

**LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
(LAUSD)**

SOUTH LA AREA NEW HS #3: Augustus Hawkins

**Schools for Community Action #4
(SCA #4)**

**School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science
(USES)**

**A STEM School
(Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)**

“There's only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that's your own self. So you have to begin there, not outside, not on other people. That comes afterward, when you've worked on your own corner.” Aldous Huxley

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A. SUMMARY ANALYSIS

A-1. Mission and Vision

Mission of the School for Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science:

To educate and empower students to creatively lead their communities towards sustainable futures.

Objectives

USES will accomplish this by:

- Exposing students to real world, inquiry-based learning environments beyond the traditional classroom
- Providing students with college and career pathways in fields that emphasize sustainability practices in urban planning and environmental sciences
- Teaching students 21st century technology skills that better prepare them for these college and career pathways that involve technology and quantitative thinking
- Fostering in students a civic and environmental awareness, ethic, and agency that empowers them to address immediate issues of inequity and sustainability within the community, to think constructively and to act in ways that promote positive social transformations

Vision: As a result of students being provided with authentic, inquiry based educational experiences that prepare them for 21st century college and career pursuits, the community around Slauson & Hoover will become a more environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable and just neighborhood.

Core Values shared within all four small Schools for Community Action (SCA):

Our core values stem from our desire for our students to experience a curriculum that offers them opportunities to transform school spaces into places where they feel valued, understood, and loved. A classroom space intent on love is one that is “lively, forceful, and inspiring, while at the same time, critical, challenging, and insistent” (Darder, 1998). It is designed to promote the idea “that the act of learning is an open-ended process and one that unfolds within its own context, both social and cultural” (Stinson in Nieto, 2008, p. 39). We agree with bell hooks that “we also choose to live in community, and that means that we do not have to change by ourselves” (1994).

Therefore, the Los Angeles’ South Central community deserves a powerful network of small public schools that can implement the following 5 core values with fidelity:

Student Centered: We believe that education should always begin with a strong respect and understanding of each student’s potential and desire to learn. Utilizing the collective strengths of students, their communities and cultures, we will create multiple opportunities for all our students to develop academically and socially. Through a reflective learning process, students will be empowered to use their voices, become leaders in their schools, communities and beyond, as they engage in transformative action.

Community Collaboration: We believe that authentic community collaboration leads to transformative school design. We take seriously our accountability to the public and the public’s accountability to the school.

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We understand that the success of this school is integrally linked to the success of the South Central community. Thus, our family and community partners are committed to our larger mission and vision for the success of every child. By combining educational experience with critical community input and shared decision-making, we can best support student learning and empower the community be partners in true educational reform.

Innovation and Excellence: We believe that teachers should constantly improve their practice to ensure students achieve new levels of success. We are committed to continual professional growth that helps align new and creative teaching practices with our mission, to provide all students with a quality educational experience. Teachers will engage students in action research, Project Based Learning, and critical reflection. We believe that true learning can only take place through collaboration and community oriented classrooms.

Social Justice: We believe that our community deserves better educational opportunities than have been historically provided. We understand that this history has impacted far too many young people's education. We recognize the community's need to transform the experience of overcrowded schools and aim to offer a better alternative for students. Our partnerships will reflect this understanding by identifying and connecting community resources in order to change the legacy of inequity in our schools into one that is more socially just.

Sustainability: We believe in creating interlinked strength between the four small schools of the Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action campus. We will create a culture of collaboration to strengthen the overall quality of learning experiences for ALL students. By working collectively across the four schools, we will share expertise and resources to offset foreseeable budget constraints, all while maintaining distinct, separate and small schools that offer the community: educational opportunity, diversity, and choice.

A-2. School Data Analysis

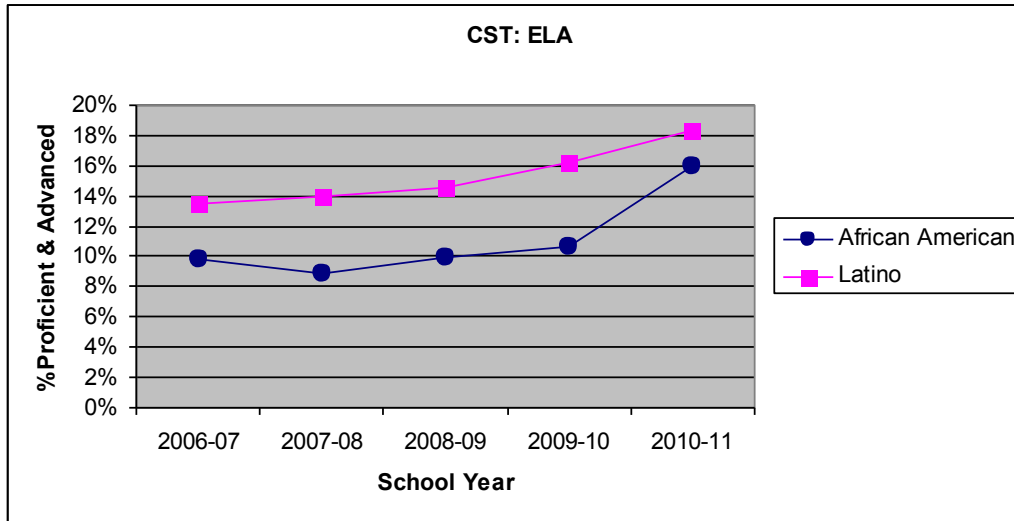
School Data Analysis:

Analyzing data from the School Report Card, Data Summary Sheet, SIS, myData, and DataQuest, we see clear opportunities for a school in this community to be more effective in meeting the needs of our students – especially African Americans, English learners, and students with disabilities – leading to higher test scores, higher CAHSEE pass rates, higher reclassification rates, and ultimately higher graduation rates.

Performance Gap between African American and Latino students

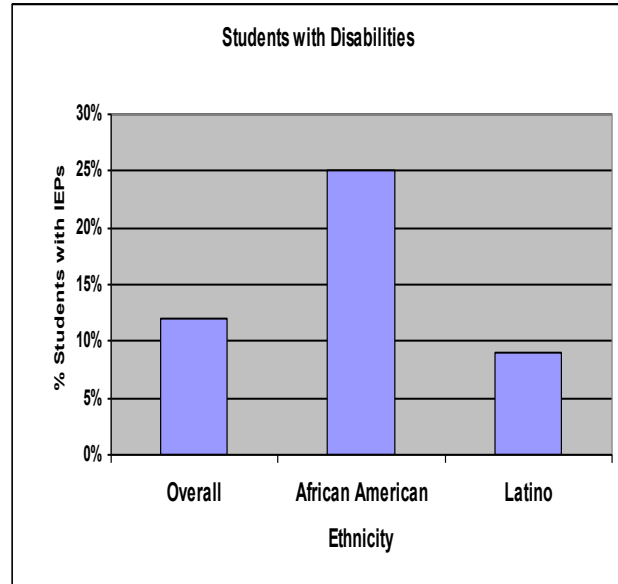
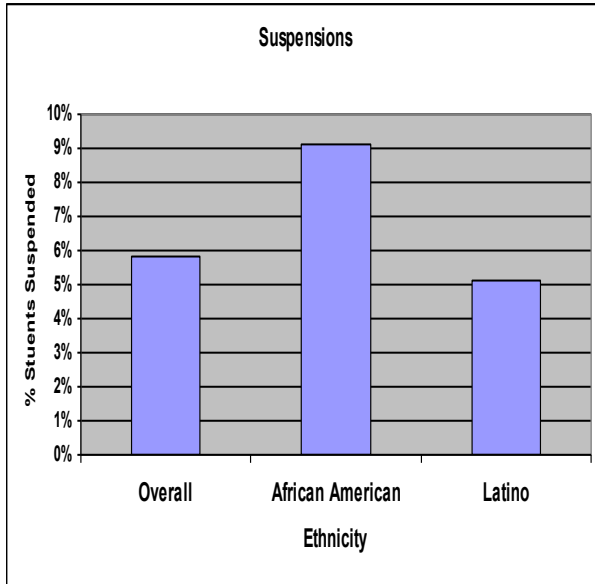
There is a significant disparity between African American and Latino achievement data that signals inequitable learning opportunities at Manual Arts High School. For example, looking at a five-year trend of the English Language Arts CST results, the gap in results is clear.

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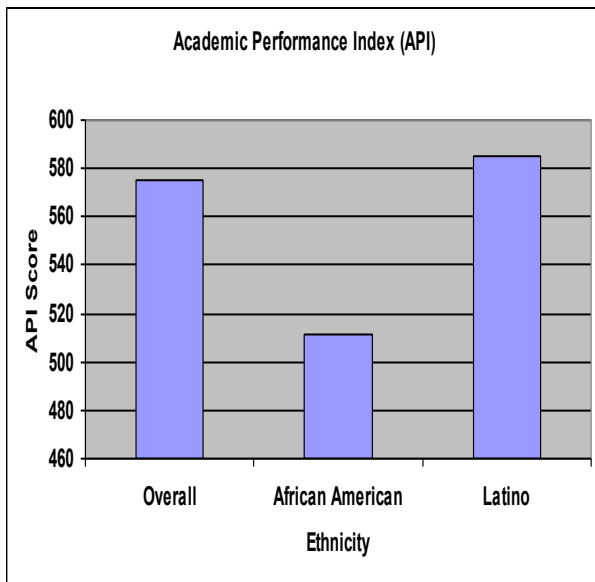


Not only are a smaller percentage of African American students scoring Proficient or Advanced, but also a larger percentage are scoring FBB or BB than the Latino students. The same trend also exists with the Math CSTs. Corresponding with this achievement data is data that show a disproportionate percentage of African American students getting suspended from school compared with their Latino counterparts, and a disproportionate amount of African American students identified as having disabilities and placed in Special Education classrooms. Twenty-five percent of our African American students have IEPs. In the 2010-11 school-year, 414 instructional days were lost to suspension.

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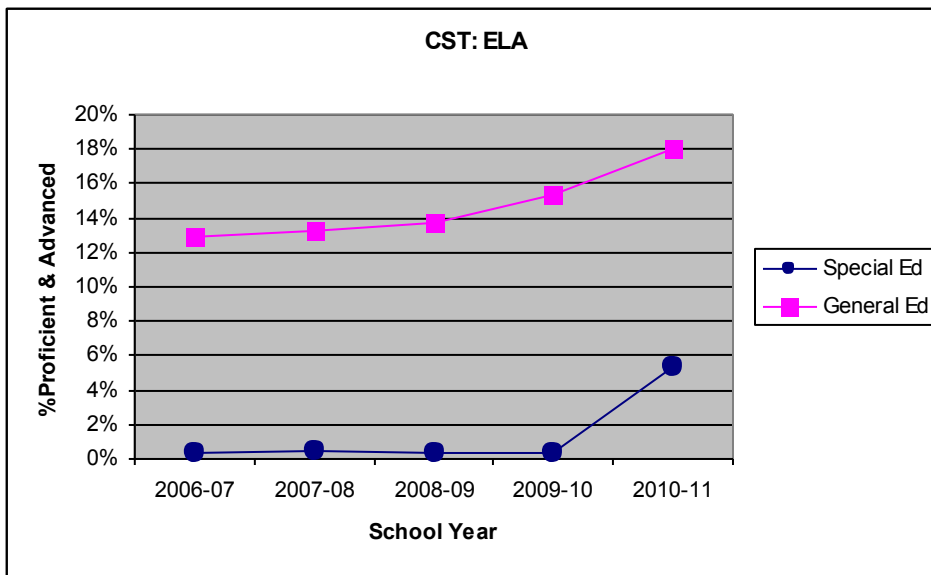
The data represented in the tables above are reflected in the API data below.



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Performance Gap between Special Education and General Education students

Students with Disabilities are not receiving an equitable education. Again, the five-year trend of the English Language Arts CST results clearly illustrates the achievement gap resulting from disparate treatment.



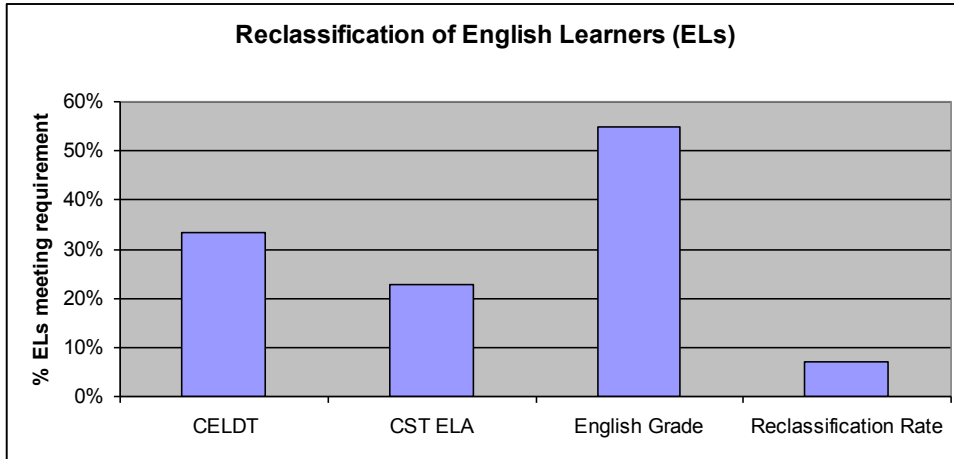
Seventy-nine percent of Special Education students are scoring FBB or BB on the ELA CST, compared with forty-eight percent school-wide. On the Math CST, 97% of the Special Education students are scoring FBB or BB.

Performance Results of English Learners

The CST data of the English Learners is very similar to that of the Special Education students.

Additionally, the reclassification rate is just 7.1%. In order to reclassify, a student must score Proficient on the CELDT, Basic or above on the CST ELA, and pass English/Advanced ESL with a “C” or above. There is great opportunity to raise the reclassification rate since a significantly larger percentage of students are performing well on each of the separate factors considered for reclassification.

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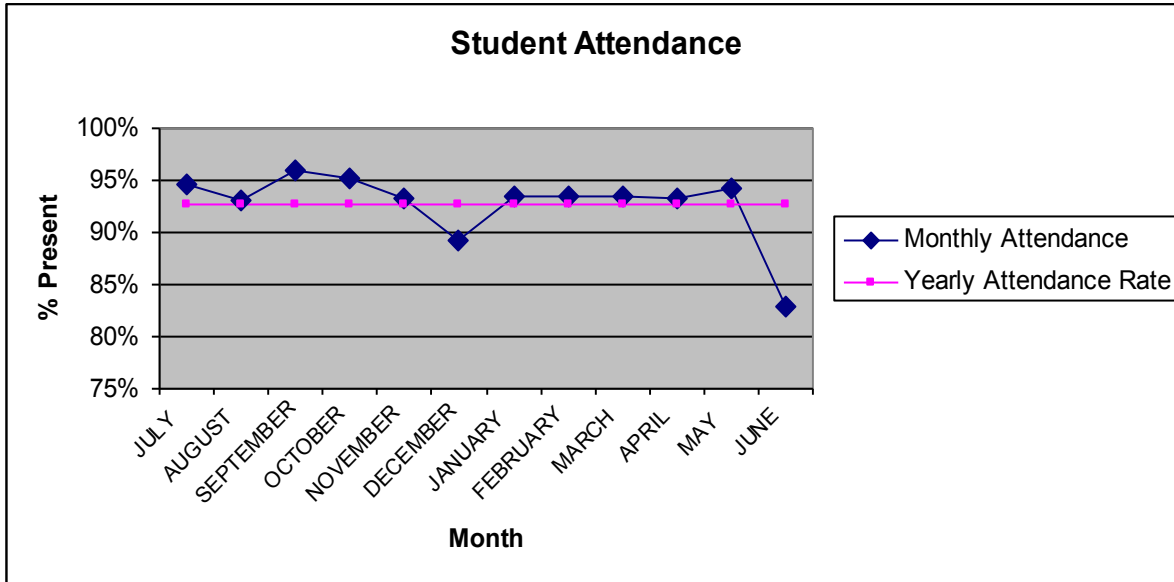


CAHSEE Improvement

Last year, the CAHSEE pass rate for 10th graders at Manual Arts jumped up 11 percentage points from 37% to 48%. Yet, there is vast potential to greatly increase that pass rate further since 66% passed the ELA section and 67% passed the Math section. So there are 18% of students who passed ELA but not Math and 19% of students who passed Math but not ELA. If this is an indicator of future 10th grade classes, then there is a potential 37% of students who are prepared to pass one of the sections and could be provided extra support in the other section beforehand to help them pass both sections on their first attempt and overcome this hurdle toward graduation.

Attendance Potential

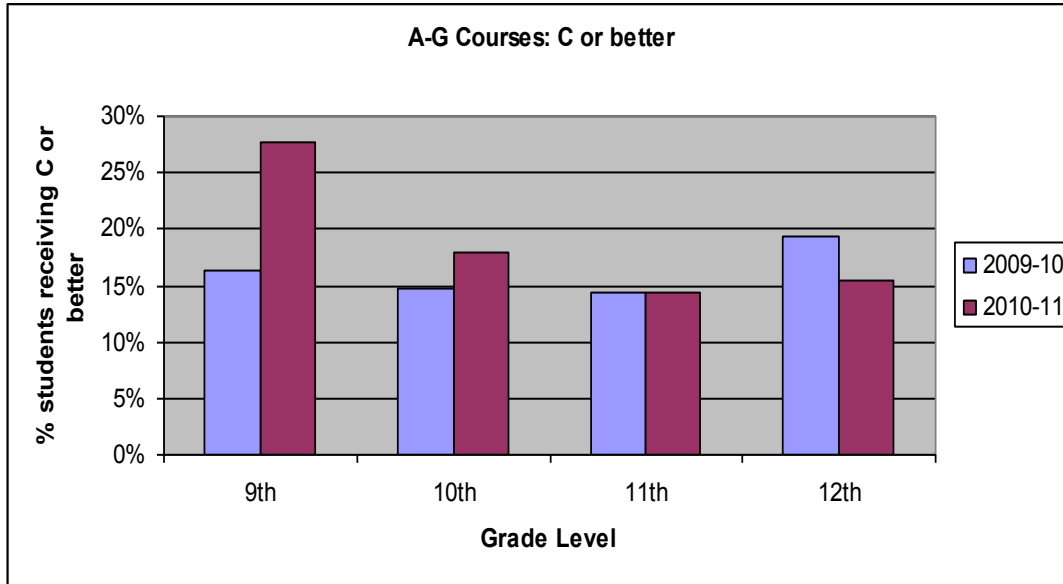
The overall attendance rate for the 2010-11 school-year was 92.7%. Interestingly, monthly attendance beat the overall yearly attendance rate for 10 out of the 12 months.



