluated by The Academy of Alameda Board of Directors on an annual basis to consider the level of success of each outreach method toward reaching the ethnic balance goal. As necessary the Outreach plan shall be updated to focus on the methods of outreach which have been most successful. As stated above, the evaluation of The Academy Outreach plan shall be reported by The Academy to AUSD as part of the annual performance report. The Academy of Alameda will maintain an accurate accounting of the ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled in the school. The Academy of Alameda will also document the efforts made to achieve racial and ethnic balance in accordance with the charter petition and standards of charter legislation.

FEDERAL COMPLIANCE

To the extent that The Academy of Alameda is a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, The Academy of Alameda has agreed to meet all of the programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act and other applicable federal grant programs. The Academy of Alameda agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act and other applicable federal programs, including, but not limited to, documentation related to required parental notifications, appropriate credentialing of teaching and paraprofessional staff, the implementation of Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services, where applicable, or any other mandated federal program requirement. The mandated requirements of NCLB include, but are not limited to, the following:

Notify parents at the beginning of each school year of their “right to know” the professional qualifications of their child’s classroom teacher including a timely notice to each individual parent that the parent’s child has been assigned, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified.

Develop jointly with, and distribute to, parents of participating children, a school-parent compact.

Hold an annual Title I meeting for parents of participating Title I students.

Develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy.

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

ELEMENT 8: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

"Admission requirements, if applicable."

-- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(H)

The Academy of Alameda will be open to all students residing in California that wish to attend the school. The Academy of Alameda will adhere to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and insure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. The school is located in the west end of Alameda specifically to serve the students in this population – a diverse group of students who range from high to low-achieving and ethnically and socioeconomically diverse as well.

The Academy shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the School up to capacity. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into the school. Except as provided in Education Code Section 47605(d)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil, or of his or her parent or guardian, within this State. The charter school shall be nonsectarian in its admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations, shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability.

ASSURANCES

The Academy of Alameda Board of Directors, hereby certify that the information submitted in this petition

- Shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Sections 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)(1)]
- Shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of The Academy for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(O)]
- Shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- Shall address all California State Content Standards for all core content areas in grade levels 6-8.
- Shall not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- Shall admit all students who wish to attend The Academy of Alameda, Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or his or her parents within the State. In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(C). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(A)-(B)]

- Shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability (physical or mental), gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics) or color, medical condition, or sexual condition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- Shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.
- Shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]
- Shall ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools are required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to non-core, non-college preparatory teachers. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(l)]
- Shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- Shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D).
- Will follow any and all other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to The Academy of Alameda including but not limited to:
 - The Academy shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.
 - The Academy shall on a regular basis consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs.
 - The Academy shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities.
 - The Academy shall comply with all applicable portions of the No Child Left Behind Act.
 - The Academy shall comply with the Public Records Act.
 - The Academy shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
 - The Academy shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
 - The Academy shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum number of school days.
 - No child shall be required to attend The Academy nor shall any employee be required to work at The Academy.
 - The Academy shall comply with Education Code Section 41365 (revolving loan fund) and all provisions of Education Code Section 47611 (State teachers Retirement System and Public Employees' Retirement System).

The application process is comprised of the following:

- Parent attendance at a school orientation meeting.
- Parent signature of School Contract
- Proof of Immunizations
- Proof of minimum age requirements, e.g. birth certificate
- Home Language Survey
- Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form
- Completion of a student enrollment form

Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open application period each year for enrollment in the following school year.

Following the open application period each year, applications shall be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability.

