Los Angeles Unified School District
Operating New Schools and Improving Underperforming Schools

Executive Summary

Young Empowered Scholars (YES) Academy

Transformation Plan

2009-10 School Year
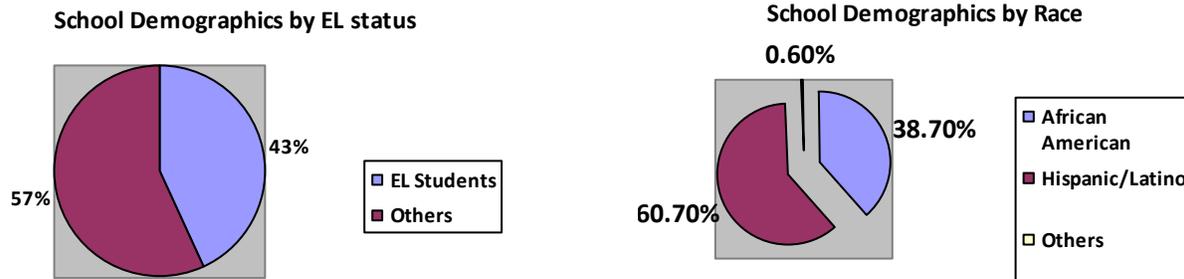
Executive Summary

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This proposal is submitted by Hyde Park Elementary Community Public School. The existing Hyde Park Elementary School will be renamed the Young Empowered Scholars (YES) Academy. YES Academy will ensure that the student composition will be reflective of the demographics of the overall school community, including but not limited to race/ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, English Learners, Standard English Learners, students with disabilities, and foster care placement. We will also implement and maintain ongoing review mechanisms to ensure retention and student composition at the Academy so that the school continues to reflect that of the overall school community.

YES Academy agrees to adhere to the terms, conditions and requirements of the Modified Consent Decree and other court orders imposed upon the District pertaining to special education. We will use the District's Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual, an Integrated Student Information System ("ISIS"), and Welligent, the District-wide web-based software system used for online IEPs and tracking of related services provided to students during the course of their education.

Review of Data

Student Population

Table 1

School Demographics by EL status

43%
57%
☐ EL Students
☐ Others

School Demographics by Race

0.60%
38.70%
60.70%
☐ African American
☐ Hispanic/Latino
☐ Others

The YES Academy will serve an urban, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic student body of approximately 680 students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Sixty percent (60 %) are Hispanic, 40% are African American and 43% are English Language Learners. Based upon recent trends and our current enrollment, 100% of our students will receive free and reduced lunch. Additional characteristics of our student body include:

Table 2 Demographics 2008-2009

Characteristic	School	District
Gifted and talented	2%	12
English Proficiency on CELDT	45%	48%
English Learners Improving	59%	60%
Reclassified Fluent-English Proficient	5%	27
Students with Disabilities	11	12
Average Parent Education Level	2.09	2.22
Percent of Students entering & leaving	30%	----
Mobility/Stability	89	93
Pupils with 96%+ Attendance	57%	69%
Employees with 96%+ Attendance	54%	72%
Students Suspended at least once	20%	2%

Our schools' population does present many challenges. Our children are considered culturally *different*, disadvantaged or "at risk" of failing in the traditional education system. However, it is evident from the data,

that we have not implemented an instructional program that has been responsive to our students needs. We have not preformed as well as many schools in our district with similar populations or many of the 100 schools with similar populations. (Appendix 1)

Table 3 API 2007 – 2009 Projected 2010

Subgroups	2007	2008	2009	2010
School Wide	615	601	590	
African American	584	572	537	
Latino	632	615	619	
English Learners	612	602	606	
SE/Disadvantaged	618	603	590	
SW/Disabilities	Not Numerically Significant			

Table 3 – Summary of Data

1. The API for all groups have declined since 2007
2. **African American students** have had the lowest API of all subgroups in every year. Their scores have fallen 47 points since 2007.
3. The API for **Latino students** is the highest of all subgroups. Their scores have fallen 13 points since 2007.
4. I*n 2009, the API score for Latino students was 82 points higher than African American's* and 29 points higher than SE/Disadvantaged subgroup.
5. The API for **English Learners** has fallen 6 points since 2007. Their 2009 API is 69 points higher than African American Students.