Promising 9th Grade Data

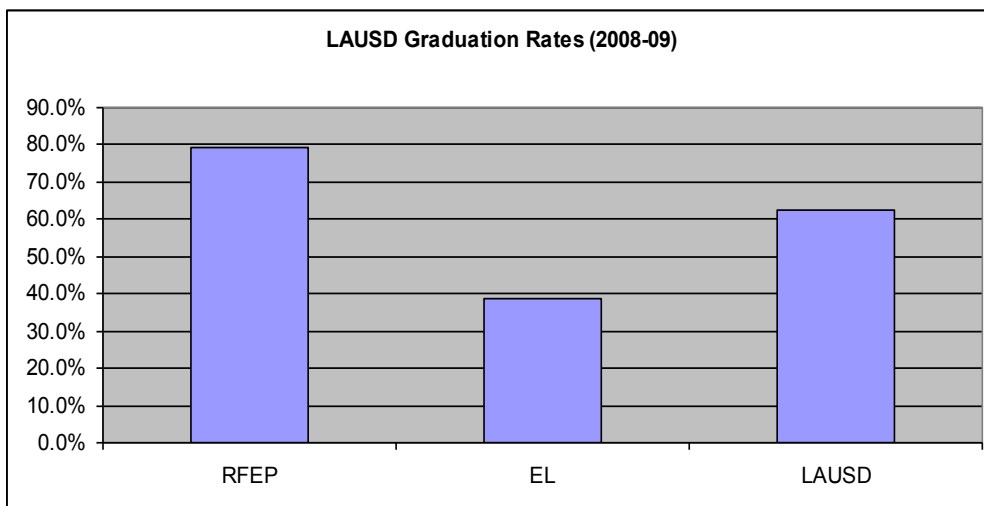
Last school-year (2010-11) was the inaugural year of the new 9th grade house, termed the Freshman Prep Academy (FPA). As a result, the percentage of retained 9th graders (first time 9th graders who did not meet all credit requirements to advance to 10th grade status by the end of the school year) dropped 11%, compared to the year before. Also, the percentage of 9th graders in A-G courses receiving a grade of “C” or higher rose significantly.

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Graduation Rate

The Four Year Cohort Graduation Rate last year was 48%, down from 51% the year before. Addressing the aforementioned data points will have a positive effect on increasing this graduation rate. For example, RFEP students graduate at a much higher rate than English Learners.



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Reviewing these various points of data, the following areas all demonstrate significant gaps that this plan addresses:

- Increasing achievement for our African American students
- Increasing achievement for our English Language Learners
- Increasing achievement for our Students with Disabilities
- Increasing the attendance rate
- Increasing the graduation rate

Qualitative Data

We studied current school practices to find why student achievement is so low and found the following:

- A strong inclination to simply use the textbook as the syllabus, going chapter by chapter without building up toward anything meaningful
- Lack of pedagogical variety, mostly relying on direct instruction that promotes passivity and boredom amongst students
- Rigid pacing plans that do not allow for re-teaching and student revision
- Infrequent checking for understanding or misconceptions to then adjust to meet student needs

These data trends are not unique to Manual Arts High School and Muir Middle School. They can be seen in many schools within LAUSD, particularly in communities reflecting similar demographics. According to a recent study funded by the Gates Foundation, 47 percent of students who drop out of school said that “classes were not interesting,” 69 percent were “not inspired to work hard,” and 81 percent claimed that their chances of staying in school would have improved if there had been “opportunities for real world learning.” Highlighting the importance of meaningful curriculum and instruction, only 35 percent said they dropped out because they were “failing in school” (Bridgeland, Dilulio, and Morison, 2006).

The high school dropouts in that study clearly experienced high levels of alienation from their school environments. Teachers cannot design measures of change in classrooms without comprehending their students first. When a teacher recognizes the humanity in each student, then a dialogue, or, as Freire refers to it, “actors in intercommunication” (Freire, 1970) can be initiated. This relationship amongst students and teachers is vital. Darder explains that if “students are to become competent in the democratic process, they must be given the opportunities to experience it actively as it gradually becomes part of their personal history.” Students who are not engaged in a humanizing dialogue with their teachers are trapped in those classroom spaces and conditioned into a state of dependency on a system that they do not understand and are unable to influence. They lack the critical skills necessary to participate and the social and self-empowerment to make their needs, interests, and concerns heard (Darder, 1991).

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Our school team believes in analyzing the myriad data available through both qualitative and quantitative sources to inform instructional practices and drive a plan that increases academic achievement, increases teacher effectiveness, and invites community collaboration into a functional and sustainable school that serves the community of South Central with equitable access to quality education that prepares children for college and careers.

In looking at these different points of data, we have found there are islands of excellence that can be expanded into whole-school sustainability. We will model our school design on the current successes by increasing equitable access to the same quality practices that show positive data trends. We have identified the following 5 immediate priorities focused around research-based innovation that is student centered and community inclusive.

Priority #1: Safety – *Ensuring that all of our students are able to learn in the safest, most nurturing environment.*

Our parents want to know that their children are being taken care of and taught in a school that is safe, free from violence, and supports students' healthy physical, social, and emotional development. In order to achieve this priority, USES will examine current data to see where safety support systems can be improved. This includes examining practices within the classroom, addressing issues of campus culture and positive behavior support, as well as understanding better the community dynamics that bring up safety issues for our students when they are away from school. Our plan for increasing safety includes the following strategies:

- Creating a positive school wide culture where the climate is one of respect for all stakeholders involved in the process of educating our students
- Instituting school wide practices that support student positive behavior support systems, empowering students to take ownership of their behaviors in a way that promotes their academic success and resolves conflict effectively
- Partnering with local organizations and initiatives such as the South LA Building Health Communities initiative, the Safe Passages program, the Brotherhood Crusade, the G.R.Y.D. program, our elementary and middle school feeder campuses, local school police as well as our local LAPD precinct to ensure that students are safe coming to and returning from school
- Providing student support services such as drug and gang prevention counseling, that empower students to be healthier and take responsible risks
- Reducing our suspension rate and addressing the behaviors that lead to suspension ahead of time

Priority #2: Attendance – *Creating an educational experience where students want to come to school as much as possible*

As evidenced by the above attendance data, we realize that there are a myriad of reasons why students miss out on so much school. We also realize that students will not be successful if they are not in school to receive the support and education they deserve. This plan addresses what we feel are some of the main causes of low attendance rates based on the data. Our plan for increasing the attendance rate includes the

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following strategies:

- Creating the most engaging and supportive learning environment for students, ensuring that every class has the highest quality instruction for all our students
- Developing multiple opportunities for our students to apply their education to real world contexts
- Coordinating with parents, teachers, and counselors to identify attendance challenges that may arise for our students and provide appropriate services to address them in a timely manner
- Collaboratively develop calendars and schedules that respond to school and community needs to better increase daily student attendance

Priority #3: Graduation Rate – *Ensuring that all of our students are supported throughout their entire high school experience and ready for graduation.*

Having 48% of our students graduate from high school is unacceptable. Our school will do everything to create an experience where students do not accept failure as an option. In supporting all of our students towards graduation, this plan will address the graduation rate with some of the following strategies:

- Intensive academic support for all students within the core content as well as Advisory
- Individualized Learning plans for every student that help all stakeholders, including the students themselves, to track and monitor academic performance data
- Utilizing multiple data sets (grades, attendance, assessments, qualitative feedback from parents and teachers, etc.) to assist in early identification of students at risk of not meeting graduation requirements on time
- Communicating regularly with students and parents about student academic progress in a variety of ways including student led conferences, traditional parent conferences, academic advising, online communication, and regular parent/community forums

Priority #4: Academic Proficiency – *Developing the academic skills and knowledge so that all of our students are proficient in all core content subject areas.*

We want all of our students to achieve academic success. This requires an unwavering commitment to student centered pedagogy and quality instruction. It requires cutting edge and innovative educational practices that prepare students for future career and college opportunities. The entirety of this plan addresses the proficiency of students in all core academic content areas with some of the following strategies:

- Culturally relevant and engaging core curriculum
- Project based curriculum and assessment
- Research based effective instructional and scaffolding practices
- Continual data collection and monitoring to inform our school wide and classroom practices
- Key partnerships that help support and celebrate the academic achievement of our students
- Personalized learning environment where every student is truly known and supported to their full potential

Priority #5 – Collaborating with Parents & Community – *Engaging parents and community members to better and more effectively support our students in school.*

This plan cannot be implemented without the support of our parents and community members. It is with this understanding that we move forward in presenting an alternative view of what education can be if all stakeholders are engaged in meaningful collaboration and dialogue around how best to support students.

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This plan, at every instance, requires our parents to be equal partners in achieving the mission and vision of the School for Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science. This will be achieved through the following strategies:

- Constant communication with parents and community members
- Authentic and multiple opportunities to participate in transparent and collaborative decision making at the school site
- Focus on cultivating positive relationships with parents and community members based on trust and dialogue
- Shared commitments to practices that ensure that our students are at the heart of all dialogue and decision making
- Professional development with local community organizations that increase the capacity of teachers and staff to foster authentic relationships with parents and community to increase collaboration
- Parent/Community training opportunities that build capacity of our parents to effectively become involved in student academic life, school decision making, and educational and community advocacy

A-3. Applicant Team Analysis

To be successful in a new school environment, we will foster democratic leadership and the development of a learning community that can implement this plan, which is focused on a shared mission having internal accountability. By empowering marginalized students, along with their parents, and leveraging dissatisfaction with the status quo into a laboratory of democracy, we can collaboratively overcome challenges, with continual learning and growing conscientiousness. We will replace isolation with support and motivation. Together, we will create a new school community that engages every student in the learning process and, with our growing strength, take control of outside factors, thereby providing every student with an equal opportunity to learn.

Only by collective action, through engaged participation of all stakeholders in imagining our future, can we make the shared decisions that will meet the needs of every student. It has been well documented that school officials often disrespect or disregard minority parents (Noguera, 1999). After creating an alienating climate and further marginalizing the parents they serve, they wonder why attendance at parent-night is so low and conclude that the parents do not care about the education of their children (Kailin, 1999). This can be remedied by not only consciously respecting parents but, more importantly, by providing parents with real power in making meaningful decisions about the school (Noguera, 1999). The creation of a social space for parents, students, community members, teachers, and administrators to gather as equals at regular intervals throughout the school year must be used for democratic experimentation in which true power-sharing exists. School leadership needs to encourage debate and engage in mutual discovery, rather than trying to convince others of predetermined decisions. Parents and students have a valuable viewpoint as victims of systemic racism on what changes need to take place. These gatherings would help similarly-situated parents communally collect their thoughts to come up with effective solutions (Guinier & Torres, 2003). Results previously unimaginable would puncture the status quo. As parents and students take ownership of the school, their motivation and commitment grow. Parental links engrain the school into the community, and social networks form that will enhance the performance of our students. Democracy will open the door toward the elimination of marginalization.

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Through our outreach into the community, we we learned that our schools need to provide families with distinct choices in the education of their children. That is why our Schools for Community Action (SCA) team has designed four separate plans for four distinct small schools on the Augustus Hawkins campus. These four choices resulted from the findings from our community outreach and as we read through the relevant school design literature:

1. Critical Design and Gaming School (C:\DAGS)
2. Community Health Advocates School (CHAS)
3. Responsible Indigenous Social Entrepreneurship School (RISE)
4. The School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science (USES)

The School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science (USES) materialized after examination into several intersecting realities that impact the community of South Central Los Angeles. The multiple environmental and public health concerns that face this community create very real barriers to student learning. The shortage of students pursuing career and postsecondary futures in fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) is creating vacuums of innovation that is needed to address issues of ecological sustainability and public health, particularly in urban settings. This shortage is particularly noticeable in working class communities of color. (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2009) As more of the world's populations continue to move to urban centers like Los Angeles, it will be leaders in these crucial fields that organize communities to creatively address issues of pollution, environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, water and air quality, in a ways that are both economically, socially, and ecologically just and sustainable. It is the convergence of these realities that prompted the below mentioned design team to create the School for Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science (USES).

Our USES design team members, along with the teachers, recent alumni, parents/caregivers, and community members of the greater SCA team, are dedicated to building the powerful and effective learning environment that the youth in our community deserve. Our SCA members have either been raised in the neighborhood or have worked nearly exclusively in the immediate area, including Manual Arts High School (the school to be relieved) and Muir Middle School (our feeder school). Two of the design team members were born and/or raised in the neighborhood surrounding the school, attending all local LAUSD schools. All of the other main contributors of this proposal have served the community in several capacities. Our plans are specific to the community needs of our South Central community, to which we are deeply connected, know well, and value. The members of our USES design team, in collaboration with the greater SCA team, are well positioned to successfully create and implement a new school environment focused on community health advocacy.

Mark Gomez has been teaching social studies in this community for the past seven years, both at the John Muir Middle School campus and currently at Manual Arts. In that time he has explored many opportunities to grow professionally. Sharing insights from his classroom experiences, Mark is a UCLA TEP graduate and has served as a mentor teacher to UCLA teachers in training as well as a faculty advisor for Teach for America. He has been a department chair, SLC lead teacher, GATE co-coordinator, instructional coach, and union chapter chair at his school sites and has facilitated many professional developments. He has also served on the School Site Councils and Shared Decision Making bodies on campus.

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Mark currently serves as Adjunct Faculty in Antioch University's graduate and teacher education program. He teaches the Language Acquisition and Development course, helping teaching candidates and other graduate level students understand the nature of effectively serving our language learning populations in secondary schools. Mark is also certified in gifted and talented education through UC San Diego's joint certification program with LAUSD.

He has successfully applied for grants to augment his classroom instruction such as the Keeping History Alive grant (Azusa Pacific University), Teacher Innovation Grants (LA's Promise), and Teacher Initiated Inquiry Project grant (UCLA). Mark's current work thru the two year UCLA TIIP grant is engaging youth in critical action research, examining and transforming their own communities through an innovative curriculum that combines the use of GIS mapping technologies, web 2.0 and film media, and a critical and participatory understanding of public policy. His work in secondary social science classrooms has been presented at many conferences including AERA, Mt. St. Mary's Critical Teaching in Action, and the Teaching for Social Justice Conferences.

Mark is also currently working with environmental educators across the nation in an online collaborative course offered through Cornell University's Civic Ecology Lab in conjunction with the North American Association for Environmental Education, and Environmental Education Exchange through EECapacity, the EPA-funded national environmental education-training program. Mark is exploring the most recent environmental educational research and contributing to the development of National Guidelines for Excellence in Community Environmental Education alongside a small group of educators from all over the country. Combined with his experience in Outdoor and Adventure education prior to becoming a classroom teacher, Mark is uniquely positioned to assist in the academic operations of the Urban Sustainability and Expeditionary School campus on the Augustus Hawkins campus.

Andrew Terranova graduated from the Center for Teaching Excellence and Social Justice at University of San Francisco. He has taught in LAUSD for the last 8 years—beginning at Westchester High School, and more recently at Manual Arts Magnet and University High School. He has taught the full range of courses within the social studies discipline including World History, US History, Principles of American Democracy, and Economics.

Andrew's passion for the exploration into natural and urban environments began in early adolescence and has stayed with him throughout his life. He is a graduate of the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) as well as an active volunteer community organizer.

For the last decade he has been a volunteer member with the Bus Riders Union and the Community Rights Campaign. Together with these grassroots non-profit organizations, Andrew has built political campaigns that explore the intersections of civil rights, mass transportation, and public health and education. Utilizing the lessons learned in these struggles, Andrew developed and instructed an Urban Ecology and Demography elective class. In this course Andrew's students are able to connect their "lived experiences" within their city to broader campaigns for community service and social justice.

Andrew has maintained a consistent focus on school reform and the task of empowering different stakeholder groups to have greater voice in our schools. As a member of Westchester High School's

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Transition Team, and co-chair of UTLA, he helped bring more site-based autonomy in the school's transition to iDesign. He worked with parents and community members to draft a single-council governance model that involved more stakeholders in decision-making and development of council by-laws.

He has been a leader on campus, serving as an elected member of the Governance Council, coordinator of Service Learning, member of the Literacy Cadre, sponsor of GSA and Taking Action student clubs, and coach of the Varsity Girls Soccer team. He has continuously sought to further his own professional development through fellowships with the UCLA Writing Project, Cal Poly Pomona's Ahimsa Fellowship in Nonviolent Studies, as well as Facing History and Ourselves.

Kevin D'Amato is in his third year teaching Mathematics in LAUSD, currently enrolled in the LAUSD District Intern Program. He has taught Algebra I, Geometry, and intervention courses at Manual Arts High School and currently teaches in the Global Issues Academy of the Social Justice Schools at Central Region High School #16.

Kevin's academic training from William Paterson University focused on Philosophy with a concentration in Mathematics and Logic. Driven by the belief that Mathematics is necessary for developing critically conscious citizens in an increasingly complex world, Kevin is trained in The Algebra Project's Math Curriculum, which uses mathematics as an organizing tool to ensure quality public education for every child. Additionally, Kevin employs cooperative group strategies in the classroom based to ensure that students engage in learning from one another through instructional conversations about content. Currently Kevin serves as a member of the School-Site Decision Making Council and the Behavior Support Team.

Kevin has lived in Los Angeles for over eight years and is a strong advocate of the burgeoning bike culture in Los Angeles, and prior to the recent birth of his daughter, resisted the car culture of Los Angeles, relying primarily on biking and public transportation to get around the city for the vast majority of that time.

Kevin is a long-time activist and organizer in grassroots social justice efforts that range from international solidarity work to focused efforts on local issues like police accountability, immigration policy, and environmental justice. Kevin helped to organize support for the community to advocate against the building of a power plant in Vernon, a working class community of color that already experiences poor air quality. Kevin has also worked on food justice issues in South Los Angeles, supporting urban community gardens like the South Central Farmers and efforts to bring fresh produce to local community markets.

Jazmin Garcia graduated from Manual Arts High School in 2010. During her time there she was a part of the Business, Education, and Specialized Technology (BEST) small learning community. She was also enrolled in the Magnet program. Having those two different experiences on the same campus helped her realize that our education system is very polarized, in the sense that only students which the school feels will succeed get enough support and information about higher education, and the ones with fewer expectations seem to never receive this information.

Jazmin is now in her sophomore year at The Evergreen State College, a liberal arts college in Olympia, Washington. She is the coordinator and founder of a student group on campus, The Educational Revisionist Community. The group focus discussions on educational budget cuts, alternative pedagogies, and critically

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analyzing why it is that our education system has and continues to fail so many of students. Through her experiences as a student and her work in organizing students in her community, she has realized the importance of community-centered schools.