Should the amount of pupils that wish to attend The Academy of Alameda exceed the enrollment limit, a public random lottery will take place to determine the school enrollment in accordance to Education Code, section 47605(d)(2)(B). If a lottery is to be held it shall follow the guidelines as set forth in the district Charter School Policy and Guidelines. Preferences should a lottery be necessary are described below. The school will designate a deadline and all interested students will be considered for the public random drawing. Public notice will be posted regarding the date and time of the public drawing once the deadline date has passed. The school will inform parents of all applicants and all interested parties of the rules to be followed during the lottery process, location, date and time of the lottery via mail at least two weeks prior to the lottery date. The school will choose a date and time for the lottery (preferably on the weekend or after 6 pm on a weekday) so that most interested parties will be able to attend. The lottery will be held at the school site if the school facility can accommodate all interested parties. A waiting list will be developed from the list of students that do not receive admission and will be considered should a vacancy occur during the year. The principles above will apply for a second lottery for any vacancies. Students on the waiting list will be notified by mail immediately if space becomes available and they will have two weeks to return the enrollment forms. If the enrollment forms are not returned within two weeks, then admission for that student is forfeited, and an admission notice will be mailed to the next student on the waiting list. The Academy of Alameda will maintain auditable records of the above activities.

PUBLIC RANDOM DRAWING

The Academy of Alameda will invite AUSD representatives and respected members of the community as official observers of the lottery to verify lottery procedures are fairly executed.

Preferences in the public random drawing will be given in the following order of priority in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2). If The Academy of Alameda exceeds the number of seats, we will hold a public lottery with the following weighting:

- Founding families who are AUSD residents: 6 entries
- Founding families who are not AUSD residents: 5 entries
- AUSD residents with siblings who are currently enrolled in the school: 4 entries
- AUSD residents with no siblings currently enrolled: 3 entries
- Non-AUSD residents with siblings currently enrolled: 2 entries
- Non –AUSD residents with no siblings currently enrolled: 1 entry

Definitions of Categories

- Category 1: Children of founding member families who have documented over 50 volunteer hours by May 1, 2010 who are AUSD residents and staff and Board members' children are given priority over categories 2-6 cap. No more than 10% of the population.
- Category 2: Children of founding member families who have documented over 50 volunteer hours by May 1, 20010 who are not residents of AUSD are given priority over categories 3-6 cap. No more than 10% of the population TOTAL (all founding).
- Category 3: Siblings of current enrolled students who are AUSD residents are given priority over categories 4-6
- Category 4: All other AUSD residents are given priority over categories 5-6
- Category 5: Siblings of currently enrolled students who are not residents of AUSD are given priority over category 6
- Category 6: Non- AUSD residents

Parents will be notified of admission in a timely fashion following the public random drawing. The parents whose children are selected by public random drawing to attend The Academy will be required to provide registration information which includes the following:

- Parent Compact
- Proof of Immunizations
- Home Language Survey
- Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form
- AUSD "Drop slip"

No student will be denied admission, disenrolled, or otherwise harmed due to their parent/guardian's failure to sign the Parent Compact or to volunteer in accordance with the Parent Compact. At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a wait list, in the order in which their names were drawn, for future openings throughout the following school year. The wait list shall expire at the end of the school year for which it was created. The Academy shall develop and adopt a comprehensive enrollment policy and procedure to implement the provisions herein.

ADMISSION AND RECRUITMENT

The Academy of Alameda will implement an outreach plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following elements or strategies which focus on achieving and maintaining a racial, ethnic, economic, and academic balance among students that is reflective of the general population residing within the Alameda Unified School District area:

- An enrollment process that is scheduled and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based application process.
- The development and distribution of promotional and informational material that reaches out to all of the various racial and ethnic groups.
- Presentations and booths in multiple locations throughout the District to generate interest throughout the District.
- Advertised open houses/tours at the school.
- Purposefully recruit and reach out to students from surrounding elementary schools, which have significant numbers of low-achieving and socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

ELEMENT 9: FINANCIAL AUDITS

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

-- California Education Code 47605(b) (5) (I).

An annual independent fiscal audit of the books and records of the Charter School will be conducted as required under the Charter Schools Act, section 47605(b)(5)(I) and 47605(m). The Academy of Alameda Board of Directors will be responsible for contracting and overseeing the independent audit. The school’s plan for providing information is to gather, prepare, and organize documents, materials, and other information as requested by the independent auditor. Fiscal statements audited by the Certified Public Accountant will be submitted to District within four months following the close of the fiscal year. Audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved in conference with the auditor to the satisfaction of the auditing agency and the AUSD. The Academy of Alameda agrees to resolve outstanding issues from the audit prior to the completion of the auditor's final report.