Table 4 AYP 2007 – 2009 * *Projected 2010*

Percent Proficient Targets		Subgroup Percentage of Tested Students**	ELA 24.4 Math 26.5	ELA 35.2% Math 37%	ELA 46.0% Math 47.5%	ELA 56.8% Math 58.0%
Subject Area	**Subgroups**		**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010***
ELA	School Wide	100%	21.6	20.3	21.4	
ELA	African Americans	40%	21.2	20.1	18.1	
ELA	Latino	59%	21.3	20.4	22.7	
ELA	English Learners	48%	19.0	18.9	21.6	
ELA	SW/Disabilities	11.5	21.2	16.3	19.2	
ELA	SE/Disadvantaged	100%	21.7	20.4	21.4	
Math	Schoolwide	100%	28.4	24.9	26.5	
Math	African Americans	40%	20.0	17.2	17.8	
Math	Latino	59%	33.2	28.8	31.4	
Math	English Learners	48%	28.2	26.8	31.4	
Math	SW/Disabilities	11.5	21.2	13.0	8.5	
Math	SE/Disadvantaged	100%	28.5	25.4	26.5	

**In ELA 465/494 (94 %) of students were tested in 2009 in ELA. School met the participation target through alternative method of calculation. In mathematics, 492/494 students tested

Table 4

1. In 2007 several subgroups achieved the percent proficient AMO. These table cells are highlighted in green.
2. The percent proficient has not changed greatly for any subgroup during the last two years in ELA. However, between 2007 and 2009 there was a 3.1% decline for African Americans in ELA
3. In 2009 in ELA, all subgroups had a higher Percent Proficient than the African Americans
4. African American students have scored lower than all other groups in mathematics excepting students with disabilities in 2008 and 2009.

5. The school met the ELA participation rate for schoolwide, African Americans, and SE/disadvantaged using the alternative method of calculation.
6. The participation rate for math was 100% schoolwide and 99% for Latino and SW/Disabilities.

Table 5 Distribution of B, BB & FBB by Grade Level 2009

Grade	Subject	B	BB	FBB	Total	FBB & BB
Grade 2	ELA	37%	18%	23%	78%	41%
	Math	31%	18%	18%	67%	36%
Grade 3	ELA	24%	29%	39%	92%	68%
	Math	17%	33%	23%%	73%	56%
Grade 4	ELA	33%	20%	20%	73%	40%
	Math	25%	35%	15%	75%	50%
Grade 5	ELA	36%	18%	27%	81%	45%
	Math	32%	15%	41%	88%	56%

Table 5

1. The largest percentage of students is scoring basic, below basic and far below basic.
2. At every grade the percentage of *FBB and BB* students exceeds the number of basics in both reading and math.
3. In 2009, grade 3 had the largest percentage of students basic and below and the largest percentage of FBB and BB students.

Implications for Reforms

- Comparing our data to 100 similar schools that are doing much better shows that we can increase our students' achievement. This can only be done by improving instruction
- Though it is obvious that most students are performing very poorly, the large discrepancy between African Americans' performance and the other major subgroups is very troubling. The reasons for this discrepancy must be looked at carefully and YES Academy must implement culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy.
- Although English learners are making adequate progress (See **Table 1**--59% improving, 45% proficient on CELDT), the number of EL's scoring proficient and advanced in ELA and math can and must be accelerated
- In 2009 only 5% reclassified of EL's were reclassified. This indicates that we need to more faithfully implement ELD strategies, and (SDAIE) strategies in ELA, Math and all content ares.
- Students scoring *BB and FBB* are often performing a year or more below grade level in reading and mathematics. Many of our students in these categories have very poor work attack skills, low fluency, poor vocabularies (academic and scholarly), and lack comprehension strategies.
- Most students cannot read the grade level texts. Teachers will have to use strategies and accommodations that will provide access to grade level content and at the same time provide instruction designed to remediate reading skills.
- Because of the large number of BB and FBB students, we will have to allocate a large percentage of our resources to providing appropriate, intensive interventions based on RTI. It is possible that we need to designate more than 3 tiers.
- Teachers at all grade levels will have to become more expert at teaching beginning reading skills. - In addition to knowledge of content, teacher will need to use a variety of methods to teach reading concepts and skills.
- All teachers will have to employ more effective strategies for teaching tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary.
- These students do not have number sense and lack automaticity or fluency in number facts and basic operations. Additional assessments will be used to more closely identify specific weaknesses.