Jazmin spent her first summer home from college with the Schools for Community Action design team (SCA), helping to organize community meetings and illicit community voice the design of a new neighborhood school. Jazmin spent the summer reaching out to her community, engaging neighbors in dialogue around what type of public school the community deserves. During these meetings and community walks she experienced intersecting histories shared in her community. She believes these similar stories should bring us closer together instead of creating rifts in our community or our educational opportunities. She worked and learned from neighbors in the hopes of bringing academic success to future generations.

Jazmin wants to is part of a school that not only offers student centered classes where respect is common between teachers and students, but where community collaboration is also a vital part of the curriculum.

The School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science will work with our partners to further develop and strengthen our curriculum. We will work with our partners in designing a standards and project-based curriculum that incorporates the highest rigor in academic and technical content and skills education (See Section B-1. b. i. Curriculum Development).

A-4. Informational Summary – *See Attached Appendix*

B. INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

Category One: Unwavering Focus on Academic Achievement

B-1. Curriculum and Instruction

B-1 a. Instructional Program

The Instructional Program described herein is an essential component of the school-wide vision that goes beyond the traditional school structure, requiring extensive collaboration between departments and across disciplines. USES will utilize the autonomy granted under LIS Waiver #2, to ensure the successful implementation of sustainability of these school-determined methods to improve pedagogy and student achievement.

Theoretical Underpinnings for Curriculum and Instruction

Our students come to us from a multitude of life experiences, situated within the community as well as the classroom. These past experiences affect attitudes and perceptions of identity, both at the individual and community level. How students define themselves as students, community members, and future adults is important for educators to consider when transforming the unacceptable educational realities and outcomes for our students.

Urban educators face many challenges to providing their students with a quality education. Our schools have been continually and paradoxically situated in reform efforts that fail to yield positive progress for our most underserved students. Many educators and researchers have begun to approach these challenges not from a deficit model, but rather by building upon the existing resources (physical, social, and cultural) that are available to urban schools. At the forefront of this movement are educators that leverage the urban environment as a classroom. This new movement towards incorporating authentic learning experiences situated in urban communities helps to drive student inquiry. Field-based experiences are crucial because learning outside of school engages students in activities situated in real-world cultural contexts. Studies have found that urban students' learning of science content and process improved over time as they participated in community-based urban gardening programs because they saw the value in their work and took ownership over their work. Further studies have found that when urban schools partner with the surrounding community to solve local problems, students are more likely to take to ownership of their learning and tend to be engaged in the scientific process. The Urban Ecology Institute and the Lynch School based out of Boston College have found that field-based learning in the urban context increases student self-efficacy, interest in science and sense of stewardship. (Barnett et al, 2010). These studies also suggest that urban students might be motivated to learn science, as well as other core subjects and achieve at high levels when the curriculum is centered on their interests and involves them actively in the doing of learning within their own community. (Barnett et al, 2010).

This model of education focuses its objectives around the central belief that education should create opportunities for young people to learn about and care for the ecological and social wellbeing of the communities they inhabit. It also serves to reconnect the school with those communities to improve student engagement and participation. By redefining the school site as an integral part of larger community ecology,

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The School Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science (USES) will build relational trust with students, parents, and community stakeholders long absent in many of South Central Los Angeles's public schools. USES will also serve as a site where students learn to address historical and current educational, social, and environmental inequities that currently constitute part of the legacy of South Central Los Angeles as a community.

Instructional Framework

Linked Learning: “Linked Learning transforms students’ high school experience by bringing together strong academics, demanding career and technical education, and real-world experience to help students gain an advantage in high school, postsecondary education, and careers” (ConnectEd). Recognizing that Linked Learning necessitates guidance and collaboration from university partners and coaches, we will be working towards becoming an official Linked Learning campus. With the assistance of Erica Hamilton, teachers will be supported in becoming Linked Learning leaders in this effort. We will provide the four core components of Linked Learning, as specified by Connect Ed:

1) Challenging academic component

Prepare students for success—without remediation—in postsecondary programs. Pathways complement traditional learning with project-based instruction that links to real-world applications.

2) Demanding technical component

Deliver concrete knowledge and skills through a cluster of three or more technical courses.

3) Work-based learning component

Offer opportunities to learn through real-world experiences with partnerships that enhance classroom instruction.

4) Support services

Include counseling and transportation as well as additional instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics to help students succeed with a challenging program of study.

Career Trajectories/Multiple Pathways/Linked Learning for USES include:

- Urban Ecology
- Environmental Sciences
- Urban Planning

Graduates of the School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science will leave our campus having engaged in a rigorous educational experience that provided them with the intellectual tools to understand the complexities of issues facing their local and global community. They will have participated in projects that helped them analyze problems of sustainability in urban settings and through these projects will have gained invaluable skill sets applicable to both successful college and/or career paths. Hands-on experience in various community projects (whether habitat restoration or transforming empty lots into community

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gardens) will enhance students' communication skills and expose them to a range of occupational opportunities. Graduates will USES proficient in reading, writing, speaking, and communication skills, as well as the work habits, confidence, and civic mindedness to use their knowledge to transform their communities into more just and sustainable environments for future generations.

Project Based Learning: Once having built this conceptual framework students can begin to engage in Project Based Learning (PBL) where student inquiry and interest drive the projects they choose to work on. These projects serve as a demonstration of mastery in core content, 21st century skills acquisition, and personal growth. This is achieved in collaboration with community partners that help students gain and utilize the skills necessary to positively impact their environment through service learning projects and internships with professionals in fields that emphasize urban sustainability. These partnerships also provide USES teaching staff with high quality professional development, review of curricular materials, and co-creation of projects to guide student learning. Through these collaborative educational experiences, students are provided with an education that they deserve, one they can utilize to continue on to higher education or immediately seek employment in fields to help transform their communities into more just and sustainable places to live.

Expeditionary Learning: Expeditionary learning is characterized by “long term, multi-disciplinary, open ended inquiries that require collaborative efforts among students and involve academic, service, and physical components. Teams of teachers, supported by extensive professional development during the school year and in summer institutes, design their own expeditions, track students performance through a variety of measures (normally involving rubrics, portfolio assessments and exhibitions of learning), and revise and elaborate them over time.” Schools that implement Expeditionary Learning methods also “modify traditional organizational structures in order to base curriculum in learning expeditions. These adjustments include eliminating tracking, regular planning of blocks of time for expeditionary learning, and professional development time for expeditionary team teachers to meet during the day.” (Ulichny, 2000)

Providing students with experiential learning opportunities through expeditions and community field trips will drive the core academic instruction at The School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences (USES). Expeditionary Learning Experiences (ELEs) offer real world learning opportunities for students to explore themselves, their communities, and the broader environmental, social, and economic challenges they face. ELEs promote student-centered inquiry that drive learning through projects. It is this focus on students that promotes deeper learning through increased engagement and relevance of the curriculum. Schools that have integrated Expeditionary Learning into their instructional approach have often outperformed district schools with similar demographics of underserved student populations. King Middle School in Portland, Maine for instance demonstrated “a steady increase in all discipline areas in student attainment” in comparison to the data before Expeditionary Learning was implemented at the site. In terms of academic growth over time, students “demonstrated the highest gains in scores of any of the District middle schools” in a majority of subject areas. It is important to note that during the study, “the population of LEP students coming from low income, modestly educated parents from all over the world increased by 20%.” (Ulichny, 2000) These powerful learning experiences translate to increased academic achievement for all of our learners, even our students who are most struggling.

USES will provide a progressive alternative to the traditional high school curriculum that is particularly alienating for many students. (McInerney, Smyth, and Down 2010) At the heart of this progressive curriculum

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will be Expeditionary Learning Experiences (ELEs) where students will engage in learning through field based exploration of two principle environments: 1) natural wilderness areas 2) their own community of South Central Los Angeles. The combination of nature based and community based field trip excursions will help students connect their learning to local issues of sustainability to global processes affecting ecological communities worldwide.

Through ELEs into more natural environments, students will develop critical understandings of ecological principles such as adaptation, interdependence, community, competition, and diversity. Research shows that direct encounters with the natural environment contribute to: “(1) an experience- based meaning of nature; (2) a relational ethical perspective; (3) the addition of a fourth perspective to sustainable development; (4) human ecology in practice; (5) sensing the quality of a simple life; and (6) democracy, identity and dwelling.” (Sandall & Öhman 2010) They will also gain deeper insight as to how human interaction helps to shape different ecological environments. Through ELEs in local wilderness settings, students are able to build an appreciation for nature as well as deeper self-confidence. They are able to redefine themselves as active participants in multiple environmental settings. These experiences are often transformational and depending on emphasis can serve not only as authentic learning experiences but also as powerful rites of passage that often are absent in many of our students’ lives.

ELEs within the communities where students live are even more integral in developing a sense of place that has both personal *meaning* and *attachment*, which many scholars have suggested leads to pro-environmental behavior. (Kudryavtsev, Stedman, & Krasny; 2011) Community based learning expeditions offer students the opportunity to connect academic learning to the reality of their daily lives. It re-situates their perspectives of themselves and their communities in a context of ecological processes continually at work and influenced by the actions of a said community. This opens up a space for students, one that fosters deep reflection and critical inquiry into issues of historic patterns of socio-economic inequality, environmental racism, and the legacy of industrial contamination of urban communities. Explorations into their own lived experiences offer students a vision of the diversity (both biological and cultural) within their communities as well as the possibility for new narratives to become reality, ones that emphasize individual and collective empowerment and action that lead towards humane, resilient, and sustainable urban living.

Universal Design for Learning: Over the past 15 years, Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) has developed **UDL** through an ongoing program of research and development (e.g., the National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum ([NCAC])), including the Strategic Reader Project, the Engaging the Text Project, the Thinking Reader Project and the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS) Research & Technical Assistance Centers. At the heart of UDL is recognition of the vast individual differences that exist among students and of the promise of curriculum flexibility for optimizing learning in the face of these differences. In essence, it is a framework for differentiated instruction that utilizes 21st century technology skills to achieve access to the curriculum for all students. For UDL, “Universal” does not mean “one size fits all” but rather that learning designs accommodate the widest possible range of learner needs and preferences. To that end, three central principles serve as the foundation for UDL and for our curriculum and instruction:

- **Provide multiple means of representation** to give learners various ways of acquiring information

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and knowledge

- **Provide multiple means of *expression*** to give learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know
- **Provide multiple means of *engagement*** to tap into learners' interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation.

Integrating UDL into our instructional framework will allow us to provide instruction that is accessible to a wide range of students and truly achieve our core value of student-centered pedagogy. Until recently, it would not have been practical to develop the flexible and educative curricula and tools envisioned by UDL for under-resourced schools because of technological limitations. Similarly, it would not have been practical at these schools to develop highly interactive strategic instruction using the UDL approach. Fortunately, advances in digital technologies now make the development of interwoven UDL tools, texts, content curricula, and strategy-based interventions possible at our school. Reliance on printed materials and scripted curricula with their lack of flexibility and often limiting access raises many barriers to achievement for many students.

Instructional Strategies for Success

Understanding by Design (UBD) – Also referred to as “backwards planning,” the UBD approach to planning instruction starts with the learning objectives for a particular unit and works “backwards” to the assessments that will measure whether or not students have met the learning objectives, to the assignments and activities that will meet students where they are and develop the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the learning objectives, and to the initial prompts and essential questions that begin the learning process for a particular unit (Wiggins, 2005). During our professional development before the start of the school year, USES will use UBD in department and grade-alike teams to develop curriculum and in small groups or as individuals in the development of individual courses.

The UBD approach to instructional planning considers these elements:

W – Ensure that students understand WHERE the unit is headed, and WHY.

H – HOOK students in the beginning and HOLD their attention throughout.

E – EQUIP students with experiences, tools, knowledge, and know-how to meet performance goals.

R – Provide students with numerous opportunities to RETHINK big ideas, REFLECT on progress, and REVISE their work.

E – Build in opportunities for students to EVALUATE progress and self-assess.

T – Be TAILORED to reflect individual talents, interests, styles, and needs.

O – Be ORGANIZED to optimize deep understanding as opposed to superficial coverage.

Culturally Relevant & Responsive Instruction – In addressing the needs of culturally diverse student populations, research has shown that Culturally Responsive teaching effectively increases achievement of students from different ethnicities and cultures. Culturally responsive teaching is defined as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively. It is based on the assumption that when academic knowledge and skills are situated within the lived experiences and frames of reference of students, they are more personally meaningful, have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily and thoroughly (Gay, 2000).

SDAIE/SIOP – Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English creates a clear, researched based road map that allows teachers to reach our English Language Learning population. Although many teachers receive professional development in SDAIE strategies, they often require more support in effective classroom implementation. The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol provides additional means to provide ongoing guidance for teachers, out of classroom personnel, and administration in implementing SDAIE strategies. Through collaborative planning, peer observation, and continual professional development in both of these instructional frameworks, we will ensure that our English Language Learners receive the quality education they need.

Complex Instruction— We view a class of students as a complex system that is not merely the sum of the students, but is a product of the students and their interactions. These interactions among individuals within the system emerge as the result of carefully designed constraints – or rules – and in relation to the environment, resulting in potentially unpredictable approaches to problems and innovative solution paths previously unimagined (Staples, 2008). This focus on student-centered collaboration has implications for both academic and social growth, “including improvement in student self- concept, social interaction, time on task, and positive feelings toward peers” (Cohen et al., 1982; Cook et al., 1985; Hartley, 1977; Ginsburg-Block, Rohrbeck, & Fantuzzo, 2006; Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Addressing potential “status” issues within classrooms helps establish a tone of respect for self and others that is necessary for safe and effective learning environments. Students and teachers see positive effects in “motivation, attitude toward learning, and skills, including work habits, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving abilities” (see, e.g. Bartscher, Gould, & Nutter, 1995; Peck, Peck, Sentz, & Zasa, 1998; Tretten & Zachariou, 1995).

Thinking Maps—Thinking maps create a “common visual language within a learning community for transferring thinking processes, integrating learning, and for continually assessing progress” (Hyerle, 1995). Thinking maps can be used in every subject area to engage students with basic thinking processes such as defining, describing and sequencing and with more in-depth analytical processes such as cause and effect, analogies and comparing/contrasting. Furthermore, we know that a great number of teachers from John Muir Middle School (feeder school) utilize thinking maps to help students access content and organize ideas; therefore, students will be familiar with thinking maps and continue using them to explore new and more complex content. Incoming students will come with a foundation from their prior education experience in elementary followed by middle school that cannot be ignored and when built upon, further enhances learning capabilities for students.

Content-area and academic vocabulary instruction – Research demonstrates that the “relation between reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge is strong and unequivocal” (Baker, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 1997) and that direct vocabulary instruction improves reading comprehension and is particularly important for struggling students and English language learners (Hill and Flynn, 2006). That said, not all vocabulary instruction is effective. The USES design team has experience with the direct vocabulary instruction based on Kate Kinsella’s research and work and will share this experience and knowledge (as well as the associated materials) through professional development sessions and direct support throughout the school year. This instruction introduces new words through engaging students’ prior knowledge (through using examples, images and metaphors connected to their lived experience), and provides a student with multiple opportunities to use the words.

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Socratic Seminar— Currently used by USES design team members in English and Social Studies classes, with varying skill levels, Socratic Seminars support a structured discussion protocol for students to engage in meaningful dialogue about a text, issue or idea. Socratic Seminar often starts with very structured discussion norms to allow for students to feel comfortable with contributing to discussion. Through modeling and practice students are able to use Socratic Seminars for analytical and complex dialogue. Also, by using Socratic Seminar for whole-class discussion students are able to draw on their prior experience and their interactions with other readers and writers to continue to make meaning of complex texts, issues or ideas. Students are responsible for listening and speaking to each other to give and receive input and to elaborate or challenge ideas discussed by the whole group. Since Socratic Seminars are formal discussions, students practice adjusting their volume and tone for an academic discussion. This also provides students practice with using academic language to write analytical and evaluative questions to bring to the discussion. The use of Socratic Seminar also supports student-centered pedagogy because instead of a teacher-centered question to start the discussion, students bring their own questions to discuss.

Rubrics— Rubrics and academic expectations will be articulated and enforced in every classroom. Student work will be posted with rubrics attached to demonstrate for students and parents, the academic expectations of various tasks and assignments. Rubrics will also facilitate the common scoring process for common assessments to guide teacher discussion in professional learning communities. Teachers will agree on common rubric formats to support common expectations across the curriculum.

Online Student Learning & Teacher Collaboration- Educational practices are shifting to incorporate new mobile technologies, social networking platforms, self-directed learning in online spaces, and critical approaches to understanding multiple forms of media. Our school will develop 21st century literacy skills within all core content areas courses. Teachers will utilize effective technologies that students are already familiar with to engage them in the curricula, further develop students' abilities with these tools academically, communicate timely feedback, and create spaces for deeper and more meaningful learning beyond the walls of the classroom. Through these instructional practices, teachers, students, and parents will become more "connected" in the process of learning no matter where they are or what time of day.

B -1 b. Core Academic Curriculum

USES is proposing a locally-determined core academic curriculum, utilizing the autonomy granted by LIS Waiver #3, that will meet all District and state requirements, while further personalizing instruction to meet the individual needs of our students. Community expeditions will drive inquiry projects, engaging students in highly relevant curriculum, with an embedded focus on local sustainability, and supporting academic content mastery.

In creating a rigorous academic curriculum for all students, our school will draw upon the California State Content standards to create the foundation for all classroom instruction. All departments will create standards based pacing plans, units, and assessments that allow for maximum collaboration and vertical alignment so that students are able to build upon each previous year's knowledge and skill base. A strategic focus on academic literacy development across the curriculum will help ensure integration of reading, writing, and technological skills in every core content class. In addition to academic content standards, innovative and adaptive environmental education standards created by the *California Environmental*

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Protection Agency will be incorporated into our core curriculum. Year long urban ecology curricular units or modules will also be implemented, adapted, and further developed in collaboration with *Loyola Marymount University's Urban Ecology* department. All core content teachers will be able to use the curricular materials developed through the *Education and the Environment Initiative (EEI)* to augment and align core curriculum with environmental & urban sustainability concepts and principles.

Career & College Preparatory – In addition to standards driven instruction, our students will benefit from an educational experience that incorporates 21st century skills training throughout the core curriculum. With our university partners, *LMU* and *UCLA* (See section B-2), our school will develop career and college pathways in the fields of urban planning, environmental science, and urban ecology. Our university partners will help provide technological training, internship opportunities, and teacher professional development around the pathway course offerings. In developing these STEM pathways, the USES campus will follow *Linked Learning* guidelines that translate to students' successful preparation in these fields.