The manner in which annual, independent, financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority, as required by Education Code section 47605(b)(5)(I), at a minimum: (A) Specify who is responsible for contracting and overseeing the independent audit. (B) Specify that the auditor will have experience in education finance. (C) Indicate the process that the charter school will follow to address any audit findings and/or resolve any audit exceptions. (D) Outline the process of providing audit reports to the State Board of Education, California Department of Education, or other agency as the State Board of Education may direct, and specifying the time line in which audit exceptions will typically be addressed.

The Academy of Alameda will transmit a copy of its annual independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year to the District, Alameda County Board of Education, and California Department of Education in compliance with the required date of each year. The independent fiscal audit of the Charter School is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

The Academy shall provide reports to AUSD and the County Superintendent of Schools in accordance with Education Code Section 47604.33 as follows and shall provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the District or County:

- By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year. For a charter school in its first year of operation, financial statements submitted with the charter petition pursuant to Education Code 47605(g) will satisfy this requirement.
- By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the Charter School’s annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the District, State Controller, State Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools.
- By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.

- By September 15, a final non-audited report from the full prior year. The report submitted to the District shall include an annual statement of all the Charter School's receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

Pursuant to AB 1137, The Academy of Alameda will provide any necessary financial statements to AUSD, the Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE), and California Department of Education.

ELEMENT 10: STUDENT EXPULSIONS

"The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled."

-- California Education Code 47605(b) (5) (J)

DISCIPLINE POLICY

School staff will review the discipline policy with students and parents prior to admission to The Academy of Alameda. By enrolling in the school, the students and parents acknowledge their understanding of and responsibility to the standards set forth in the discipline policy. The discipline policy will include the students' rights and responsibilities and the school's suspension and expulsion policies. The discipline policy will not be discriminatory, arbitrary, or capricious, and will provide all students with an opportunity for due process. All 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 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Students who do not adhere to their responsibilities, and who violate the school rules may expect consequences for their behavior. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Warning, both verbal and written
- Notices to parents by telephone or letter
- Parent conference

The discipline policy will clearly describe progressive discipline measures, grounds for suspension and expulsion, minimum/maximum number of consecutive days of suspension, notification process to parents of suspension, reason for suspension, appeal process, length of suspension, provision for student's education while suspended, etc. Policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically review, including periodic review and modifications by school staff, parents and students of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion.

Any student who engages in repeated violations of the school's behavioral expectations will be required to attend a meeting with school staff and the student's parents. The school will prepare a specific, written remediation agreement outlining expectations for future student conduct, timelines, and consequences for failure to meet the expectations which may include, but are not limited to, suspension or expulsion.

Students who present an immediate threat to the health and safety of others may be immediately suspended and later expelled. Additionally, a student may be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated in Education Code section 48900 related to school activity or school attendance that occur at any time including, but not limited to:

- 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 AND EXPULSION

A student may be recommended for suspension or expulsion for any of the following reasons, as specified in the Education Code Section 48900(a)(1) through 48900 (q); 48900.2, 48900.3, 48900.4, and 48900.7; and 48915 (a) and (c):

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

- Engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation directed against school district personnel or pupils, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of either school personnel or pupils by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment (grades 4-12).
- Made terrorist threats against school officials school property or both

As specified in Education Code Section 48915(c), a student shall be immediately suspended and recommended for expulsion for the following reasons:

- Possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm. In accordance with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994, any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school, expulsion for a period of not less than one year (except on a case-by-case basis).
- Brandishing a knife at another person
- Unlawfully selling a controlled substance
- Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery
- Possession of an explosive

To expel, except in the case of Education Code Section 48915(c) behaviors, one of the following must also be found to be true: Other means of corrective action are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct. Due to the nature of the act, the student's presence causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the student and/or others:

