

AUGUSTUS HAWKINS BUSINESS CAREERS HIGH SCHOOL

INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY

Augustus Hawkins Business Careers High School will be one of four small high schools opening on the newly built campus of Augustus Hawkins High School in August of 2012. The other three schools will include a Technology Careers High School, an Entertainment Careers High School, and a Health Careers High School. Together, these small schools will focus on the most rapidly growing career fields in Los Angeles. Each of the small schools will function as a separate, independent school with its own principal.

The school will operate on an eight-period, alternate-day bell schedule. School hours will be from 8:00 a.m. to 2:52 p.m. Students will take four 81-minute classes on one day, and four 81-minute classes the next. There will also be a 25-minute advisory period that students attend every day. Staff development for teachers will be scheduled every Tuesday from 8:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. Students will report to school at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesdays.

In addition to the four small-school principals, there will also be an operations principal. The operations principal will have responsibility for schoolwide, non-academic duties. These will include discipline, supervision, physical education, athletics, student activities, and facilities.

This organizational structure will make it possible for each of the four small-school principals to have a strong focus on classroom instruction, while the operations principal focuses on school operations. Each of the five principals will be supervised by an instructional director assigned by the school district, who will have overall responsibility for the site.

1. **Mission and Vision**

- a. **Mission.** Students of the Augustus Hawkins Business Careers High School will gain full proficiency in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. They will acquire the ability to comprehend a variety of reading materials with full understanding, the ability to explain ideas clearly in speech and writing, and the ability to use mathematics for planning and creating. They will gain proficiency in the use of computers. They will learn to think critically and creatively. They will develop confidence, determination, persistence, and ability to work with others. They will also attain knowledge and skills in business careers.
- b. **Vision.** Students who graduate from the school will have the academic skills necessary to begin college, learn independently, and achieve at high levels. They will think critically and communicate ideas effectively. They will use technology to gain knowledge and create solutions. They will work well with others. They will have the confidence, determination, and persistence necessary to complete challenging tasks.

2. **Data-Driven and Student-Centered Instructional Programs**

- a. Based upon achievement data from the nearby feeder schools, improving skills in language arts and mathematics are the most important academic needs. In language arts, students will learn to read with full comprehension and express ideas clearly in speech and writing. In mathematics, students will learn how to use numerical concepts to think abstractly, plan, and create.
- b. It will be an extremely high priority to improve attendance rates. There will also be a strong focus on building hope and helping students develop positive attitudes about themselves and their ability to be successful in school.
- c. There is an achievement gap between genders, with male students achieving at lower levels than female students. There is also an achievement gap between African American and Latino students that must be addressed. Students need constant encouragement as they get older. This means they must have adults at school who believe in them and will work with them to achieve success.

3. **Instructional Program**

- a. Students will be enrolled in all necessary courses to meet the Los Angeles Unified School District graduation requirements, the University of California A-G requirements, courses necessary to gain English proficiency, and courses necessary for students with disabilities.
- b. There will be a full program for students with special needs. This will include services and classes for students with disabilities, with students being mainstreamed into the regular program as much as possible. There will also be a full program for students identified to receive gifted and talented education (GATE).
- c. In addition to the required core courses, all students will be simultaneously enrolled in supplemental courses in English language arts and mathematics. To ensure high achievement in mathematics, students will retake classes of the same level immediately during the next semester if they do not achieve a passing grade the first time. For example, students who do not pass Algebra 1A during the fall semester will take Algebra 1A again during the spring.
- d. Particular emphasis will be placed upon the development of high levels of English proficiency for all students, both English language learners and standard-English learners. This will include an emphasis in all academic classes on increasing vocabulary skills, improving reading comprehension skills, improving the ability to express ideas in speech and writing, and developing thinking skills.
- e. Teachers will provide standards-based, well-planned, rigorous, bell-to-bell instruction. Teachers will submit lesson plans to the principal on a weekly basis. Teachers will also provide learning environments in classrooms that include

subject-matter displays and displays of student work, effective classroom discipline to ensure high standards of student conduct, and effective methods of checking for understanding that involve all students. Project-based learning will be encouraged as a way to develop thinking skills and provide connections between classroom learning and the real world.