USES will offer core classes to every student to ensure all A thru G requirements are met upon graduation. All staff members will instruct from a pedagogy centered on the belief that every student will achieve success at our school and build upon these successes in future college or technical career endeavors.

Project Based – An integral component of all core classes will be instructional emphasis on Project based Learning (PBL). In Project-Based Learning (PBL) multiple shifts take place. The action moves from the teacher lecturing to the student creating, the nature of learning shifts from memorization to discovery, and the classroom transforms into a lively forum for sharing ideas and asking questions. Research shows that relevant PBL facilitates student engagement across all student groups, including struggling students, English Language Learners and gifted students. (Barron, Scwhartz, Bransford 1998) Engagement occurs through the high levels of differentiation and individual attention that are possible when students work in groups to complete a project. Furthermore, research demonstrates that within highly-structured, teacher-facilitated student group work, students learn from one another, and students learning English as a second language are provided with multiple opportunities to practice language use in a smaller group, less formal group of peers (compared to whole-class instruction). (Waxman, TELez 2002) The data from our relief campus suggests that when PBL is integrated into core curricular classes such as math through programs like *Algebra Project*, in which Manual Arts students in 9th grade Algebra I classes using the *Algebra Project* curriculum saw an increase of 140% in CST scores from the previous year without implementation of the curriculum.

The School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science Thematic CORE courses

9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
Essential Questions:			
PARTS & WHOLES	ROLES	GOALS	POWERFUL

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<p>What is a Community?</p> <p>What are the parts/systems of a community?</p>	<p>Who are the members of our community and what are their roles and responsibilities?</p>	<p>What does our community need to be healthy?</p> <p>What can we provide to the community to achieve healthier and sustainable realities?</p>	<p>What is an Action plan?</p> <p>How can action plans be sustained?</p>
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Grade 9 Schedule

Per. 1,3,5,7	Per. 2,4,6,8
English 9 A/B	Algebra 1 A/B
Art/Music or Garden Mosaics	Geometry A/B
Ecological Systems Thinking/ Earth Systems (Science)	Community Sustainability Inquiry (Geography A/B)
P.E.	Health

Grade 10 Schedule

Per. 1,3,5,7	Per. 2,4,6,8
English	Algebra 2
Biology/Chem	World History
P.E.	Community Service Learning
Spanish	Art/Music or CAHSEE intervention

ELA & Algebra Block: Using the Algebra Project Curriculum, students will engage in examination of the community and how the language of math is present throughout the community. They will develop this linguistic approach to mathematical expression, as well as narrative

ELA & Algebra 2: Continuing to utilize the Algebra Project curriculum as well as building off of the 9th grade literacy development in both core subjects, students in ELA and Algebra 2 blocks will analyze representations of phenomena in their community. This will include examination into media and

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development in their English classes.

Geometry, Art, & Garden Mosaics Block:

Students will use geometric principles and combine them with concepts of sustainability to design gardens on campus or in the community that promote new visions of healthy ecologies. Examples could include urban sculpture and agricultural gardens on campus and in the community.

Science and Geography Block: Students learn how to analyze different ecological systems for sustainability and then generate data thru field expeditions in the community and beyond. Students will then utilize GIS mapping technologies to help present data findings on the research they have gathered.

P.E. & Health Block: Students combine theory and practice of healthy and sustainable lifestyles. This will include examining access to food, water, and shelter.

mathematical representations of community phenomena, as students develop critical media and math literacies further.

Science and Social Studies Block: Students will combine their studies around biological and ecological systems with world historical events to analyze the present day realities of globalization and urbanization in the context of local sustainability here in Los Angeles. This will be done through interdisciplinary projects where students will create biological diversity and sustainability assessment reports.

Spanish & Art/Music Block: Students will be encouraged to explore different cultures practices and understandings of community and sustainability. This cultural exploration will be primarily through language, music, and art as these are often the transmitters of deep cultural knowledge.

PE and Community Service Learning

Block: Students will build off of their projects in the 9th grade around sustainable and healthy community and individual practices. They will use a critical awareness of community issues to collaborate with university volunteers around a community service-learning project.

Grade 11 Schedule

Per. 1,3,5,7	Per. 2,4,6,8
Amer. Literature	U.S. History
Chemistry/Physics	Trig/Math Anal
Urban Ecology 1	Internship
Beginning GIS	Spanish

Grade 12 Schedule

Per. 1,3,5,7	Per. 2,4,6,8
Composition/Lit.	Econ/Govt.
Statistics	Community GIS
Urban Ecology 2	Internship
Spanish	Senior Capstone

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English and Social Studies Block:

Students will be engaged in a rigorous study of contemporary America's evolution, connecting it to the local historical and present day landscape. By aligning history content standards with relevant literature of the time, students will experience an interdisciplinary look at the interconnectedness of national and local history, and its impact on the sustainability of the community.

Science and Math Block: Students will engage in a natural aligning, interdisciplinary approach to learning chemistry and mathematical principles and concepts. Since chemistry necessitates so many fundamental math skills (proportions, percents, simple statistics, and logarithms); this interdisciplinary core will natural compliment each other.

Urban Ecology and Internship Block: Students will build off of their previous studies in core content areas to study issues of community health and sustainability. They will link their studies to internships with different community organizations that are engaging in work around these issues currently in the local community.

Beginning GIS and Spanish Block:

Students will expand their knowledge of both the Spanish language and the many different cultures interconnected by the language through the use of geospatial technologies. This block will help to build students' skills in spatial understanding as well as their abilities to use technological tools such as GIS mapping to understand places and cultures.

English and Social Studies Block: This core block will institute a focus on rigorous academic writing across both disciplines. Seniors will be able to different writing genres to critical analyze political and economic theories and their influence on modern day issues of sustainability, environmental, and social justice.

Statistics and Community GIS Block:

Building off the foundations of GIS mapping, students will collect and analyze data from community expeditions using geospatial technologies and statistical quantification. The combination of skills taught in this block allow for a high level of rigorous study along the career and college pathway of Urban Planning. Students will be adequately trained to conduct serious research alongside university students and professors. The products of this research will inform action plans around community issues of health and sustainability.

Urban Ecology and Internship Block:

Students will further their knowledge and skills to position themselves to seriously pursue postsecondary and career opportunities in the fields of Environmental Science and Urban Ecology.

Spanish and Senior Capstone Block:

This block will focus on the culmination of our students' time at the USES campus. Collaboration will center on effective and powerful presentation skills. These two courses will prepare students to give professional presentations around the summation of their four years of study. An emphasis on bilingual demonstrations of academic speech and writing will further provide students with marketable and relevant skills, as well as recognize the power

in sharing knowledge with their community.

Curricular Development

Our teaching staff and administration will work with several partners in designing a standards and project based curriculum that incorporates the highest rigor in academic and technological content and skills education. At the foundation of our curriculum will be exploration of community and self to further understand key environmental and ecological principles, as well as applications of sustainable practices in varying fields of study.

The School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science (USES) will work with Loyola Marymount University's *Center for Urban Resilience and Ecological Solutions* and UCLA's Luskin School of Public Affairs *Center for Innovation and Urban Planning* to develop project based curricular experiences that partner our students with undergraduate and graduate students to examine local issues of sustainability. These projects will center on skills development, student-inquiry, data collection and presentation, and innovative problem solving.

This curricular collaboration will begin by exploring existing curriculum currently being implemented in schools around the nation, developed by the Urban Ecology Institute (UEI). Collaboration with LMU's CURES department, a regional branch of UEI will center on teacher training on utilization of curricular materials. Further collaboration will focus on curricular adaptation and best instructional practices that most meet the needs of our students.

This partnership around curricular development has already begun and will continue throughout the opening of the USES. Our university partners will provide professional development trainings in the spring and summer of 2012 prior to the opening of the campus. These trainings will focus on assisting teachers with implementation existing curricula developed by UEI focused on project based instruction as well as curricular development for the upcoming year, logistical planning of collaborative projects, and alignment to key academic and industry standards of environmental & urban sustainability. Other professional development opportunities will be scheduled throughout the year based on assessment of the needs of our faculty. College students and faculty within these programs will act as mentors to our students as well as trainers to our faculty. Our partners will also help identify relevant training opportunities and conferences, as well as possible supplemental funding, that will aid in developing a solid environmental sustainability curriculum that is culturally relevant to the students and community of South Central Los Angeles.

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The first three years of curricular development will focus on effectively utilizing local community based expeditions to drive authentic Project and Inquiry Based Learning in the core content areas. After the initial three years, USES will develop a more extensive program that utilizes extended Expeditionary Learning Experiences in more remote wilderness areas to further expose students to in-depth study of Environmental Science and Ecological Sustainability. Further curricular development will look at the potential to become a certified and accredited member of the schools for Expeditionary Learning network. The campus may also seek to become accredited by the Association of Experiential Education. The staff, administration, school-School Leadership council, and all other stakeholders and partners will assess these potential campus goals. A timeline and action plan will then be developed and implemented to achieve these memberships and accreditations. (See Curriculum Development Appendix)

B -1 c. - WASC Accreditation

WASC Initial Visit Process

During August of 2012 the School Leadership Council will review the *Conditions of Eligibility* to be considered for WASC Affiliation as part of its ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the PSC plan. By September 30, 2012 the principal will submit at *Request for WASC Affiliation* form with the \$150 application fee. The school will then be provided with an *Initial Visit School Description* form that requests information regarding the purposes and operation of the school and evidence of the school's status in relation to the conditions of eligibility. During professional development time as part of the end of the semester reflection process, the faculty will review WASC's *Conditions of Eligibility Rubric*, complete the *Initial Visit School Description* form and gather the appropriate documentation. Upon receipt of the forms, the Executive Director of WASC will schedule a two member, one-day school visit, after which they will make a recommendation regarding the school's readiness for initial affiliation which include the following possibilities and related responses by the school:

- *Not granted affiliation* means that one or more of the conditions was not met. In the extremely unlikely event that this is the recommendation, the principal will call an emergency meeting of the School Leadership Council and faculty to address the Conditions of Eligibility not met, and resubmit for a second visit ASAP.
- *Candidacy* means that the school qualifies for accreditation and will be directed to submit a first-year progress report indicating progress being made in meeting the recommendations of the initial visiting committee. After submitting this report, the school remains in candidacy status until the visiting committee, and the school must apply for full accreditation within 1 – 3 years (depending on the recommendation of the committee).
- *Initial Accreditation* means that all conditions of eligibility have been met to the satisfaction of the visiting committee, and the school must apply for full accreditation within 1 – 3 years (depending on the recommendation of the committee).

B-1 d. – Addressing the needs of *all* students

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The data on the area high schools and feeder campuses shows that our student population will be entering our school with a wide variety of learning needs that will include English language and standard English language learners, students with special education needs and/or very low skills and gifted students who need additional challenges to grow as learners. In order to meet the diverse needs of our students, we have developed a plan that provides for individualized, early and consistent supports for every student.

Through a strong feedback loop (timely feedback based on continual data monitoring analysis), USES maintains constant awareness of student progress to identify student needs and develop concrete responses to them. In doing this, our school responds to the fact that struggling learners are often confined to an educational regimen of low-level activities, rote memorization of discrete facts, and mind-numbing skill-drill worksheets. They have minimal opportunities to actually use what they are learning in a meaningful fashion.

Utilizing school-wide feedback systems, we will balance personalized interactions built on student teacher relationships with innovative 21st century communication technologies that many of our students are already immersed in. This approach will provide continual and timely feedback that empowers students to master content, self assess, and respond to their own individual academic needs. Our approaches to addressing the needs of all learners involves students and parents/caregivers in the goal of improving students' success through engagement, assessment, ownership, and empowerment throughout their entire USES experience.

Meeting the needs of English Language Learners, Special Education students, and Gifted and Talented students will be done by using adaptive pedagogical practices. Adaptive pedagogy ensures effective classrooms where "teachers use diverse strategies ranging from whole class lecture and recitation to guided inquiry, small group work, discussions, independent work, projects, experiments, book and internet research, constructions of models and products, use of technology and the arts for accessing and expressing ideas, and teacher interaction with individuals and small groups. In these classrooms, students attend to short-term tasks as well as long-term projects and are engaged in activities aimed at the mastery of facts as well as in-depth understanding."(Darling-Hammond, 2002)

Based on our emphasis on inclusion through the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), English Language Learners and students with disabilities will be more organically incorporated into the "mainstream" (General Education) classes.

In meeting the needs of our diverse student populations, our plan incorporates the latest research based instructional strategies and pedagogies to ensure that all of our students regardless of academic level upon entrance, achieve proficiency on their way towards graduation and beyond.

Personalization – Key to understanding the needs of every student on our campus will be an environment of *personalization*. The mere size of our small school structure offers a context for the personalization of the learning experience but is not in and of itself the sole requirement to achieve personalization. Although small structure is integral to the personalization of education for students, our plan recognizes that although the "educational research has suggested that, all else equal, small schools tend to produce significantly better results for students. These results are the most pronounced for students who are typically least well served by traditional schools. Yet it is important to recognize that "small" is not enough. While it is true that small schools are generally more successful than large schools, smaller size is only a part of the answer." (Darling-Hammond 2002)

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Teachers and students will be encouraged to develop relationships that extend beyond the classroom and transcend the typical student adult relationship that too often creates situations that lead to disengagement from the high school experience for many of our students. Our school will work hard to ensure that there are multiple opportunities for these type of mentoring relationships to be created so that every child has some adult figure on campus that they can go to for both academic and social and emotional support. This *personalization* work will begin from the very first meeting of staff and faculty. Through their first expeditionary experience as high school students, freshmen will have multiple opportunities throughout their off site high school orientation to get to know the faculty in a more intimate setting than the classroom is often viewed as. Learning will begin immediately through experiential activities designed to get students to connect learning to the real world. Yet these experiential activities will also focus on community building rituals and relationship building exercises that focus on effective communication and trust. This set of first experiences will create a collaborative context that will be developed and sustained throughout the remainder of the academic year.

Advisory will also serve as a means to personalize the educational experience of the students. Through advisory activities that build the capacity of students to take their education into their own hands, teachers will act as advisors and work with students to develop *Individual Learning Plans* (ILPs) for all of their advisory students. The *Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)* is an important tool that students, teachers and support staff will use in conjunction with the students' parent(s)/guardian(s) to guide instruction and support the learning of each student at the School for Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science. Different from traditional graduation plans, or special education IEPs, the School for Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science ILP is a portfolio notebook that will be created on the student's first day at the school and conclude with the student's final (senior) exhibition that reflects his or her experience at USES. We expect that each ILP will change and grow with the student, and thus include different elements as the student develops. However, all ILPs will share the following core elements: a graduation plan that will be updated by the student (with the supervision of the advisor) each semester; a S.M.A.R.T. goal setting, completion and reflection log; all school- wide assessments; student analysis of his/her learning styles and strengths and challenges; and documentation of and reflections on participation within core academic area projects. The ILP will be maintained as part of our Advisory program and supervised by the student's advisor with the support of each grade-level team and the school counselor. The ILP will also be part of every parent meeting, and parents will be part of the student's goal setting and completion.

Project Based Culturally Relevant Curriculum – Research shows that PBL often succeeds in engaging our most difficult learners. Several studies have documented positive changes for teachers and students in motivation, attitude toward learning, and skills, including work habits, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving abilities (see, e.g. Bartscher, Gould, & Nutter, 1995; Peck, Peck, Sentz, & Zasa, 1998; Tretten & Zachariou, 1995). Interestingly, students who may struggle in traditional instructional settings have often been found to excel when they have the opportunity to work in a PBL context, which better matches their learning style or preference for collaboration and activity type (see, e.g., Boaler, 1997; Meyer, Turner, & Spencer, 1997; Rosenfeld & Rosenfeld, 1998). Through working on collaborative projects with other peers in mixed ability groups, college students, and faculty members our students will learn from each other and experience multiple opportunities to demonstrate success within and beyond their classrooms.

We would like to stress that our instructional model, with its incorporation of Project Based Learning, Expeditionary Learning, and student driven inquiry, is a curriculum inherently responsive to variations in

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student need. Each student at the School of Expeditionary Learning and Urban Sustainability will pursue an individual learning plan that supports his or her unique educational requirements.

Teachers will apply instructional strategies proven to work with students with diverse learning styles. (see section B-1 a. Instructional Program)

Students of Poverty – Although many of our students deal with issues of poverty, this does not indicate a change in instructional approach. Working class students do not learn any differently than those of middle and upper socio-economic backgrounds. Instead what is needed to address issues of poverty; i.e. high absence rate, health problems, lack of housing, lack of home work space, or any number of unforeseen difficulties a student from this background may experience is to provide added support and services. The Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action campus will work with community based health organizations like St. John's Clinic to provide services such as free health screenings, access to family planning services, as well as social and emotional well being programs.

In addition USES will depend upon the personalization offered through our Advisory program, and the support of our school counselor to facilitate the attention and flexibility needed to help students cope with issues related to poverty while meeting the expectations of quality work and participation.

Finally, the flexibility offered through our internship/volunteer/work-study program gives students who must work to help support the family an opportunity to integrate their work experience with their academic experience and not have to choose one over the other.

Students with Disabilities – All students included in the USES community, particularly RSP students and SDC students will benefit from the schools philosophy of teaching the whole child, with close monitoring from their team of teachers, access to the on-campus physical and mental health services and academic intervention programs. USES will also take every measure to personalize the learning experience of each student with special needs, through a focus on art and technology, and through building on the strengths and responding to the needs of each student with the development of an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP). For all students, USES will be a place where they are well known by a common set of adults who will track their progress and support their transitions within high school and beyond. USES is committed to developing students who are ready and able to advocate on their own behalf and on behalf of their communities. USES will provide all students with the chance to apply their standards-based learning to innovative solutions to community health and social work issues. Collaboration between general education, special education teachers, and career partners will insure student success (See Appendix E: Service Plan for Students with Disabilities).

Gifted Students – High performing students often lack motivation when work becomes unchallenging. When instruction is slowed down to meet the needs of other students, high performing gifted students become disengaged. Project Based Learning offers high achieving students choice within the curriculum. Expeditionary Learning experiences allow for high achieving students to take leadership roles as they work together with their small teams to accomplish challenging outcomes often set by the group themselves. Student inquiry offers more choice within a curriculum as well as opportunities for teachers to differentiate instruction. Heterogeneous collaborative grouping allows students to not only assist other lower performing

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students, but creates spaces for high achieving students to rethink certain assumptions they may have and engage others in problem solving, allowing them to learn from other students in the group.