Other Assessments

In addition to the above data, we will conduct the following surveys in our efforts to create a school where all students are eager, engaged, and highly successful students.

1. Parent community survey.
2. Student survey.
3. Teacher survey related to beliefs and practices
4. Teacher evaluation of educational programs, and school facilities
5. Administrative and peer evaluations of classroom practices, using observations and students' work. This will help us to plan a more focused "needs approach" to professional development.
6. Screening and diagnostic assessment to help us make purchases and other decisions about the level of resources required to address the large number of students who are one or more years below grade level

Creating a New School

Mission

YES Academy will create a learning community where all students will achieve academic excellence, social and emotional maturity and will recognize and achieve their full potential to realize their goals and dreams.

Vision

The **YES** Academy will provide a student-centered, standards-based instruction programs in a multicultural environment. Our students will become highly successful, enthusiastic, motivated life-long learners and high achievers.

The success of **YES** will rely on its professional learning community who will have high expectations of every student. Each member will continuously seek ways to improve instructional practices, and is nurturing, and supportive of every student. We will offer a progressive student centered curriculum that uses culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy and differentiated instruction to address all students' different learning styles, strengths, talents, and interests. The innovative use of technology will enhance the student-centered curriculum and prepare **YES**' students for the future. Through full partnership of the student body, committed staff, parents and community, each student will represent a unique fulfillment of our vision.

Philosophy

Our students and their academic, social, and emotional needs will determine all our decisions and behaviors at YES Academy. Every student is valuable, important, and unique. We respect and strive to understand our students' diverse backgrounds including race, religion, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, gender, and age. Therefore, we seek to establish a nurturing learning environment that embraces the whole child. Teachers must be the facilitators for student growth and the school community as a whole must make decisions based on what will best meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs and support student achievement. We believe:

- Education is a shared responsibility between all stakeholders
- Students' needs (emotional, social and academic) are the determining factor for decisions made at school.
- Students have various learning styles, unique abilities, interests and multiple intelligences that must be known and understood by every stakeholder and are also used in planning and delivering instruction.
- Students learn best in a safe, orderly, culturally responsive, positive, and inviting environment
- All students can learn when educators build on students' unique strengths and allow them to be successful at their own pace
- A multi-tiered approach to instruction and intervention will improve student achievement

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- Integration of active learning, technology, environmental education, and visual/ performing arts will motivate teaching/ learning
- A climate of mutual respect and an appreciation of diversity is critical in developing and sustaining an effective learning community
- Adult behavior serves as an important model for our students' behavior
- Teaching behavioral expectations and conflict resolution skills are necessary to promote peace in the school, neighborhood and global community
- Collaboration is essential for building a professional learning community.

We believe that the Guiding Principles of a Responsive Classroom (http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/aboutrc.html) will best guide our student-centered YES Academy.

- The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
- How children learn is as important as what they learn: Process and content go hand in hand.
- The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
- To be successful academically and socially, children need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.

Educational Plan

YES Academy's educational plan is a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning aligned with our mission and vision and focused on the whole child. A standards-based and academically rigorous curriculum will be continually developed and implemented.   Researched-based methodologies such as Thinking Maps, differentiated instruction, culturally relevant pedagogy, increased opportunities for structured talk and writing, cooperative learning, and academic language development will be implemented for all students including, English Language Learners, Standard English Learners, and students with special needs. *The Response to Instruction and Intervention RTI2* framework will be the basis for on-going assessments which will be used to define and drive instruction. On-going professional development designed to increase teachers' effectiveness will be planned and implemented. Our coordinated effort to systematically implement RTI2 a to ensure that struggling students receive instruction designed to close the achievement gap