- Students may be expelled for any of the following reasons, as specified in the Education Code Section 48915:
- Causing serious physical injury to another person except in self defense
- Possession of any dangerous object (such as a firearm, knife, or explosive)
- 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 (Section 48915(c))
- Robbery or extortion
- Assault or battery upon any school employee

It is the intent of the Legislature that alternatives to suspension or expulsion be imposed against any pupil who is truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from school activities. The Executive Director may use discretion to provide alternatives to suspension or expulsion including, but not limited to, counseling and an anger management program

PROCESS FOR SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION

Informal Conference

Suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the Executive Director, with the student and the student's parents. The conference may be omitted if the Executive Director determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If the student is suspended without a conference, the parents will be notified of the suspension and a conference will be conducted as soon as possible.

Notice to Parents

At the time of a student's suspension, a school employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parents by telephone or in person. Initial contact will be followed by a written notice. This notice will state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may state the date and time the student may return to school. If the school officials wish to confer with the parents regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may note that the parents are required to respond without delay. School personnel may also remind the parents that student violations of school rules can result in the student's expulsion from the school.

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/guardian. If a student is recommended for a period of suspension exceeding ten (10) continuous days, a second conference will be scheduled between the parent/guardian to discuss the progress of the suspension upon the completion of the 10th day of suspension. 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. Therefore, the maximum days that a student can be suspended for in one year is twenty (20) days.

Upon recommendation by the Executive Director for expulsion, the student and the student's parents will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the student should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Executive Director upon either of the following findings:

- Whether the student's presence will be disruptive to the educational process
- Whether the student poses a threat or danger to others
- Upon this determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

Expulsion Hearing

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. The hearing will be held within 30 days after the school Executive Director determines that the student committed an act subject to expulsion. The hearing may be presided over by the governing 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 parents at least 10 calendar days before the date of the hearing. This notice will include:

- The date and place of the hearing
- A statement of the specific facts, charges and offense upon which the proposed expulsion is based
- A copy of the disciplinary rules that relate to the alleged violation
- The opportunity for the student or the student's parents to appear in person at the hearing
- The opportunity for the student to be represented by counsel
- The right to examine and acquire copies of all documents to be used at the hearing
- The opportunity to cross-examine all witnesses that testify at the hearing
- The opportunity to present evidence and witnesses on behalf of the student

Written notice to expel a student will be sent by the Executive Director to the parents of any student who is expelled. This notice will include the following:

- The specific offense(s) committed by the student as listed in "Reasons for Suspension and/or Expulsion."
- Notice of the student(s) or parent's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with The Academy of Alameda.

APPEAL OF SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION

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

Any incident of violent and/or serious student behavior shall be communicated to the district/school to which the student matriculates.

REHABILITATION PLANS

The charter school's governing board shall develop a rehabilitation plan for each pupil expelled from the charter school, and shall give it to the student at the time of the expulsion order. This plan will state the terms and conditions of expulsion and it will define what the student must do in order to be considered rehabilitated and prepared for readmission considerations.

READMISSION

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

SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

The Academy of Alameda recognizes that disciplinary procedures are different for special education students. Disciplinary action will be taken according to federal and state law and District policies regarding special education students. The IEP team and the Executive Director or designated administrator will be responsible for managing continued violations of school policies.

ELEMENT 11: RETIREMENT SYSTEMS AND EMPLOYEE MATTERS

“The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, Public Employees’ Retirement System, or federal social security.”

-- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(K)

BENEFITS

Mandatory benefits such as workers compensation, unemployment insurance, Medicare, and social security (for non-STRS members) will be provided by The Academy of Alameda. Life, health, dental, vision, and related benefits will also be provided to all full-time employees. The Board of Directors will determine the amount paid to employee benefits on an annual basis. Employees will earn paid legal holidays not less than currently offered by AUSD for a work year of comparable length.