Identification of these high achieving students will be the first step in addressing their specific needs as learners. This identification will take place through previous GATE program placement/identification, previous CST scores, marks in previous courses, and teacher/counselor recommendations. We will also identify students who need extra challenges through beginning of the year assessments. Once identified, students will be classified as “accelerated” in their Individualized Learning Plans, and will work with their advisor and parent/guardian to set appropriate goals for the school year.

Other specific classroom strategies that USES will implore are an emphasis on teacher understanding and application of differentiated instructional techniques and providing depth and complexity within the core curriculum. Gifted students often need different instructional approaches that allow them to have choice within the curriculum while simultaneously encouraging them to explore subject matter at a level of depth and complexity suited for their cognitive abilities. Teacher training in this approach will be crucial in serving these students.

Opportunity for enrichment as well as enrollment in AP courses will also be necessary to ensure equitable challenge for our high achieving students. This will require teachers to offer advanced placement sections of the courses, increasing the level of rigor appropriate to requirements.

English Language Learners & Standard English Learners (EL & SEL) - EL students are one of our largest and fastest growing populations that remain underserved. Standard English Learners are also a substantial population that needs strategic support in developing their academic English proficiency towards mastering core content standards. Both of these populations need structured support and intervention in academic language development. Research based instructional strategies in language development have proven to address the needs of these and other types on language learner populations.

Although there are many types of English Language Learners that need differentiated support, some of the greatest numbers of EL students are “Long-Term English learners.” These students are defined by the remaining non-proficiency in English, “despite many years in our schools and despite being close to the age at which they should be able to graduate.” (Olsen, 2010) Along with students who have recently immigrated to the U.S., our total population of EL students of varying levels will range somewhere in the number of 200 students, or close to half of our school population.

Understanding that language is both primarily a social tool used to accomplish tasks in the world as well as learning is fundamentally a social process, our teachers will draw from socio-linguist and socio-cultural theory to promote learner agency for our EL students. We will develop multiple opportunities for students to interact and learn from each other. Mixed ability grouping will allow students to learn from experts (native speakers), as well as students of equal or less understanding. USES will work hard to support EL students in a way that reverse trends of social segregation and linguistic isolation. Classrooms will be interactive sites that produce the multiple dialogues we know help students decode, comprehend, and practice second languages (Walqui & Van Lier, 2010)

In addition to a focus on opportunities for highly participatory learning, we will provide a rigorous curriculum that both challenges and supports language acquisition and content understanding. Lessons will

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be specifically designed to incorporate high challenge with high support. In time the support will be lessened but never the academic rigor. Instruction for EL & SEL will always be amplified, not simplified. This approach to *scaffolding* recognizes that the ultimate goal in teaching students to become proficient in a language happens when the students' autonomy is achieved through the gradual removal of support structures. In this sense, EL & SEL learners will be encouraged to find their own voice and take initiative in proposing, planning, constructing, and reflecting on subject area tasks. This autonomy signifies an emergence, a hand over of control of their own learning. Through continual challenge and appropriate support, our students will achieve regardless of incoming language proficiency. (Walqui & Van Lier, 2010)

Respecting the cultural diversity our students come to us with, as well as its impact on learning, USES will build upon the prior knowledge of our students. This includes the knowledge and skills they have developed in their native language. Although development of academic English will be the primary goal of all classes, students will not be discouraged from using their native language to assist them in their development of academic English as there is no empirical research showing that banning students' native language from the learning context is beneficial. Contrarily the evidence suggests that prohibiting it can be detrimental to students (Walqui & Van Lier, 2010). Furthermore, USES believes that bilingualism is an asset, especially in the South Central community.

Our teachers will utilize this current educational, learning, and language theory to inform practices that allow EL & SEL participate to the highest extent in a core academic program that will ensure access and eventual mastery in the content curriculum. Through the use of research based, common instructional strategies in all core classes, teachers will allow for

- SDAIE/SIOP strategies
- Scaffolding
- Project and task based instruction
- Interactive Notebooks
- Thinking Maps
- Building on Prior Knowledge
- Multisensory Instruction and the use Realia

Beyond their general education classroom experience, English Language Learners will receive the following supports:

- Early and accurate identification and placement (CELDT Initial Assessment)
- English Learner (EL) teacher position –will work similar to a special education resource specialist position for the 20-30 students who require English language development instruction. This teacher will work within the core content classrooms and support English learners during morning lab hours. In addition this teacher will facilitate CELDT testing, and monitor the progress of non-redesignated students identified for the *Response to Intervention* process.
- Individualized Learning Plan will include reclassification goals (CELDT annual testing) set with the student, his/her advisor and the student's parent/guardian.
- Regular collaboration between the EL teacher and general education teachers.

Research on English Language Learners, students with special needs, and at-risk students confirms that authentic, relevant, project-based instruction is vital to engaging these marginalized populations (Olsen,

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2010). This approach is essential to ensuring equity and access to a rigorous, A-G curriculum for all of our students. We anticipate that our design will be demanding for teachers, but the ultimate benefit is the students. USES will also plan professional development on the implementation of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model (Echevarria, Vogt and Short, 2008) to support ELL students.

B-1 e. Vertical Articulation

Through the interlinked collaboration within the Augustus Hawkins *Schools for Community Action* campus, we will be able to orchestrate an integrated vertical articulation plan that maximizes student choice and paves the otherwise rocky transition from middle school to high school. Other campuses that do not share coordinated initiatives for vertical articulation and family awareness have led to parent and student confusion and inequity. We recognize that adaptation to a new environment is important in developing a sense of security that fosters learning. We will build on a common language and foundation, host and plan community events, conduct student/parent community forums, and develop a summer bridge program. (See Section B-9.a. Sharing a Campus)

Building on a Common Education Language and Foundation

Our teachers are able to scaffold on students' prior knowledge by using learning tools that are familiar to the students. For example, we know that a great number of teachers from our feeder school, John Muir, utilize thinking maps to help students access content and organize ideas; therefore, our teachers will continue using thinking maps to explore new and more complex content since our students will already be familiar with them (See Section B-1.a. Instructional Program). Our incoming students will come with a foundation from their prior education experience in elementary followed by middle school that cannot be ignored. We will establish relationships with other educators from the feeder schools to fully understand what our new students have experienced and how we can build on to that foundation. The SCA educators have had the experience of outreaching to the community and truly believe that the same outreach and relationship building needs to happen with other key players in our student's educational experience, such as their teachers from earlier years. This helps ensure vertical articulation and multi-campus relationship building and collaboration.

Hosting and Planning Community Events

Enacting our core value of Community Collaboration is essential to helping facilitate a smooth transition to our campus for both incoming students and their families. Our teachers and students will interact with our community partners to either host, plan, and/or develop community forums that bring knowledge and awareness to the wider community. As our students become peer educators for their peers and adults in the community, they will plan and host community events that will engage and invite future students and their parents to campus. Our academic programs will engage all students in Project-Based Learning and Student Inquiry Research. Student projects will focus on relevant community issues. Knowledge and data collected through such projects will be shared with the community at large through presentations and service learning

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collaboration. Extra coordination will take place with neighboring middle and elementary schools in the area to ensure that younger students within the enrollment zone of the *Schools for Community Action* campus will know of the work their older peers are engaged in. These events will help shape a safe and accessible campus that incoming students and the wider community have already experienced multiple times. Our students will not only reinforce and provide new knowledge, but also practice packaging information in multiple ways as they reach out to younger members of our community, thus exposing them to our campus before their high school years.

Student/Parent Community Forums

In-depth interactive workshops will be hosted on the SCA campus by all four community schools, co-led and co-organized by both educators and students. Both adults and youth will interact within single and mixed workshops facilitated by SCA students and educators. Peer education and youth leadership will be developed as students apply their knowledge, planning, and facilitation skills. One such forum will be held to provide incoming students and their parents/caregivers with an opportunity to explore the distinct visions of each of the four SCA schools so that they clearly understand the vast choices and can make an informed decision of which school best meets the interests and needs of the student. Another forum will focus on the web-based student information system that we will use to help support student achievement and ensure that students and their families are comfortable utilizing this important tool.

Summer Bridge Program

SCA will develop a summer bridge program in collaboration with our feeder school. Students will explore content that prepares them to be ready for their high school level courses and at the same time gives an opportunity to understand each of the distinct visions for the four SCA community schools. The summer bridge program will also provide an opportunity for students to begin establishing relationships with potential future teachers and administrators because it is necessary for them to know their adult support network. Students who participate in the summer bridge program will also begin building their student support network by meeting and interacting with new peers. Our students will gain a physical awareness of their campus as they explore through scavenger hunts.

Student Placement for Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action Campus

To ensure equity and choice when placing students at the Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action Campus, the following criteria will be used to offer the community educational opportunity, diversity, and choice:

Student Placement for <i>Schools for Community Action</i>		
Timeline	Activity	Persons Responsible
April 2012	Create informational packet for the <i>Schools for Community Action</i> , along with SCA School Choice form	Design team members

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April 2012	<p>Educate the community/students about each of the schools, stressing that the schools will all offer the same quality of education, but will offer a different theme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations will take place at Muir Middle School (feeder school), Manual Arts High School (relieving school) and at <i>Schools for Community Action</i> sponsored community meeting at Southern California Library. • At presentations, students and families will prioritize which schools they would like to attend by filling out the SCA School Choice form. <p>In addition, academic counselors at feeder and relief schools will receive information to ensure parents/caregivers and families have access to information.</p>	Design team members
May 2012	Create school website with relevant information using LAUSD's School Loop Web Service	Design team; Learning, Communications & Web Services Branch
May 2012	Outreach to those who cannot attend community meetings through community walks and mailings.	Design team members
June 2012	Collect all SCA school choice forms	Design team members
July 2012	Design Student Placement Rubric to determine SCA school placement.	Design team members
July 2012	Using ID20s (to ensure distribution of high, medium, and low achievers), SCA School Choice form, gender distribution, and other needs, students for all small schools students will be assigned to one of the four schools.	Design team members, lead teachers and counselors
August 2012	Pre-opening orientation for students and families which will offer another opportunity to make sure students who are coming are properly placed and to outline expectations for the first day of school.	Design team members, lead teachers and counselors
September and throughout the	Continued use of the SCA Student Placement Rubric when new students are assigned to the <i>Schools for</i>	Design team members, lead

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school year	<i>Community Action</i> campus	teachers and counselors
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B-1 f. – Early Care and Education

Understanding that many of our students are affected by the realities of being teen parents and the challenges they present for academic success, the SCA schools will explore and develop partnerships with key community organizations like St. John's. Although it will be unrealistic to provide comprehensive services for our teen parents in year one, SCA will develop a plan to bring such resources to the Augustus Hawkins campus throughout year one and more strategically in year two. These services will focus on providing comprehensive academic supports for teen parents, access to health screenings, family planning supports, and health education.

B-1 g. – Service Plan for Education

USES should expect to serve approximately 40-60 students who require special education services (either RSP and SDP), with the potential of also serving students (or classes of students) with mental retardation, autism, emotional/behavioral challenges or orthopedic impairments. Research shows that the most effective way to educate students with learning disabilities is integrating them into general education classrooms, along with focused pullout sessions, direct support from specialists, and training for all teachers in how students learn and how to differentiate instruction (Causton-Theoharis and Theoharis, 2008). We want to avoid the marginalization of students with special needs and give them equal educational opportunities. Based on this research, our students with special learning needs will spend the majority of their day in the least restrictive environment/general education classrooms, with the following supports in place:

- Bridge Coordinator position will be between all four Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action campuses (See section B-7 b. Leadership Team)
- Special education clerk shared among the Schools for Community Action small schools (serving no more than 150 students).
- Early and appropriate identification of students already receiving services (through our enrollment/identification process) and for students with special needs who are not receiving services through our Response to Intervention (RTI) and student assessment process.
- All teachers will receive copies of their students' IEPs
- Early and frequent monitoring of each student's IEP with meetings held within the first 2 months of enrollment, mid-year and end-of-year. Additionally, each student's IEP will become part of their overall ILP that is used by all teachers at the school to direct the learning of the students, as well as used by the student him or herself to understand and engage with his/her own learning process.

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- Partnerships with organizations that provide additional supports for students with special needs such as additional mental/physical health supports through St. John's Child and Wellness Center and independent living skills services through Partnership for Active Learning Services.
- For our RSP students, our resource/inclusion specialist(s) will monitor student IEPs, provide in-classroom assistance to students and teachers, conduct pullout sessions and learning center/lab time as indicated on the student's IEP. Since the students in the resource program spend the majority of their time in the general education setting, this teacher's caseload will average 28-32 students.
- For our SDP students, our special education teacher/inclusion specialist(s) will monitor IEPs, provide in-classroom assistance to students and teachers, and conduct pullout sessions and self-contained classroom time as indicated on the student's IEP. Since the students who qualify for the SDP program usually require more time in self-contained classrooms, this teacher's caseload will average 10-15 students.
- We also recognize that as determined by the district's special education division, we may be receiving students with orthopedic impairments, mental retardation, autism, emotional/behavioral challenges and/or who require CBI. We recognize that some of these populations/students will need more self-contained classroom time to be successful (and that we will be receiving the positions to support this time). However, it is our goal to include *every* student at USES in *at least* our Advisory program so that *all* of our students will receive the social benefits of participating in a diverse learning environment.
- Staffing – as with the hiring of the general education staff, it is crucial that USES have complete autonomy in the hiring and evaluation of all special education staff (including special education aids). A key finding in research on special education inclusion is that collaboration between the special education staff and the general education staff is absolutely necessary (Causton-Theoharis and Malmgren, 2005). To address this, our hiring and evaluation processes will include a focus on collaboration, as well as participation of the collaborating teachers, and the students who will be taught, and their parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Professional development for all teachers regarding how students in both special and general education learn, on the modifications/accommodations for special education students and reasoning behind them, and on teaching strategies that have been proven to facilitate the learning of students with learning disabilities

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B-2. Professional Development (PD)

B-2 a. Professional Culture

Research supports that one of the most crucial factors in determining the success of students in schools is their teachers. (Darling-Hammond, 2000) At the School for Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science every teacher will be expected to embody the mission and core values within their professional practice. The culture of professionalism will be informed by the USES core values: *Student Centered, Collaboration with the Community, Innovation & Excellence, Social Justice, and Sustainability*.

USES teachers must embody the school's mission to nurture, empower and inspire the future social workers and community health advocates of South Central. Through curriculum, personalization and commitment to learn, USES teachers will help realize our vision to prepare students with an understanding of ecological and sustainability issues in order to excel through higher education and become transformative leaders of our local and global communities.

Our teachers will strengthen the instructional program by: 1) contributing to the curriculum through design, reviews, field testing, and troubleshooting, 2) analyzing results through assessments which anchor the curriculum, and 3) continuously learning through action research, reviewing the latest research on learning and teaching, and enhancing professional skills. Our principal, as an academic leader, will keep the school focused on our mission and vision, support curriculum reviews and troubleshooting, and lead the response to close the gap between results and our goals.

In order to implement the long-term initiatives necessary for true reform, the school needs to transform into a learning community with a culture of trust and mutual dependency in which everyone at every level of the school is working toward continuous improvement. Professional development will be embedded in practice and intertwined with the attainment of our goals (Fink & Resnick, 2001; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2007).

To develop internal accountability, we all need to agree on communal and individual responsibilities, along with well-defined measures of success (Elmore, 2005). Before school begins, all stakeholders will come together to democratically decide upon one-year initiatives that tie into the long-term goals of our mission and vision. Together, we will also decide on measures to assess our progress toward achieving these initiatives. Then, these initiatives and measures of success, along with needed resources and structures, will be written into our mission-focused SPSA that is mutually agreed upon by all stakeholders. After coming together in a laboratory of democracy to collectively decide on initiatives that lead to explicit measures of success, everyone involved will be invested in collaboratively achieving our shared goals.

Although there is individual accountability for people in different roles, the accountability is also interlinked. We hold each other responsible for what we collaboratively agreed upon, and we are more motivated because our input gives us a sense of ownership. With this heightened accountability, we need to foster a culture of trust and support so that everyone will feel comfortable discussing their challenges without fear of blame (Fink & Resnick, 2001). Blaming others does not help our cause when something goes wrong. Instead, when one link falters, the others take responsibility to assist and strengthen. With a common mission of educating every child, we fail or succeed together. In the schools that Scheurich (1998) studied, even the students were taught to be responsible for the success of each other.

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As everyone's leadership capacity grows, structures and processes will be put in place to also grow their capabilities (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Students and teachers can be grouped into smaller cohorts, and these teachers with shared students can have a common planning period to create cross-curricular units, lessons, and project-based assessments, as well as, discuss and reflect upon instructional strategies. Teachers will be empowered to direct their growth, so if there is a shared area of concern, they can embark on an action research project to explore and assess the effects of a possible solution (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2007). We need to look at the gap between what we want to achieve and what we are achieving, the difference between our values and our actions (Reitzug, West, & Angel, 2008).

Peer observations are a powerful tool of support that will allow teachers to engage each other in reflective dialogues about their teaching so that together we can better understand each teacher's strengths and needs (Terehoff, 2002; Zepeda, 2005). We will work together to foster a supportive and trusting environment in which everyone is comfortable sharing problems, assured that doing so will not reflect poorly on their performance, but rather will lead to collaboration on overcoming challenges. The principal will model this behavior by not only allowing everyone avenues of input on school problems, but also by working collaboratively with the other three SCA principals to solve challenges they are all facing (Fink & Resnick, 2001).

Together, we can all continually improve on our abilities to adapt and change effectively to roadblocks that come up in the implementation of our plans. For example, the current economic crisis has exacerbated the marginalization of our students by causing more stress, a lack of resources, and greater accountability, leading to increased violence, larger class sizes, and a need to prioritize spending. By bringing the community together through our laboratory of democracy, we can share the funds of knowledge that exist within our families to better meet our communal needs.

Every Monday, the USES faculty and staff will meet after school for a focused 30-minute forum open to students, parents/caregivers, and community members. This helps make the work of running a school more transparent, de-privatizing one another's practice and allowing colleagues to support each other in their work. The "30-minute meeting," developed by Los Angeles Education Partnership, is an agenda and protocol to keep meetings brief and to-the-point, capturing concerns, administrative needs, and questions from the group without lengthy discussion (see Table 3a.1). This weekly meeting serves as a valuable opportunity to showcase our successes and challenges, and bring in parents/caregivers, students, and community members to share in the work. A volunteer could easily sit in on a Monday meeting, and then spend the rest of the week collaborating with teachers and staff on working through the challenges and programs necessary to fulfill our school's mission and vision.