- f. Students will be tested three times a year in core subjects via the LAUSD periodic assessments. Teachers will use data from the assessments to determine individual student progress and adjust classroom instruction to improve student achievement. Students will also be tested weekly in core subjects with standards-based assessments created through LAUSD Core K-12. These assessments allow teachers to gain frequent and accurate information on student achievement levels.
- g. Teachers will meet collaboratively in professional learning communities every Tuesday morning from 8:00 to 9:15 to examine student achievement data and share instructional strategies. During these meetings, they will analyze student achievement data and share best practices to improve student achievement. Students will report to school at 9:30 on Tuesdays.
- h. The small-school principal will observe in classrooms and provide written feedback to teachers every day. Records of classroom observations will be kept in a set of central notebooks for inspection by the instructional director. The instructional director will visit classrooms regularly to monitor classroom instruction and provide support to ensure that all students learn at high levels in every classroom.

4. **School Culture**

- a. Students will be immersed in a school environment of high expectations, with constant encouragement to improve their academic skills. Awards will be provided to students for high attendance and academic improvement.
- b. A college-going culture, including peer counseling, will be established in which students hear constantly from all staff members that they are expected to achieve at high levels and become fully prepared for college.
- c. Students will attend an advisory class each day to form close connections with teachers and receive assistance with non-academic needs. Advisory teachers will also develop close relationships with parents and call parents frequently to discuss academic achievement and all absences. Students in advisory classes will carefully examine and analyze their scores on standardized achievement tests. They will also be made aware of their English language redesignation status and progress needed to achieve English proficiency.
- d. The operations principal will ensure that the school has an effective discipline system. This will include a schoolwide detention program, along with positive incentives to ensure high standards of student conduct. Suspensions will be used

only as a last resort. Students will wear uniforms. Teachers and staff members will work together to create a school culture that is friendly, welcoming, and motivating.

- e. A complete extra-curricular program, including sports and student activities, will be offered to provide learning opportunities that are not available through regular classroom instruction. This will be led by the operations principal, who will also manage schoolwide non-academic tasks such as discipline, campus supervision, facilities, and food services. This structure will make it possible to offer a rich program of extra-curricular activities.

5. **Parent Engagement and Involvement**

- a. Each of the four small schools will have a School Governing Committee that fulfills the responsibilities of the School Site Council and the Shared Decision Making Council. The committee will be composed of two parents, two students, two teachers, the principal, and an additional school employee. It will meet once a month to examine student achievement data, discuss research on school improvement, and develop plans for the school's mission, vision, and goals. The committee will also make decisions about staff development, discipline policies, activity schedules, school equipment, and selected budgets.
- b. Advisory teachers in particular will maintain close relationships with parents. They will call the parents whenever students are absent. They will monitor academic achievement and make contact with parents to discuss learning issues. They will also provide information to parents on college readiness, applying to college, and seeking financial aid.

6. **Staffing**

- a. The first step in the staffing process will be to hire the principals. These positions will be advertised on the LAUSD Human Resources Website. The selection process will be implemented by a Personnel Selection Team composed of four teachers, an administrator from the Design Team, two parent representatives, a classified employee representative, a student, a UTLA designee, and a designee of the superintendent. The priority will be to hire strong instructional leaders who also have a thorough knowledge of school operations.
- b. The next step in the staffing process will be to hire the teaching staff. The selection process will be implemented by a Personnel Selection Team composed of four teachers, the principal, two parent representatives, a classified employee representative, a student, a UTLA designee, and a designee of the superintendent. The goal of the selection team will be to hire skilled and caring educators who have the ability to connect with students and provide instruction that is standards-based and rigorous. There will also be a focus on finding teachers who are skilled at relating subject matter to real-life applications using classroom strategies that engage all students at high levels.