It is recognized that not all student needs are being met by directed teaching of the core curriculum, structured pacing, and summative assessment practices. Yes Academy will shift from isolated classrooms, using routine practices, to a collaborative learning-centered culture that will empower students. This broad change affects school organization and structure, and requires collaborative norms for teacher teams. A focus on data collection will enable monitoring and analysis of student achievement to drive decision-making. We will implement consistent support of behavioral expectations to maximize instructional time. The goals for our overall educational program include:

- Insuring that every child develops proficient reading, oral and written language, and math skills
- Maximizing the impact of core instruction for all students through "good first teaching" that is culturally responsive.
- Implementing instruction that is standards based and assessment driven rather than program driven. The core program and supplements will used with fidelity as a resource in teaching the skills, concepts, and knowledge in all subject.
- Implementing an instructional program that differentiates instruction and engages diverse learners with varying levels of knowledge and skills through project-based activities
- Using formative and summative assessment data to provide multi-tiered, departmentalized instruction and intervention
- Providing and engaging in professional learning community structures to analyze, implement and revise instruction

- Integrating standards-based curriculum to provide responsive, relevant and engaging learning environment with overarching themes of environmental awareness and responsibility into the daily life of school community

The students at YES Academy will be taught in *small classroom settings* (20:1 primary and 24:1 upper elementary) and teachers will work in professional learning communities. Our intent is to provide the delivery of elementary classroom instruction by skilled and knowledgeable teachers. Instruction will be appropriate to the diverse needs and characteristics of early learners, with fidelity to the standards and core curriculum. We will organize strong educational leadership that encourages, facilitates, and sustains involvement, participation and guidance in development of a professional learning community. We will hold firmly to our belief in the implementation of a multi-tiered network of academic and behavior supports available for all students, and will consistently monitor student performance in our response to intervention. We will provide involvement by all staff in *professional learning activities* through staff development programs that are purposeful, collaboratively developed, and promote the creation of a learning-centered culture.

Innovative strategies and programs may include, but are not limited to:
daily intervention with 10-12 targeted students per teacher before school.

- *implement* **Morning Meeting** *and the* <u>*First Six Weeks of School*</u>*, components of the Responsive Classroom*—developed by Northeast Foundation for Children. These programs will play a key role in creating positive learning environment and helping the school to design and implement a positive schoolwide discipline plan.
- early intervention for K-1 students using research based programs such as Code Breaker in small group settings
- daily teacher collaborative planning time
- differentiated professional development based on teacher needs and interest,
- rigorous staff and teacher selection by committee
- performance task projects using the latest technology to research and demonstrate learning
- communication using technology for students, parents, teachers, and community members such as online classes, through email and online forums, and student created websites

A Day in the Life of a YES Academy Student

Roberto, a 3rd grade student, enters his classroom at 8:00 am and is warmly greeted by his teacher, the educational assistant and his classmates. After dropping his homework, he joins the circle of students on the rug for the daily Morning Meeting. During today's meeting, the group first reviews the morning message which tells students news and announcements. Today's message recognizes Kimberly's birthday. It also asks students to think about what they would measure with a ruler, a yardstick, and unit mile: The students responses are charted in columns.

The *morning message* is related to math This morning's message asks students to find Word Wall words in the morning messages. Students' responses to the question: After this discussion, two students share. Donnie announces that he has a new baby brother. Kameron shares that his grandmother is coming to live with his family. The other children take turns asking questions and share comments. Because of this regular sharing, students have become experts at listening, by given giving eye contact and undivided attention. They also know how to ask related questions and make comments. The continuous practice of these listening and discussion habits has transferred to core instructional activities.

The Morning Message

March 10, 2010

Happy Birthday, Kimberly,

We've been learning about measuring in math, When you
need to measure something, how do you decide which to
use?

What would you measure with:

a ruler?	a yardstick?	the unit mile?

After students move quietly back to their seats at the end of morning meeting. Roberto independently reads a story from a leveled **Scholastic Reading Inventory Book.** As Roberto and other students are engaged in reading, the teacher monitors students' progress and assists them with individual needs. Roberto likes this time where his teacher is available for anything he may need help with. After 15 minutes of silent reading, he responds to a teacher elaborated set of questions regarding the targeted skills covered in today's lesson: finding main idea and details in a descriptive text.