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Table 3a.1: 30-minute Meeting Agenda

Segment	Purpose	Time
Updates	> Check in; find out what's going on	5 min
Questions & Needs	> Share challenges, needs, & questions that require collaboration > Chart Q's & N's	10 min
Assign Tasks	> Attach names to tasks based on needs	10 min
Reflection	> Share final thoughts before beginning the week	5 min

This weekly meeting serves as a reflection point: When we step outside of our own immediate needs for a few minutes, listen and understand our colleagues' challenges, and offer assistance when possible, we begin to see how daily activities contribute to developing our school community's beliefs, norms, and practices. The chart with tasks and persons responsible remains in a prominent location throughout the week as staff members cross off completed tasks, helping make school operations transparent and shared. Students will experience a similar process in their Advisory on Mondays, which will also allow them reflect on their progress and needs. What we expect of our students is what we expect of ourselves. If we expect genuine collaboration amongst students, we must genuinely collaborate as faculty, staff, parents/caregivers, and community partners.

B-2 b. Professional Development

The professional development plan described herein goes beyond the scope of legal/compliance mandates. USES will use the professional development autonomy granted by LIS Waiver #7 to provide supplemental support to teachers as they engage in the interdisciplinary curricular development and refinement processes described in the instructional plan and core academic curriculum.

Additionally, USES will use professional development autonomy to provide targeted professional developments in response to locally-determined needs. For example, design team members requested

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targeted professional development concerning the new trends in teen drug use for the Freshman Preparatory Academy, during the 2010-11 school year, when a significant increase in drug and alcohol use by ninth graders was observed. Unable to receive such professional development in a timely manner, design team members invited individuals with specific expertise to lunch and after school meetings, which benefitted those in attendance but were not mandatory to all faculty and staff.

Research shows that effective professional development (PD) for teachers is driven by school wide goals and is informed by the teacher needs. Much like students, teachers will be encouraged to reflect on their practice and assess their own professional growth needs. Teachers, administration, and campus partners will collaborate in creating a PD plan that will align with the goals of the school and be personalized to further develop the capacity of every teacher in providing the highest quality of personalized instruction for every student on campus. All professional developments will seek to familiarize and develop staff in the professional learning standards.

Standards for Professional Learning:

Learning Forward, an international membership association of learning educators focused on increasing student achievement through more effective professional learning, has developed the Standards for Professional Learning with the contribution of 40 professional associations and education organizations (<http://www.learningforward.org/standards/index.cfm>). Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students:

- a) Occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment
- b) Requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning
- c) Requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning
- d) Uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning
- e) Integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes
- f) Applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long term change
- g) Aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards

To help establish an effective PD plan for the Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences School, our school will partner with the *Center for Urban Resilience and Ecological Solutions (CURES)* at Loyal Marymount University and UCLA's Luskin School of Public Affairs *Center for Innovation and Urban Planning*. These

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partnerships will focus on the development of Project Based Learning opportunities that partner university professors in related fields, undergraduate and graduate students, with our teachers and students. These crucial partners will provide professional training for our staff, curricular development workshops, and communicate opportunities for lecture series and conferences that would help further prepare teachers to meet the school objectives.

Specifically the *Center for Urban Resilience and Ecological Sustainability* will work with USES to:

- Create a professional development calendar to help our teachers implement a modernized curriculum that deals with emerging environmental issues
- Organize and host professional development workshops that assist teachers in creating neighborhood-based projects contributing to long-term environmental sustainability of the community of our students
- Lead professional developments that familiarize teachers with existing curricular modules that embed Urban Ecology principles within the core curriculum
- Train teachers in Universal Design for Learning strategies that fit with Inquiry and Project Based instruction and pedagogies
- Help establish Linked Learning pathways and place our students in direct contact with professionals in such fields as urban planning, environmental science, and urban green construction
- Act as a liaison between the USES and local government agencies to help foster collaboration around community projects that address issues of sustainability
- Search for additional funding sources to aid in the continual development of effective professional development and curriculum

Likewise the *Center for Innovation and Urban Planning* at UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs will work with USES to:

- Create curriculum incorporating the use of GIS technologies that would empower students to spatially analyze challenges in the community. These technical skills could be taught through the core curriculum in an integrative approach that would address issues of student engagement by providing them with an empowering knowledge base. The use of GIS mapping throughout the school would introduce students to serious data collection, analysis, and presentation processes. This knowledge production would serve as the foundation for transformative educational experiences for students.
- Build a bridge between the secondary and post secondary educational systems, ensuring higher success rates in college completion for our students. This connection would begin in 9-12 classrooms and would extend into the university. This would include but would not be limited to mentoring programs, concurrent enrollment opportunities for 11th and 12th graders, internship opportunities for undergraduate students, and support throughout the college experience from application and admission to graduation.

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- Act as an advocate for the surrounding community in helping leverage policy makers and urban planners to utilize student generated data of their community to drive decisions of housing, health care, nutrition, access to services, and safety.
- Search for additional funding sources to aid in the continual development of effective professional development

Linked Learning Development

Additionally, USES will work with Erica Hamilton, an expert on leadership in Linked Learning schools. Her research and theoretical foundation, as well as her background as an English/filmmaking teacher and CTE Coordinator at Fremont High School, gives her a unique perspective on Linked Learning that is based in practice and rooted in theory. Currently, Erica is working as a Linked Learning coach at Santee Education Complex, helping teachers to develop and implement cross-curricular, thematic project-based learning units. Erica has committed to provide mentorship and curriculum support at USES for Linked Learning.

Professional Development to Support Students with Disabilities

As part of professional development all teachers will:

- Be trained in the Special Education Process as outlined in the LAUSD Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual (pg. 14).
- Be trained in the Response to Intervention Process
- Be introduced to the special education programs offered at our school
- Review student IEPs
- Discuss and be trained in strategies for integrating students with special needs into the classroom
- Be trained in differentiation, and classroom modifications
- Collaborate with the RSP and SDP teachers to implement successful differentiation and classroom modifications

Information regarding the Special Education Assessment Process, Response to Intervention Process and all relevant forms will be located in the Faculty Manual made available to all faculty members, with a copy located in the school office as well as on the CHAS website.

It is important to note that students with learning disabilities will not be singled out or identified within the general education classroom. As part of the professional development that all teachers will receive, we will address strategies for co-teaching, in classroom support and teacher collaboration for supporting students with special learning needs.

Continued Collaboration with UCLA's Teacher Education Program (TEP)

To support professional development and mentorship, USES teachers will be encouraged to continue existing relationship with UCLA's Teacher Education Program. Members of our design team are graduates of

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the TEP program and/or have served as Mentor Teachers. By working closely with the Student Teachers and the university, Mentor Teachers revisit pedagogy, teaching strategies, and instruction. By engaging in this professional development with colleagues outside of the school community, it provides the opportunity to continue learning and/or apply a new lens to teaching. Cooperating Teachers and teaching teams are also able to learn strategies, which can often be immediately incorporated into the classroom. By providing mentorship, the Cooperating teacher also grows as a leader by sharing best practices and providing guidance and support for teachers interested in working with students in the inner city.

As a small school, USES will utilize the autonomies and waivers afforded to new campuses around professional development to create a personalized and differentiated PD plan that aligns with the school's mission and objectives as well as the needs of the staff. We will collaborate with partners to develop this plan, create an implementation strategy, continually monitor the plan, and make adjustments accordingly.

Continued Professional Development Aligned with School Priorities

All professional development at USES will focus on practical implementation of the school mission and vision as well as incorporate all of the school wide priorities. All professional development will be about providing knowledge and skill sets for teachers, classified staff, and out of the classroom personnel that better prepare the USES team to address safety, attendance, graduation rate, academic proficiency, and parent & community collaboration. (See section A2)

B-2 c. Teacher Orientation

The planning for a successful school year begins well before the students arrive. A cohesive and well-informed staff needs to be in place prior to the first day of school. Once staff is selected to work at USES, information regarding summer PD opportunities will immediately be shared. In addition to these summer professional developments, USES will host a 2 weeklong staff orientation. During this orientation, staff will have the opportunity to become very familiar with the foundations of Project Based Learning, Expeditionary Learning, and Universal Design for Learning. This orientation will preliminarily assess staff's level of experience with the fundamental pedagogies and instructional practices of USES.

In addition to thoroughly covering the foundational philosophies of the USES campus, the orientation will address topics such as addressing the needs of all learners, appropriate instructional strategies for our different student subgroups, and models for effective collaboration. A myriad of strategies will be implored that help build staff unity, communication, as well as identify and build leadership capacity.

Understanding that we will have teachers who are not familiar with all of the instructional strategies introduced at this retreat, and that a two week PD session is not sufficient for all teachers to become comfortable using these strategies in the classroom, these preliminary assessments of our staff will help drive the remainder of the year's PD calendar. (See Appendix) They will also serve to inform each staff member's individual professional growth plan.

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B-2 d. PD Program Evaluation

There are multiple factors that determine the effectiveness of PD for staff. As such, it is important to illicit feedback from every professional development that is given throughout the year and analyze as another data stream to help evaluate progress towards achieving the goals of our school. Staff generated feedback forms will be created during the first PDs of the school year. These will continue to be used throughout the year to collect qualitative data around staff perceptions of professional development.

In conjunction with staff feedback, USES will utilize peer observation protocols, cognitive coaching models, and examination of student data (including work, formative and summative assessments, and student feedback tools) to assess the impact of teacher professional development on the learning outcomes for students as well as facilitation of the school mission.

B-3 Assessments and School Wide Data

B-3 a. Student Assessment Plan

Interim benchmark assessments are a critical part of the feedback loop that will enable teachers and students to track individual student learning. Teachers who use district-provided interim benchmark assessments face numerous logistical obstacles including timely access to data, receiving incomplete materials, and planning around testing windows that tend to change. Teachers are not able to modify Interim Benchmark Assessments to improve the accuracy and utility of data. For example, ELA teachers have observed for years that students, who demonstrate knowledge of denotation and connotation through a variety of in-class assessments, often fail to demonstrate this knowledge on the district provided interim benchmark assessment. Analysis of the assessment has revealed that students must understand a high level vocabulary word in order to demonstrate their knowledge of denotation and connotation this particular assessment. The simple addition of a question that tests for knowledge of denotation and connotation using low level vocabulary to the assessment, could enable teachers to differentiate between which students need to revisit denotation and connotation and which understand the concept but are failing to demonstrate understanding because they are struggling with reading comprehension and vocabulary. Without this level of accuracy, a teacher may erroneously conclude that otherwise successful lessons on denotation and connotation are failing to teach the concept, when the students actually need support in another area.

Many of our students, both struggling and successful, display negative attitudes towards standardized tests, especially tests that are visibly purchased from an outside vendor. Teacher developed interim benchmark assessments will bear the authenticity and immediacy of the locally-developed curriculum.

USES will utilize the autonomy to develop and administer local interim benchmark assessments, granted by LIS waiver #4, to create assessments that are aligned with and equivalent to District requirements and comply with State and Federal requirements, but bear the authenticity and immediacy of locally-developed

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curriculum. Teachers will continually modify these assessments to increase the accuracy of the data collected, taking the tests themselves and analyzing student feedback in professional developments. USES' locally-developed instructional plan and core academic curriculum will define the development of pacing plans anchored with interim benchmark assessments.

Assessment is key to determining whether or not implementation of the school plan is working for our students. The creation of authentic summative and formative assessments requires adequate collaborative time for professionals to engage in dialogue around assessment development. As such, USES staff will be given every opportunity to collaborate throughout the school day, calendar year, and summer. In partnering with LMU's CURES department, staff will be supported in the training and effective use of research based curriculum and assessment models aligned with our school's mission and student learning outcomes. This partnership will not only provide adequate training around curricular and assessment materials, but will also build on our staff's capacity to continually develop and adapt assessments to meet the needs of our students over time.

As the most authentic assessments are best generated by fully understanding the content and skill objectives, finding common best instructional practices, and understanding data to support the findings of assessments, USES staff will dedicate part of the summer training around understanding this process and developing assessment tools to measure student growth. In partnership with CURES, example assessment materials and approaches will be explored and further adapted and developed by USES staff during the summer training. Content and grade level teams will develop curricular and assessment calendars.

USES teachers will also develop and use appropriate diagnostic assessments in all courses (pre-tests and ongoing feedback against desired results) and have subject-area committees produce valid and peer-reviewed lists of "cornerstone assessment tasks" that will guide the writing of curriculum and shape the teaching of content. We will design and implement recurring tasks and rubrics related to key performance tasks that are, in turn, related to mission and long-term program goals.

We will have departmental and grade-level teams meet to analyze student performance and achievement deficits in light of cornerstone assessment tasks, and collaboratively plan activities to improve results. Additionally, USES recognizes that we must ensure that curriculum is designed backward from key assessment tasks reflective of key performance goals. The evidence that we collect signals to students what is most important for them to learn and how to learn. These tasks are substantive in nature and require students to apply factual knowledge, concepts, and skills along with higher-order thinking skills (e.g., evaluation) and in order to achieve successful results. They provide meaningful and concrete learning targets for students when presented at the beginning of a course or a unit.

Our school will also utilize portfolios and digital portfolios for ongoing feedback and assessment. A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's effort, progress, and achievement in one or more areas over a significant period of time. Many schools and teachers are using a student's portfolio as the centerpiece of parent conferences. USES students will be active parent conference participants, describing and explaining the work in their portfolio as barometers of their growth toward desired accomplishments. Coupled with developmental rubrics, portfolios offer concrete evidence of learning and

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growth. Because research points to the fact that some of the greatest gains in achievement require opportunities to get feedback and use it,

Project Based Assessments will be a direct outcome of Project Based learning (see Section B2 of this proposal). For all classes, including electives, students will develop presentations/exhibitions to demonstrate mastery. Project-based assessments often require more investment in time and effort, therefore becoming more engaging and stimulating than traditional assessments. Students will create tangible products based on real life scenarios and decisions that they can exhibit and have pride in. Further, project based assessments are student- centered. This allows, special populations (ELL, SPED, and Gifted students) to reach their highest potential. When students use rubrics instead of raw scores, students are able to self-assess areas of strength and areas of need. Finally, project based learning allows for more problem solving and creativity, which supports rigorous curriculum with high expectations for all students. Project Based assessments will incorporate rigorous writing components to continually build academic literacy in all content areas as well as critical reflection of key concepts learned.

The table lists the national, state, district, and classroom assessments to be scheduled each year. The exact dates and testing windows will be determined by the guidelines of the national, state, and district-testing program in June.

Assessments for <i>USES</i>		
Examination	Timeline	Rationale
Pre-Assessments for English and Math	First week of school	Used to identify strengths and needs in English and Math in order to provide adequate support.
California High School Exit Exam Diagnostic	October	Used to identify student strengths and areas of improvement to generate data that informs teachers and further prepares students to pass CAHSEE
PSAT	October 12 & 15th	Ensure that all eligible students register for this exam
California English Language Development Test (CELDT)	September to October	Required state test that identifies achievement level for English Learners
Weekly Assessments	At least Weekly	Formative assessments (small projects, presentations, debates, computer simulations, essays, quizzes, tests, etc.) that provide ongoing feedback on each student's understandings so that teachers can adjust to best support students as we

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		progress
Summative Interdisciplinary Projects	Quarterly	Students synthesize their learning from multiple subjects in order to answer grade level essential questions and create possible solutions to a key issue they examined in their community
Exhibitions/Presentations	Quarterly	Authentic, student-centered assessments and celebrations used to synthesize, publically display, and highlight learning and multiple abilities. Parents and community members will be invited to these exhibitions.
Digital Product	Quarterly	Assess students' ability to preserve the essence of their projects and presentations as digital products. These products will be included in students' digital portfolios.
CA Physical Fitness Test	February to April	Required state test for the 9th grade students to measure health and fitness
California Standards Testing (CST)	March to May	Required for all students
California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)	March	Required for all 10 th graders and 11 th & 12 th graders who have yet to pass
SATs	March to June	Ensure that all eligible students register to take these exams
Advanced Placement (AP) Exams	May	Ensure that all students enrolled in AP courses register to take these exams
California Modified Assessment (CMA)	March to May	Required for specific students based on IEP recommendation
Rite of Passage Expeditions	June	The Rites of Passage are annual rituals that celebrate each student's progress yearlong journey from one grade level to another. Ceremonies highlight the values and beliefs important to school culture and mission. Rites of Passage expeditions will offer students time to reflect upon important accomplishments and milestones from the

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		year.
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Assessment Development:

Once the school is approved, the design team will continue to meet weekly to develop assessments, curriculum, and partnerships. We will work with LMUs CURES and UCLA Luskin School of Public Policy to develop our thematic, interdisciplinary, projects and expeditions. We will utilize the backwards design process: first identify the objectives for students to reach – based on our mission and vision, desired academic skills, and state content standards– and then create assessments to demonstrate those objectives.

B-3 b. Graduation Requirements

We believe in equal access to educational opportunities within LAUSD and will welcome students to transfer into our school at all grade levels from other schools in the district. Therefore, though we will offer courses specific to college/career pathways in the fields of urban ecology, urban planning, and environmental sciences in addition to the A-G and District requirements, we will adhere to the minimum graduation requirements. Our emphasis on Project Based Learning experiences will support students in meeting their computer literacy and service learning requirements. The continual data-collection of individual student achievements in their ILP portfolios, our students will graduate with resumes of accomplishments in addition to their transcripts.

B-3 c. Data Collection and Monitoring

USES will gather and analyze multiple data streams to ensure that appropriate decisions are being made with regards to school plan implementation and support for students. Data collection and monitoring will be the shared responsibility of all stakeholders and as such training and support will be provided throughout the year to ensure that leadership, staff, students, and parents all understand the importance as well as the process of using data to inform both programmatic and instructional decisions.

In this effort, USES will collaborate with West Ed to ensure that the mission and vision of the school are at the heart of all planning, reflecting, and decision-making. West Ed will utilize an online **Planning and Monitoring Tracker** system, which measures metrics around S.M.A.R.T. goal development and implementation based on the school's mission, vision, and objectives. Constant monitoring of our progress towards achieving the mission will help our school site plan community professional developments, set school wide S.M.A.R.T. goals, and inform instruction. This software will help provide specific accountabilities to all stakeholders.

West Ed will also help train the USES community in effective data analysis. A focus on authentic data analysis will help drive instructional conversations away from deficit focused lamenting and steer them more towards innovative responses to data trends. Increasing all stakeholders' abilities to understand and

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effectively use data to inform instruction will have a significant impact in our school's ability to respond to the needs of all of our students.