RETIREMENT

All full-time certificated employees who are eligible will participate in the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS). Employees will contribute the required percentage, and The Academy of Alameda will contribute the employer’s portion required by STRS. All withholdings from employees and the charter school will be forwarded to the STRS Fund as required. The Academy of Alameda will submit all retirement data through ACOE and will comply with all policies and procedures for payroll reporting. Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of STRS. Social Security payments will be contributed for all qualifying non-STRS members. The Academy of Alameda Board of Directors retains the option to consider any other public or private retirement plans and to coordinate such participation with existing programs, as it deems appropriate. All full-time operations personnel who are eligible will be covered by a 403b retirement plan. All full-time eligible employees will be covered by the Federal Social Security program. The Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for the retirement coverage have been made.

WORK SCHEDULES

Work calendars, hours per week, and vacation time will be determined by individual employment contracts or work agreements. Administrators and office staff will work a calendar year of 12 months. Teachers will work a calendar year of 11 months including staff development days and supplemental instruction. A typical work week will be Monday through Friday, 8 hours daily, with the possibility of extra time for special events, school meetings, parent conferences, etc.

TIME OFF

The Academy of Alameda will comply with all the regulations pursuant to California Labor Code 233. The Academy of Alameda retains the right to alter any of the stated time off policies in the future.

VACATION

Only full-time employees working in excess of 36 hours per week may accrue and take paid vacation time. Part-time employees working 30 hours or more will receive pro-rated paid vacation. Part-time employees working less than 30 hours and teachers are not eligible for paid vacation. Full-time employees accrue 15 days of paid vacation per year. Vacation is accrued on a monthly basis (i.e., full-time employee accrues one and one quarter vacation day per month. The Academy of Alameda Board of Directors retains the option to change this policy in the future.

SICK DAYS

Only full-time employees and teachers working in excess of 36 hours per week accrue paid sick leave. Full-time employees and teachers accrue a total of 6 days of paid sick leave per year. Sick leave is accrued on a monthly basis (an employee accrues one-half of a sick day per month). Eligible employees may not carry over unused sick leave from one calendar year to the next. Sick leave will not accrue during any unpaid leave of absence.

BEREAVEMENT

Eligible full-time employees and teachers may take up to five (5) days paid leave per rolling 12-month period for the death of a parent, parent-in-law (including parent of a domestic partner), spouse, domestic partner, child (including stepchild or child of domestic partner), or sibling. Paid bereavement leave is available only to a full-time employee or teacher who has been working at The Academy of Alameda for twelve (12) consecutive months. Upon request, and at the school's sole discretion, those employees not eligible for paid bereavement leave may take up to five (5) days unpaid leave per rolling 12-month period as bereavement leave.

TERMINATION

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

Voluntary Termination (Resignation). Voluntary termination occurs when an employee chooses to leave The Academy of Alameda. To leave in good standing and be eligible for rehire consideration, employees must give at least two weeks prior notice.

Involuntary Termination (Discharge). Involuntary termination occurs when The Academy of Alameda chooses to discharge the employee. The Executive Director may terminate or suspend the employment of any employee if s/he determines that the employee has failed to fulfill the duties and responsibilities and/or demonstrate the qualities outlined in the job description, or if other good cause exists. In the event the school finds it necessary or desirable to terminate an employee's employment before the end of the school year, the school will attempt to give the employee written notice at least 10 calendar days before termination, unless the Executive Director determines that the employee poses a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of the school or students.

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

DUE PROCESS AND PROCESS FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES

Grievances procedures will be identified in employee handbook that will be complete prior to hiring

ELEMENT 12: ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES

“The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district that choose not to attend charter schools.”

-- California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(L)’

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

No student is required to attend The Academy of Alameda. Students living within the attendance area of AUSD who do not desire to attend the charter school will possess the same alternatives as those offered to other students currently 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 the district or county of residence.

The parent(s) or guardian(s) of each pupil enrolled at The Academy of Alameda shall be informed that the pupil has no right to admission in a non-charter District school (or program within a District school) as a consequence of enrollment in the charter school, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the District.

The governing board of a school district shall not require any pupil enrolled in the school district to attend a charter school.

ELEMENT 13: EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

“A description of the rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school and of any rights of return to the school district after the employment at a charter school.”