Following the independent reading time, the teacher leads a structured discussion about how students will connect their OCR reading selection with their writing assignments which will necessarily incorporate their own experiences: Describe what a friend is for you. Students are supported and encouraged to used academic and scholarly language (tier 2 words for which they know a tier 1 word), and the use of Think-Pair-Share strategies to discuss their own ideas and opinions. Roberto loves this part of the day where he can interact with his partners while following "good discussion" protocols: taking turns, listening and being listened, respecting others' opinions and learning in a cooperative way.

Next, in whole group discussion, Roberto's teacher seeks ideas from all students and then together they create a circle map on chart paper. The teacher explains that, they will need the information recorded in the circle map to be transferred into another kind of thinking map that assist them organize their writing.

Next, while working in pairs, students are assigned the task of pulling a selection of details from the circle map that they will further develop. Together, using Think-Pair-Share and Cooperative Learning Strategies, the students create a flow map-tree map combination that helps create and define the structure of their descriptive writing piece: a block for a topic sentence, another block including details supporting the topic sentence, and a final block where they should include a conclusion. Key words that students may need for writing are also written on a chart. While working in pairs, Roberto and his partner use their dictionaries and seek for teacher help a few times. Before ending the session the teacher models the map she has created and narrates the content of her map. Next groups volunteer to present and share their maps. This verbal rehearsal will help Roberto internalize the ideas in his thinking map prepares him to later proceed to the next steps of the writing process: Pull-Out-and-Talk with partners and Pull-Out-and-Write following a communication guide. He has been improving his writing so much to being able to organize his ideas. He also loved the part of writing his draft using their computers where spell check and editing were fun.

While Roberto and others are working independently, the teacher and the assistant work with intervention groups. The teacher works with four students who are learning to sort words by syllable types. They are still very inaccurate or confused about when to use the long vowel sound when a word has a single vowel. The teacher guides them in a sorting activity using words and rimes with open and closed syllables. This activity is designed to help students carefully analyze the patterns. Students also practice reading a

decodable text and a list of high frequency words. The teaching assistant words with individual students on fluency. They also read from a set of cards that contain words that they misread while reading.

Roberto returns from recess to enjoy his manipulative- based math lesson. He loves this kind of hands-on activity where he works with partners, leads his own learning, and learns about math through his own reasoning. He enjoys working with his small group to create multiplication arrays using cubes and/or graph paper to create multiplication arrays that prove that 4X3=12. Before ending the session, a representative from each group orally explains their group's strategy in solving the problem and invites questions from classmates. Roberto really enjoys sharing his findings. All students are supported in using academic language as they explain their work. These key words are listed on a chart and are used by Roberto and his classmates as they write in their math journals where they explain how they use the manipulatives to show multiplication.

After returning from lunch, Roberto and his classmates move to the science block, another one of his favorites. The teacher guides students in reviewing the standard, concepts and information previously experienced. They are shown realia and photos of situations where energy is being used. They collaborate in small groups where they transfer their real life observations into theory by using battery wires and motors provided in the Foss Matter & Energy Kit. The feeling of becoming real scientists and learning from own experience, observation, and research to reach conclusions is a thrilling one. Roberto feels he may become a scientist in the future and sits at his computer to do further research. For homework the class is assigned the task of finding sources of energy in their own homes.

For the final 30 minutes of the school day, Roberto's class learns about health in a lesson that combines ELD strategies with an introduction to the digestive system. The words of "The Food Route" chant are projected onto a screen as the whole class joins the teacher in choral reading. Following this activity, students recite the chant in pairs. As the students practices the teacher circulates to accesses and encourage their work. The school day ends with Roberto and his classmates being escorted to the dismissal gate by their teacher. He enjoys reminiscing about the exciting day they had at YES Academy.

Lasting Change Begins with the Adult Community

One of the Guiding Principles of a Responsive Classroom is "How the adults at school work together is as important as their individual competence: Lasting change begins with the adult community."   As students do not learn in isolation, but as part of a community, YES Academy will strongly enhance and empower the adults in the community to educate the whole child.