Accessibility to data is crucial when involving all stakeholders in authentic collaboration in meeting the needs of all students. In addition to using the district's MyData, SIS, and ISIS servers to access data, USES will explore platforms that allow both students and parents to access information regarding current grades, behavioral referrals, CST scores, attendance patterns, as well as any other pertinent information that can support the success of student academics. USES will explore new platforms such as **Power School** and **Jupiter Grades** that enable greater access and usability. This will in turn create a more effective communication system between parents, teachers, and students relaying the most up to date feedback to ensure that all parties have the information to support our students throughout the entire year (See section B1 b.).

Category Two: School Culture, Climate, and Infrastructure

B-4. School Culture and Climate

B-4 a. Description of School Culture

USES is predicated on the belief that self-sufficient and healthy communities begin with a culture of caring. Compassion leads to collaboration, which in turn leads to effective empowerment to achieve communal and shared goals. Informed by the Schools for Community Action core values, USES seeks to cultivate a positive learning environment, one that extends beyond the campus of our school and out into the community.

A Culture of Community Learning: The School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science is predicated on the belief that building a community of learners, requires learning to take place in the community. Our focus on authentic community based Inquiry allows students to see that natural extension that can be cultivated when school and home are connected. The outcomes of student learning will be the continual betterment of our students, our school, and the community we serve. This can only be done through a spirit of collaboration with all stakeholders. By collaboratively creating a culture of community learning, the School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science will make aims towards achieving its mission and vision.

Student Life: A day in the life of a student at the School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science will be exciting. Every morning students will engage with their advisors to plan and reflect on their goals,

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academic progress, and preparations for the upcoming day of learning. In their core classes, students will be immersed in projects that promote critical thinking about the world around them. Lessons will connect to each other in interdisciplinary ways. Students will participate in field inquiries, internships, and service learning projects within the community. A student at our school will know and come to love the learning that takes place beyond the classroom.

Through a personalized environment, students will be supported in their learning in many different ways. Students will be empowered from very early on to take ownership of their education. Through a series of systemic supports like Advisory and Individualized Learning Plans, students will be able to develop their own personal goals and see them through to their achievement. (See section B-4 C.)

Extracurricular Activities: Involvement in learning at the School for Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science does not end when the bell rings. On any given day students will be involved in a number of activities:

- Development of Community & School Gardens
- After School Clubs and Organizations
- Sports
- Field Trips
- Community Presentations of Student Projects
- Campus Tours & Greening

Safe Learning Environment

Through the use of strategic scheduling, campus services, and cooperation with community programs such as Safe Passages, we will provide a nurturing experience from home to school and back again for all of our students. An emphasis on pro-social and communal behaviors will be modeled by staff and expected of students. USES will strive to always emphasize the positive and work hard to support our students through challenges. Authentic caring will be at the heart of this work for all stakeholders.

B-4 b. – Student Support and Success

Personalization – Designing USES to be a small school lends the structure for students' education to be more personalized. However small doesn't always necessarily equate with more personalization. Understanding this, USES will implement many support structures that link students with adults on campus in a way where every student's needs are known and addressed.

An intense support system of relevant and appropriate intervention will ensure both personal and academic growth and achievement. Utilizing multiple streams of student data (grades, scores, teacher/parent observations, student work/reflections, etc.), our school will build on the strengths of our students while simultaneously challenging them to improve in areas where they currently struggle.

Student Motivation to Succeed – Our students often face challenges in seeing themselves as successful. USES will create a positive school culture where students are motivated not only to get good grades, but also to improve aspects of themselves, their school, and their community. This will be done by shifting the paradigm of traditional education that our students typically receive from one of a passive scripted

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curriculum to a more adaptive pedagogy, or one that adapts to the needs and learning styles of the students. In terms of academic motivation, students will have more opportunity to engage with the core curriculum centered on interaction with the ones own environment as well as peers and other members of a broad learning community.

Students will also have opportunities to take ownership of monitoring their own progress by engaging in student led conferences.

Beginning in the 9th grade and continuing through 12th grade will serve several purposes.

Students will:

- ☐ Become aware of A-G requirements
- ☐ Become aware of credits necessary for moving from one grade level to the next with an outlook on credits necessary for graduation
- ☐ Become familiar with calculating GPA
- ☐ Become familiar with courses taken and grades received
- ☐ Reflect on their strengths, needs, and resources
- ☐ Create SMART goals
- ☐ Practice presentation and communication skills
- ☐ Share information and progress with adult support provider (parent, caregiver, and/or advocate)

Parents (caregiver or adult support) will:

- ☐ Receive presentation from student about his/her own progress, grades and requirements
- ☐ Have an opportunity to discuss progress with student and teachers
- ☐ Receive information about how to support the student

Advisors and counselors will:

- ☐ Support students in preparing and leading the student-led conferences
- ☐ Facilitate discussion and answer questions during conferences

Using resources created in the Freshman Prep Academy at Manual Arts High School in the previous two academic years, USES will revise and tailor resources and tools, such as PowerPoint templates, “Grade by Grade A-G Requirements” handouts, “A-G summary” handouts, credit checklists, graduation checklists, and “Making SMART Goals” handouts. Students will utilize these tools within the context of their ILPs to monitor and plan their own progress.

The small and personal nature of our campus will assist in the goal of knowing every student that attends USES. However, an understanding that small is not enough

B-4 c. – Social and Emotional Needs

USES will provide social and emotional support at different levels, giving students multiple ways to receive support, including: an Advisor, a counselor, PSW (shared by 4 schools), and referrals for continuing services

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and programs to outside agencies. Additionally, the grade-alike teams will collaborate to brainstorm and discuss strategies to support all students. To be truly reflective, they will also conduct a semester review and annual review of the social and emotional supports in place for students, and make their own adjustments within the grade-alike teams, as well as make recommendations to the School Leadership Council regarding the need for additional and/or different support personnel for students.

Advisory

In Advisory, students will have an adult advocate who will support their emotional and social needs through personalization. The research of Linda Darling-Hammond affirms that deep, meaningful relationships between students, teachers, and parents/caregivers have a positive impact on all students, but particularly those at risk of dropping out (Darling-Hammond et al., 2006/2007). Each student will be assigned an advisor and will meet with that advisor for 30 minutes at the beginning of each day. Advisory has been purposely set at the beginning of the day to provide Advisors an opportunity to check-in with their Advisees, first thing in the morning. If students are late or absent, the Advisor can make immediate phone calls to parents/caregivers. If the attendance is a recurring problem, the Advisor will take the appropriate action to ensure the counselor follows-up. Advisory will also be a place for peers to hold each other accountable and support each other towards graduation and through higher education. Advisory will also serve as the place for students to have breakfast and start the day ready to learn. As each Advisory community is developed, the Advisor will facilitate discussions and activities specific to community issues, USES activities, and individual goal-setting.

At cohort meetings, the Advisor will be the liaison between student, teachers, parents/caregivers, and other advocates. The Advisor will follow the RTI Process to schedule parent conferences and/or make necessary referrals. Through this process, the inherent personalization in Advisory will be the centerpiece of our support for students.

Counselor

In addition to our Advisory class, USES will have a dedicated counselor who will provide one-on-one and group counseling and act as triage for student emotional and social support referrals. This counselor will also provide the role often assigned to a Pupil Services and Attendance (PSA) counselor to support attendance.

Programs, Services, and Resources

USES will work with existing programs in LAUSD, as well as new programs to support the social and emotional needs of students. While we will have referrals to outside agencies and onsite services through Psychiatric Social Workers (PSWs), it will be critical for us to begin screening as soon as the school year begins, in order to provide the support throughout the school year and during the summer break. One way we will do so is by working with our Local District 7 Mental Health Services office to use Cognitive Behavior Intervention and Treatment in Schools (CBITS) to screen students for exposure to trauma. Developed by UCLA and LAUSD, CBITS is a skills-based, group intervention that is aimed at relieving symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, and general anxiety among children exposed to trauma. Children learn skills in relaxation, challenging upsetting thoughts, and social problem

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solving, and children work on processing traumatic memories and grief.¹ As part of the registration packet when enrolling at our campus, all 9th grade students and parents/caregivers will be given the CBITS consent form. This will allow our PSW along with the social workers provided by Mental Health Services to use CBITS at beginning of the year in order to prioritize the need for groups, as well as individual services needed by students. The CBITS program requires parents/caregivers and children to complete a Life Events Scale, a Child PTSD Symptom Scale and the Children's Depression Inventory, and a Pediatric Symptom Checklist completed by parents/caregivers. These measures are completed prior to beginning the program, at program completion, and three months after program completion, so USES will be able to monitor success of the program. Through our web-based student information system, we will also monitor services provided for students to support their needs throughout their high school career (See Section B-3. c. Data Collection and Monitoring).

USES will also work closely with Manual Arts High School (relieving school) and John Muir Middle School (feeder school) to identify students already receiving services.

In addition to initial screening and continuing services, specific programs and groups will be established depending on student need. We will continue to work with organizations that have existing programs and groups for students to feel empowered and take the initiative to change their lives and the lives of those around them. The can include, but are not limited to, mentorship programs, violence prevention, tutoring, character building, and leadership development.

As designated by their IEP, students will also receive services through Designated Instructional Services (DIS), which includes counseling by a School Psychologists.

By collaborating with agencies, such as 97th Street Clinic, Hyde Park Clinic, St. John's Clinic and Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic, we will ensure that students are given more opportunities to receive services beyond the school day, including evenings, weekends, and summer.

To coordinate the onsite and offsite services, our PSW will play a major role in navigating the different services provided for students on campus and by outside providers. This will ensure services are not duplicated, to match students with support needed, and to monitor progress. The PSW will also work with the Organization Facilitator for LD7 to write Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) or make addendums to existing district MOUs. Our established partnership with USC Masters in Social Work program will also allow for interns, under the supervision of the PSW to support in this work.

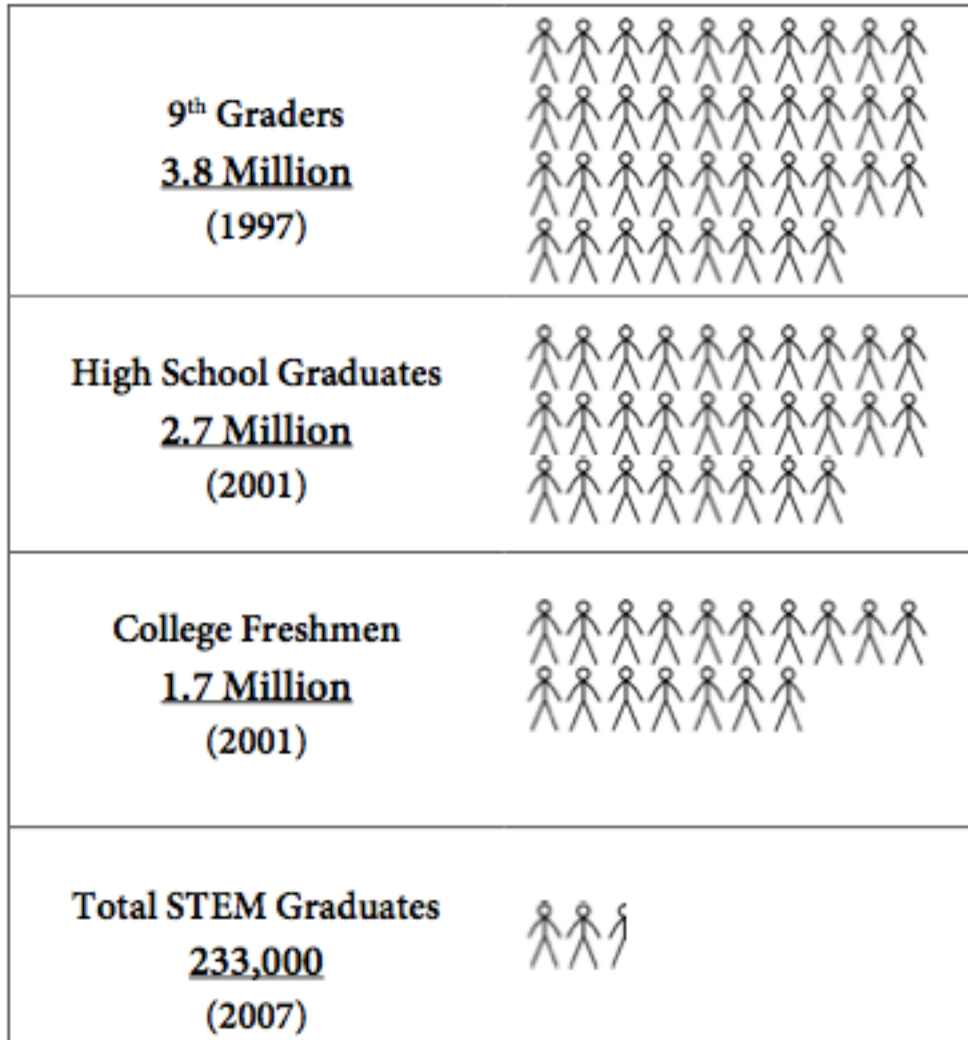
Because we anticipate a high number of students in foster care attending our campus, we will advocate for DCFS to provide an onsite social worker to work with students, including working with student who will need a transition plan once they are 18 years old and are no longer part of the foster care system.

B-4 d. – College and Career Readiness

¹ http://www.nctsnet.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/CBITSfactsheet.pdf

Recent studies have drawn attention to an alarming trend around the lack of STEM graduates with technical and science degrees. In today's global competitive environment, Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) are vital to American competitiveness, yet relatively few students obtain a STEM bachelor's degree (Business-Higher Education Forum, 2005, 2007). As Figure 1 shows, the STEM education pipeline narrows quickly. In 1997 there were around 3.8 million 9th graders in the United States. In 2001, about 2.7 million students graduated from high school in the same year and almost 1.7 million students enrolled in two- or four-year colleges (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). However, by 2007 only about 233,000 students¹ earned a STEM bachelor's degree (National Science Board, 2010)

Figure 1. The U.S. STEM Education Pipeline



 = 100,000 Students

In response to the growing reality, USES will collaborate with key university (LMU and UCLA) and business partners to develop a pathway for students to enter college with a focus in a STEM area by learning how to use cutting edge technology such as geospatial and computer modeling software to investigate pressing urban ecological problems. Through designing a comprehensive approach that integrates career discernment, college preparation, and engagement with innovative technologies to solve local problems, USES will improve the capacity of urban youth to enter a STEM career.

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USES will:

1. Develop a pathway for inner-city high school students to STEM careers and college built around the use of innovative technologies such as GIS coupled with computer modeling to evaluate the environmental impact of physical and ecological changes on their neighborhood
2. Integrate the development and implementation of an instructional program with rigorous research, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches
3. Integrate parents and caregivers into our program by having them participate in similar activities as their children providing them a better understanding the nature of potential careers that their children will be able to pursue through participation in their student's learning

We will achieve these goals by (1) improving student capacity to internalize the connection between their academic work and their future career options, thereby enhancing their motivation to succeed in school and persist in pursuing a STEM career, (2) providing opportunities for students to work alongside teachers, scientists, and educators, (3) conducting career discernment investigations and interact with industry personnel through job shadowing and mentoring, (4) providing a science and technology focused college-bound pathway for students, (5) providing opportunities for parents to learn about STEM careers and about information technologies, and (6) providing mentors from LMU and UCLA.

College Going Culture

All university partners have committed to sponsoring the work at USES through university mentors; campus field-trips and tours focused on community sustainability programs, though not limited to those programs; and college application support. A college-going culture is also visible through teacher, administrators, and staff featured next to their favorite book and alma mater in our school hallways.

Additionally, our university partners will support our *Schools for Community Action* campus-wide support for 11th graders researching colleges, meeting application deadlines, identifying financial aid sources and completing applications. An annual *Schools for Community Action* College Workshop, offered in English and Spanish, will support students and their parents/caregivers with the range of university and college systems and with financial aid resources. USES will specifically invite colleges and universities with existing urban planning, sustainability and environmental science majors.

Through our course offerings and our opportunities for internships, professional mentoring and job shadowing, students will receive exposure to rigorous curriculum to ensure they are best prepared for whatever post-secondary pathway they choose.

College Portfolio

Starting in the 9th grade, in the Advisory class, students develop a *college portfolio* consisting of an A-G checklist, current transcripts, personal statement drafts, recommendation letters, awards, community service records, scholarships applications, and information for colleges of interest. Through the work of the

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Advisors, Counselor and staff, students will be exposed to universities through annual college trips, which consist of college tours and panel discussions with students at each university. At USES, we view college and career-readiness as more than a period of transition for 12th grade students. Rather, we will begin in 9th grade and start preparing students for graduation at the beginning of their high school career. Through their advisories, students will begin researching college and career options early, allowing several years and multiple perspectives to make their decisions and prepare for them. The college portfolio will be aligned with the each student's ILP and will be the rite of passage during senior graduation.

Once students choose from community college to 4-year universities, cohorts are created to continue to support students beyond the high school experience. Within these cohorts, students can support each other with study groups, carpooling, course selection, and academic and social support resources.

B-4 e. – School Calendar/Schedule

With an understanding that master schedules drive the instructional opportunities available to students, the Schools for Community Action will utilize the autonomy to propose local schedules, granted under LIS Waiver #5, to purposefully enact a master schedule that will meet the curricular and personal needs of students, the professional needs of staff, and the overall sustainability and flexibility for the four schools on the campus. By expanding, rather than limiting, opportunities for students to be successful, the school schedule allows for a variety of classes, as well as internships for 11th and 12th grade students.

The USES bell schedule was created based on five major priorities:

- 1) Longer class periods (85 minutes) to allow for more concentrated time to master subject material and allow for deeper exploration of class topics and project work;
- 2) Cohort teacher grouping that allows the four core teachers (English, math, science and social studies) to share the same students – this facilitates personalization, cross-curricular instructional strategies, and cross-curricular projects;
- 3) Advisory time every day – since Advisory plays such a major role in our school, it is key to have this class every day, for 30 minutes
- 4) Common planning time for cohort core-subject partnerships; and
- 5) Daily professional development time to give teachers an opportunity to check-in regarding student needs, participate in professional learning, and collaboratively plan.

The schedule that best fit these requirements is an 8 period A/B schedule, also known as the 2x8 bell schedule. It is important to note that all four Schools for Community Action will be using this schedule. The common scheduling allows us to use the shared bell system, to share electives and other passport classes (on a case by case or pre-determined basis), and to reduce confusion for shared personnel, parents, and visitors on campus. This supports our core value of *Sustainability*.