--California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(M)

Job applicants for positions at The Academy of Alameda will be considered through an open process, and if hired, will enter into a contractual agreement with the school. Any district union employee who is offered employment and chooses to work at The Academy of Alameda will not be covered by his or her respective collective bargaining unit agreement, although The Academy of Alameda may extend the same protections and benefits in individual employee contracts.

All provisions pertaining to leave and return rights for district union employees will be granted to certificated and operations personnel in accordance with current collective bargaining agreements. Former District employees must consult with the District to determine their eligibility for leave. Return rights would be at the discretion of AUSD and collective bargaining agreements, at the salary and benefit rate in current use by the district for employees in the same classification who remained with the district or returned to a non-charter district school. This is subject to change pursuant to any revisions in the AUSD collective bargaining agreement.

The Academy of Alameda will follow all applicable laws regarding employee rights to organize.

Rights of School District Employees

The description of the rights of any employees of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school, at a minimum, specifies that an employee of the charter school shall have the following rights: A) Any rights upon leaving the employment of a local education agency to work in the charter school that the local education agency may specify; B) Any rights of return to employment in a local education agency after employment in the charter school as the local education agency may specify; C) Any other rights upon leaving employment to work in the charter school and any rights to return to a previous employer after working in the charter school that the State Board of Education determines to be reasonable and not in conflict with any provisions of law that apply to the charter school or to the employer from which the employee comes to the charter school or to which the employee returns from the charter school.

party. The Written Response may be tendered by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

(3) If the controversy, claim, or dispute cannot be resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, then either party may request that the matter be resolved by mediation. Each party shall bear its own costs and expenses associated with the mediation. The mediator's fees and the administrative fees of the mediation shall be shared equally among the parties. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 120 days from the date of the Issue Conference. The mediator may be selected from the approved list of mediators prepared by the American Arbitration Association. Mediation proceedings must be administered in accordance with the mediation rules or guidelines of the American Arbitration Association. This arbitration will be non-binding.

(4) If the mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to settle the controversy, claim or dispute by arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator in accordance with the guidelines of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the California State Bar or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California. Each party shall bear its own costs and expenses associated with the arbitration. The arbitrator's fees and the administrative fees of the arbitration shall be shared equally among the parties. Each party shall bear their own costs and expenses.

(5) However, any party who fails or refuses to submit to arbitration shall bear all costs and expenses incurred by such other party in compelling arbitration of any controversy, claim, or dispute.

The Academy of Alameda recognizes that if the substance of a dispute is a matter that could result in the taking of appropriate action, including, but not limited to, revocation of the charter in accordance with *EC* Section 47604.5, the matter will be addressed at the CSD's discretion in accordance with that provision of law and any regulations pertaining thereto.

CHARTER PETITION REVOCATION

The District may revoke the charter of The Academy of Alameda if The Academy of Alameda commits a breach of any terms of its charter. Further, the District may revoke the charter if The Academy of Alameda commits a breach of any provision set forth in a policy related to charter schools adopted by the District Board of Education and/or any provisions set forth in the Charter School Act of 1992. Furthermore, the District may revoke the charter of The Academy of Alameda on any of the following grounds:

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

Prior to revocation, and in accordance with Cal. Educ. Code section 47607(d), the District will notify The Academy of Alameda in writing of the specific violation, and give the The Academy of Alameda a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation, unless the District determines, in writing, that the violation

constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils. Notwithstanding the immediately preceding language, revocation proceedings are not subject to the dispute resolution clause set forth in this charter.

TERM AND RENEWAL

The proposed term of the charter will be for a period of five years from July 1, 2010 until June 30, 2015. Prior to the expiration of the charter, AUSD, at its own expense, will contract an independent third-party to perform a school evaluation based upon the measurable goals and terms outlined in this charter. The Academy of Alameda will submit its renewal petition to the District in full compliance with AUSD charter school petition guidelines and regulations. At the time the charter renewal is submitted, The Academy of Alameda and AUSD will establish a mutually agreeable timeline to complete the renewal process.