Professional Development for Teachers and Staff

Professional Development will be data-driven, based on student needs, and research-based. We strive to build a professional learning community where teachers and staff are fully involved in a self-enrichment process to ensure student success. To that end, professional development will be differentiated and teacher-led. In-house expertise as well as outside experts will be sought as needs arise. Peer coaching and mentoring will be the primary instrument of self-improvement, self-evaluation, and reflection to build teacher efficacy and capacity.

Family and Community Involvement

The stakeholders of the YES Academy Community have developed this proposal because we believe that we can and will create a highly successful school where all children will achieve. We realize that family and community involvement are essential elements that support the whole child. We will strive to empower the family and community through shared decision- making, clear communication and collaboration. In addition to academic classes we will be provide classes designed to help students and their families to have full access to the benefits and resources available at our school, in the educational system and the community. These classes may include homework help instruction, pathways to college, and student and family empowerment.

Success in educating our children begins with established partnerships between parents, students, teachers, administrators, and the neighboring community. YES Academy is committed to partnering with parents and the community in order to create diverse options, high quality educational opportunities, and excellent

teaching for the academic success of ALL students. An established Parent Center will continue to provide established services to parents as well as offering some exciting new opportunities for involvement in their children's education.

We will continue our partnerships with several community organizations that will provide hands on experiences in the areas of music, dance, and community outreach: California Dance Institute. We will pursue partnerships with local universities, environmental agencies, local businesses, and industries to provide a variety of experiences for our students in community responsibility for living in, and caring for our global environment.

Leadership and Governance

Student needs are the central driving force of education at YES Academy. We believe that persons who are closest to students are best equipped to make decisions about the instructional programs. (Sergiovanni, T. J. (1992). Moral leadership: Getting to the heart of school improvement. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.) For that reason, YES Academy will use the Shared Decision Making model as outlined in the LAUSD-UTLA contract. Our philosophy is that all teachers, parents, administrators, and community members should be actively involved in how our learning community needs to function to foster our students' academic and social success. Our school community will recreate the values of our democratic society where all members are represented and equally held accountable. This governance model will help us achieve our vision of having full partnership of all stakeholder groups. The Shared decision making governing council will consist of the Principal, the UTLA Chapter Chair, 5 teachers, 4 parents, 1 classified staff, and 1 parents or community members. Elections to council, except that of the Principal and UTLA Chapter Chair, will be through election by stakeholder groups. The Local School Leadership Council has decision making authority related to five areas as outlined in the LAUSD-UTLA contract. The School Site Council has sole authority for all aspects of the development and implementation of the Single School Plan and related policies and categorical programs.

Fiscal Plan

In order to realize our mission and our vision, the fiscal priorities will be focused and realigned to the vision and mission to support students and their success. Data will be used to determine what would best meet student needs. The realignment will support the following changes:

- Limit class-size
- Extend school hours for more intensive and extensive intervention and enrichment
- Provide professional development directly linked to improving student achievement
- Expand parent resources center and improve services that are provided
- Purchase innovative technology and other curricular resources
- Budget for extended instructional support personnel (e.g., Physical Education Teacher, Arts Prototype and Chorus teachers)

While our school already has some differentiated instructional materials, it is imperative that we have appropriate materials for all levels of students including but not limited to (1) leveled readers, (2) Scholastic Reading Skills Kits, (3) Junior Great Books, (4) decodable readers for grades 4 & 5. (5) Benchmark assessments in ELA arts that will allow us to assess students' progress test taking materials etc.

Because we are so committed to teaching to the needs of our students, intervention is integral to the closing the achievement gap. The instructional staff will pull out students, evaluate materials, lead professional development on intervention strategies and will evaluate assessments. Intervention will be part of the regular instructional day as well as after school and on Saturday.

We use incentives to celebrate the accomplishments of our students because we value success. It is very important In order to achieve our vision for student success we feel it is important to provide instructional

coaches in English Language Development (1) and Math (1). These positions, and a Title 1 Coordinator, will help provide teacher support through professional development and demonstration lessons.