AMENDMENTS

Any amendments to this charter will be made by the mutual agreement of the governing boards of The Academy of Alameda and AUSD. Material revisions and amendments shall be made pursuant to the standards, criteria, and timelines in Education Code Section 47605.

ELEMENT 15: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

“A declaration whether or not the Charter School shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act.”

-- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)

The Academy of Alameda will be the exclusive public employer of all employees of the charter school for collective bargaining purposes. As such, The Academy of Alameda will comply with all provisions of the Educational Employment Relations Act (“EERA”), and will act independently from AUSD for bargaining purposes. In accordance with the EERA, employees may join and be represented by an organization of their choice for collective bargaining purposes.

ELEMENT 16: SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES

“A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes.”

-- California Education Code Section 47605(b) (5) (P)

The following are closing procedures that abide by Cal. Educ. Code §47605(b)(5)(P), should the school close for any reason. The decision to close The Academy of Alameda either by The Academy of Alameda governing Board or by the AUSD Board, will be documented in a Closure Action. The Closure Action shall be deemed to have been automatically made when any of the following occur: the charter is revoked or not renewed by the AUSD Board of Education; the charter school board votes to close the school; or the charter lapses. In the event of such a Closure Action, the following steps are to be implemented:

1. Written notification to parents/guardians/caregivers of the enrolled students of The Academy of Alameda will be issued The Academy of Alameda within 72 hours after the determination of a Closure Action. A sample copy of the language used in the written notification is also to be made to AUSD within the same time frame.
 - a. The written notification will also include information on assistance in transferring each student to another appropriate school, and a process for the transfer of all student records.
 - b. The process for transferring student records to the receiving schools shall be in accordance with AUSD procedures for students moving from one school to another.
 - c. Parents will also be provided with student information that includes closure notice, grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed coursework and credits that meet graduation requirements.
2. Written notification to AUSD of the list of returning students and their home schools, to be made within 72 hours of the determination of the Closure Action.
3. Transfer of student records to the receiving schools, within seven calendar days from the determination of an Action to Close.
4. Written notification to the California Department of Education and the Alameda County Office of Education of the Closure Action shall be made by The Academy of Alameda by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action.
5. The Academy of Alameda shall allow AUSD access, inspection and copying of all school records, including financial and attendance records, upon written request by AUSD.
6. A financial closeout audit of the school will be paid for by The Academy of Alameda to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets. The final independent audit shall be completed within six months after the closure of the school. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt incurred by The Academy of Alameda will be the responsibility of The Academy of Alameda and not AUSD. The Academy of Alameda understands and acknowledges that The Academy of Alameda will

cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of The Academy of Alameda]. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. The Academy of Alameda understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused AB 602 funds will be returned to the District SELPA, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.

7. For six calendar months from the Closure Action or until budget allows, whichever comes first, sufficient staff as deemed appropriate by The Academy of Alameda Board, will maintain employment to take care of all necessary tasks and procedures required for a smooth closing of the school and student transfers. All other staff employment will be terminated upon Closure Action.
8. The Academy of Alameda Board shall adopt a plan for wind-up of the school and, if necessary, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code.
9. In addition to a final audit, The Academy of Alameda will also submit any required year-end financial reports to the California Department of Education and AUSD, in the form and time frame required.
10. If the charter school is a nonprofit corporation, the corporation does not have any other functions than operation of the charter school, the corporation will be dissolved according to its bylaws.
 - a. The corporation's bylaws will address how assets are to be distributed at the closure of the corporation.
 - b. A copy of the corporations bylaws containing the information on how assets are to be distributed at the closure of the corporation, are to be provided to AUSD prior to approval of this Petition.

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

FACILITIES

If The Academy of Alameda moves or expands to another facility during the term of this charter, The Academy of Alameda shall provide a certificate of occupancy to the District for each facility at least 45 days before school is scheduled to open in the facility or facilities. The Academy of Alameda shall not open in any location for which it has failed to timely provide a certificate of occupancy to the District, unless an exception is made by the Charter Schools Division. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in this charter, the interpretation, application, and enforcement of this provision are not subject to the Dispute Resolution Process (Element 14).