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An abundance of research has shown that teenage sleep cycles naturally shift later during adolescence. This change is due to “biologically programmed reasons, and sleep plays a crucial role in a teen's ability to learn”, according to Children's Hospital Boston neuroscientist Frances Jensen, MD, and neurologist David Urion, MD. They went on to explain that, “differences in sleep cycles may have big implications for the timing of optimal learning periods, as researchers have discovered that the ideal time for learning starts two hours after a person's biologically set wake-up time.” (Graham, 2008)

Over ten years ago, a congressional resolution to encourage schools to reconsider early morning start times to be more in sync with teens' biological makeup. The "ZZZ's to A's" Act was intent on moving school start times to no earlier than 8:30 a.m. (National Sleep Foundation, 2011)

With this research in mind, each school of the Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action (SCA) will schedule a campus wide school start time at 8:05 AM everyday. Extracurricular activities such as sport teams limit delaying school start times much further; however, USES and every school of SCA will begin each school day with Advisory. This measure delays the start of content courses until 8:40 every morning while offering a small and consistent classroom community wherein each student will find familiarity, accountability, and support at the start of the day.

The later start times and consistent opening period scheduling will yield an improvement in attendance from the feeder schools and increased student alertness to optimize learning. Such results were documented by Dr. Kyla Wahlstrom at the University of Minnesota who investigated the impact of later start times on student performance the Minneapolis Public School District changed the starting times of seven high schools from 7:15 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. (National Sleep Foundation, 2011)

In order to effectively implement Expeditionary-learning opportunities that are Community and Project Based, USES will incorporate a calendar and bell schedule that maximize student instructional time, as well provide faculty ample opportunity for curricular development and cross-curricular collaboration.

The schedule that best fit these requirements is an 8 period A/B schedule in which students attend eight classes in an A/B structure every two weeks. It is important to note that all four Schools for Community Action will be using this schedule. The common scheduling allows us to use the shared bell system, to share electives and other passport classes (on a case by case or pre-determined basis), and to reduce confusion for shared personnel, parents, and visitors on campus. This supports our core value of *Sustainability*.

The SCA core value of *Sustainability* also guides the scheduling decision that places Headquarters at the start of each and every day. The consistency of this scheduling decision offers students a familial setting wherein they begin their academic day. Reflecting upon recent research on teenage brain development and teenage sleep patterns, Headquarters is designed to guide the *whole* student into academic arena. Students do not begin their core academic courses until 8:40 am, allowing their brains and bodies time to wake and prepare for their daily missions.

The 2 x 8 master schedule most readily implements promising programs, especially those that use technology and project based learning in order to more precisely match content to students' needs and that accelerate remediation or that do away with its need entirely. The schedule emphasizes the importance of aligning state and higher education standards to ensure that students leave high school ready to do professional and college-level work. (

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Classes are paired for cross-curricular units and co-teaching opportunities. For example, one class of 9th graders will take English during Period 1 and Algebra during Period 2. Another class of 9th graders will take Algebra during Period 1 and English during Period 2. If the English teacher and Algebra teacher are together in one of the double labs, then they will co-teach these two classes. If they are in separate classrooms, then they will be alternating which group of students they are with from day to day, but they will still be working together toward a shared project involving both content areas. (See section B-1 b.)

Morning Lab (before school programs) (M-F 7-8am):

USES will offer open doors to students willing to begin their day's academic journey before the first bell rings. The Morning Lab programs are designed to entice students to attend and engage them in small groups with multiple opportunities for one-on-one instruction and direction, be it with teachers, community volunteers, partnerships, or peers. The Morning Lab programs offer students the opportunity to receive direct tutoring, including activities and instruction designed specifically for ELL support and special education support. Students will also be able to complete coursework as part of a credit recovery plan using programs such as APEX or E2020. Students will also be allowed to participate in open workshops that enable them time and resources for tinkering, the natural type of adventurous learning that relies on free thinking and imagination to produce that the happy accidents, discovery, and invention that drives progress and innovation.

Later Lab (after school programs) (M-F 3:15-5:30):

In order to service the students and community of the USES, Later Lab programs will be offered after school. These programs will include traditional after school programs including sport teams and clubs, marching band, drama, and other student designed clubs. The Later Lab programs will also include the same opportunities for specified academic intervention and advancement as offered in the Morning Lab programs.

Teacher collaboration (M-F 3:25-4pm):

After the final period of each school day, teachers and administrators will participate in structured collaborative meetings. These regular meetings offer consistent times for structured lesson design, action research implementation and evaluation, data analysis, and meetings for School Leadership Council and subcommittees. The regularity of these meeting are essential in order to sufficiently implement the school plan in congruence with the students' academic and social needs.

B-4 f. – Policies

Graduation Policies: In order to increase the percentage of students graduating and moving on to college and career paths while simultaneously addressing the needs of students transferring from other high schools, USES will adhere to the LAUSD graduation requirements. This will help to ensure that any student who enters the School for Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science will receive credit for previous academic work at other school sites.

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Retention Policies: Data collected from our sending school (Manual Arts) indicates that (not including drop-outs), the transient rate is approximately 49.4%, meaning that 49.4% of the students checked-out of Manual Arts to attend schools elsewhere.

USES will clearly document (through leaver-codes and ISIS notes) the departure of students. We will also use exit surveys to identify why students are leaving the school and determine what our sphere of influence is regarding student retention.

Student Behavior Policies: USES will expect excellence from our students and give them all the necessary supports to achieve this. We know that school discipline is best accomplished by preventing misbehavior before it occurs. School safety and academic success is strengthened when school staff and personnel build positive relationships with students and are actively engaged in their lives and learning.²

Through our core classes and our advisory program, we will build a positive school culture that focuses more on behaviors to be encouraged than on behaviors to be avoided. We will systematically acknowledge positive student behavior as a school-wide community. The School Leadership Council will collaborate with the Student Council to develop positive behavior rewards for individuals and classes who meet and exceed behavior expectations. (See Attachment)

Behavior Expectations: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rethink and Refuse

The principal at the USES will:

- Be at school, on time, regularly
- Expect excellence and quality work from all students.
- Show respect towards staff and students
- Be available to students, staff and parents for questions, comments, concerns or ideas

The office staff at the USES will:

- Be at school, on time, regularly
- Be prepared to help students, teachers and parents
- Expect excellence and quality work from all students.
- Show respect towards students

All teachers at the USES will:

- Be at school, on time, regularly
- Be prepared to teach with lessons, assignments, notes, etc.
- Expect excellence and quality work from all students.
- Show respect towards students
- Be available for discussion about grades or to help students with your work.

² (Advancement Project, *Key Components of a Model Discipline Policy* 2009).

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All students at the USES will:

- Be here, on time, regularly
- Be prepared for class with pencil or pen, paper, notes, books & other required materials.
- Make an effort to participate in class and learn from teachers.
- Create quality work
- Show respect towards each other and the adults present at this school.

Behavior Consequences

Positive Consequences—The School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science School Leadership Council will collaborate with the Student Council to develop positive behavior rewards and celebrations for individuals and classes who meet and exceed the behavior expectations.

Negative Consequences—If a student violates the behavior expectations, USES staff, teachers and the principal will engage in a process to determine and differentiate between various violations and the respective appropriate responses. (See Appendices and Attachments)

All too often our school's responses to negative behavior has been rooted in stereotypical notions about the criminality of young people of color. Our schools have relied on suspension, expulsion, and zero tolerance and other punitive policies that lead to racially disproportionate outcomes and student "push-out" of schools. These policies have also created a direct track to the juvenile and criminal justice system—"the school to prison pipeline." (Russell Skiba, et al, *Are Zero Tolerance Policies Effective in Schools?* A Report by the American Psychological Association Task Force, 2006). This is unacceptable and we can do better.

When students' behavior falls short of school-wide expectations, USES will seek to understand the *root cause* of this negative behavior in order to provide an effective remedy. We will clearly articulate, teach, and reinforce our behavioral expectations. We will offer intensive interventions to students who exhibit chronic or severe misbehavior—understanding that this is often a symptom of a much larger problem. We will focus on inclusion and seek to avoid consequences that remove students from the classroom. Finally, we will actively involve parents in all of these processes and have a school team dedicated to monitoring our compliance through the use of hard data and student focus groups.

USES will provide in-depth training for all stakeholders in LAUSD's School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (Policy Bulletin 3638.0). Born out of Local District 7, SWPBS offers tremendous possibility but has often been hampered by a lack of implementation at the school site. Ensuring that all stakeholders understand this policy will empower the school community to hold ourselves accountable to all student needs.

USES will explore partnerships with Youth Justice Coalition to provide training and tools to faculty and staff on how to recognize potential conflict and better diffuse it within the classroom setting. We will also explore to partner with the Asian Pacific American Dispute Resolution Center and the Western Justice Center to train a cadre of Peer Mediators and faculty sponsors to empower youth with the knowledge and skills to manage conflicts in a restorative and cooperative manner. Studies have shown that restorative justice policies and peer mediation decrease disciplinary cases, and suspensions/expulsions leading to higher

attendance rates. They alleviate the workload of school administrators by offering alternative processes to handle student issues and they decrease youth violence through implementation of a system that encourages positive problem solving rather than exclusion. (APADRC/ Varnham, J. *Seeing Things Differently: Restorative Justice and School Discipline*, 2005).

B-5. Parent and Community Engagement

B-5 a. – Community Background

The Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action campus is located near West Slauson Avenue and South Hoover Street in the area of Los Angeles currently referred to as South Los Angeles, though it is more commonly referred to as South Central Los Angeles. An area of Los Angeles that can boast of its rich cultural diversity from Mexican Americans, African Americans, Belizean American, Salvadorian Americans, Guatemalan Americans, and other Central American cultures.

The demographics of the area in the past 30 years have markedly changed. According to the 1980 census much of the South Central area was over 50% African-American, with most neighborhoods anywhere from less than 10% Latino to between 10% and 25% Latino. By the 2000 census, this same area's demographics had changed to a majority Latino population of over 50%, while the African American population had declined to 10% - 25%. According to a Los Angeles Times mapping of the Vermont/Slauson area, the community is comprised of 60% Latinos and nearly 37% African Americans. There are 18,577 people per square mile, among the highest densities for the city of Los Angeles and among the highest densities for the county.³ Forty-five percent of households in the area earn \$20,000 or less, compared to West Los Angeles, for example, of which 15% of households earn \$20,000 or less. Single parents head almost 25% of the households in the area. As for education, only 3.7% of residents 25 and older have a four-year degree, whereas 60% have less than a high school degree. One interesting piece coming from the statistics is the fact that almost 25% of residents are middle and high school age (11-18 years old).

Statistics alone, fortunately, do not convey the entire picture of the community. The area is rich with multi-generational households. And partially this means that many of our students are models for younger family members, which underscores the important work of providing a quality education that prepares these students to excel in higher education. This is also a community that wants to be directly involved in their children's education, but often feels disempowered to get involved based on previous experiences in schools in the area. For instance, several of the churches we outreached to, expressed hope for the new school and a desire to be involved in the school's mission in ways they have not been able to before. Such dialogues have begun to set the groundwork towards meaningful relationships that, given the adage that it takes a village to raise a child, will prepare our students for success.

³ <http://projects.latimes.com/mapping-la/neighborhoods/neighborhood/vermont-slauson/>

B-5 b. - Strategies

Team's History and Experience

The USES design team members are educators who have collectively taught, lived, and grown up in South Central Los Angeles. Design team members are driven by a core value that authentic community collaboration leads to transformative school design. We take seriously our accountability to the public and the public's accountability to the school. This core value comes from each team member's history and experience serving and growing in the community.

The collective experiences of the design team members include designing and implementing engaging and socially relevant curriculum in the classrooms, while creating authentic relationships with students and families. The team members are passionate about creating and implementing engaging and challenging curriculum for students. This passion drives our commitment to enable all students to achieve academic and social success. This commitment demands efforts to effectively and regularly communicate academic goals, expectations, and progress with students and their families. Each team member has consistently worked with other teachers, administrators, and counselors to create alternative academic intervention plans based on formative assessments for students' struggling to understand essential concepts.

Furthermore, we understand that the success of any school is integrally linked to the success of the community around the school. In February of 2011, USES design team members, as part of the larger SCA design team began to plan strategies for engaging community members in this process of designing the best public school option parents and guardians and their children. These strategies included sponsoring monthly community meetings held at the Southern California Library over the summer, coordinating community walks to inform community members about the public school choice process and to invite them to the community meetings, attending community events planned by other community organizations, and sharing our progress and planning through online networking like Twitter and our webpage. These efforts and subsequent interactions with our community validated a belief put forth by Bell Hooks that "we also choose to live in community, and that means that we do not have to change by ourselves" (1994).

During the summer of 2001, USES members, as part of the Schools for Community Action, held a series of monthly community meetings between June and August. In order to inform and invite community members to these meetings, design team members participated in community walks a week before each meeting was to be held. On these community walks, design team members went door to door in the neighborhoods that surrounding the Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action campus. These home visits not only informed community members about the PSC process and the community meetings we were holding, but they were also sincere moments where we were able to listen to the many perspectives and experiences that community members have in regards to public education. The community walks initiated dialogues that would continue during the community meetings. Because USES design team members are also teachers and residents of this community, it was also an opportunity for us to interact with students, parents and community members in a variety of neighborhood settings.

The SCA Community Meetings were initiated to provide a space to have genuine dialogue with members of the community. The meetings we designed to model the classroom practices utilized by design team members. At these meetings design team members worked with community members in small groups

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analyzing recent qualitative and quantitative data gathered from Manual Arts High School. Each small group would culminate their discussion with a presentation, in English and Spanish, in front of the large group. The small group discussions allowed all members to directly participate and have a voice in what they need from schools in their community. Design team members took notes and collected the group posters that were created from these meetings and analyzed the data to directly inform our writing process.

During the June community meetings participants examined the questions “What are our schools like now?” and “What do we want schools to be?” For the July community meeting participants examined the question, “What will an ideal day look like at our school?” As we gathered and analyzed the data from these two meetings there were a number of key things we learned. For instance, there is a great disparity between parents’ objective experiences vs. teachers’ impression of parents’ experiences. This was highlighted in small group discussions analyzing data collected by a science teacher at Markham Middle School. This teacher spent two years investigating parent engagement at her school. Interviews were conducted with teachers and parents in order to document how teachers viewed parent involvement in the school community and to gain insight and information on parent perspectives of school policies, communication, and involvement. The data was recorded into two graphs, one showing parents’ perception of parent involvement and the other reflecting teachers’ perceptions of parent involvement. The parents, students, and community members at our SCA Community Meeting felt confident stating the following:

- Parents feel unwelcome at schools, whether it is due to language barriers, unfriendly staff, or not knowing how to navigate their way around campus
- Parents want help in supporting their kids through high school in the form of a parent support groups, consistent and open meetings, and

In order to continue the critical dialogue from the community meetings, design team members used the contact information offered by meeting participants in order to share monthly newsletters and Twitter feeds. The design team members also used the data to inform the continuing writing process.

This most recent history of working as a design team within the community was also additionally evidenced through further community outreach efforts. These efforts were focused in July and August at Summer Night Lights. Summer Night Lights is an anti-gang initiative that keeps parks open after dark—during the peak hours for gang activity—with free food and expanded programming. Over the summer, USES team members, as a part of the Schools for Community Action team, visited local parks like Harvard Park and Mt. Carmel Park to invite the community to our events while engaging community members in conversations about their neighborhoods and their hopes for the new school. Most importantly, design team members were tremendously inspired by the positive and creative space reclaimed by the community. This inspiration was embodied in the park directors who are truly committed to creating a park filled with activities and events for all ages. The youth leading the activities are also from the community; it was a pleasure to see many former students giving back their time and leadership efforts to help make Summer Night Lights a safe and enjoyable space. The parents and family members were always very candid about the need for these activities to extend beyond the summer and beyond the parks.

Continuing Community Engagement

As reflected in our core values and evidenced in our history, community collaboration is at the heart of our vision for USES. We understand that, in order for our children to be as successful as possible, it is necessary for us to recognize and then meet the needs and expectations that community members have for their schools. The design team recognizes that all people learn from the covert and overt things we see. As educators this includes familiarity with not only the academic data of our community but also the qualitative data of the community's experience. These experiences of the community, shared in detail through our community outreach programs, reflect the belief that "the various knowledges, discourses, and literacies that youth bring and experience in school" (Moje et al., 2004, p. 41) can combine with a critical pedagogy of space and place to acknowledge that "experience has a geographical context" and "the way to admitting critical social and ecological concerns into one's understanding of place, and the role of places in education" (Gruenewald, 2003, p. 9) is to include the assets our students' and our community bring to the design and implementation of a new school.

Design team members believe that social justice is not solely lesson planning and it is not only a collection of teaching strategies, just as life is not simply breathing and moving. Social justice education is committed to naming spaces of inequality with clarity. Social justice educators and their students use analyses and personalized production, just as praxis combines action and reflection, in order to transform spaces into humanizing and democratic places. For this reason, design team members consider not only what teachers and schools plan to do but, more importantly, how we educators interact with our community. For students to gain academic and social empowerment and success, classroom spaces need to be tools used by students and educators for humanizing interactions. These tools need to be modeled by every educator on campus committed to understanding, celebrating, and joining the local community. It is essential for any transformational education to occur.

USES is also mindful of the collaboration that needs to take place beyond the "nuclear family," as many of our students live with grandparents, older sisters, or are part of the foster care system. In the zip codes closest to the school, 90037 and 90044, the statistics show the need to engage more than just the traditional "parents" because many of the students living in these communities have experienced living in, or are currently living in, foster homes or group homes. For example, in the 2010-2011 calendar year, the number of children with entries to foster care system from the 90037 and 90044 zip codes comprised 5.6 per 1,000 youth and 8.3 per 1,000 youth, respectively.⁴

Thus, our outreach will include collaboration with Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), SPA 6 Collaborative Advisory Council, on site Psychiatric Social Workers, and individual student social workers.

Strategies to Engage Parents/Caregivers

A large portion of our identities is constructed through our interpretations of the spaces we inhabit. Some spaces are welcoming while other spaces are confrontational; however, all "places are social constructions

⁴ Center for Social Services Research University of California at Berkeley at http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/GeoDataResult.aspx?report=ent10azip&county=19

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filled with ideologies, and the experience of places shapes cultural identities” (Gruenewald, 2003, p. 5). Therefore, a truly welcoming environment is essential at USES. Too often, “parental involvement” simply means keeping the school open for a few extra hours a handful of times each year.

At USES, we have some opportunities, based on dialogue with community members over the summer, to engage parents/caregivers more meaningfully in their children’s education.

Parent Tours: The Welcome Center (see below) for the school grounds will be located in the centralized administration area. This center also serves as the headquarters for parents, family, and community members to actively participate in our collective efforts to integrate our schools within the community. Parents/caregivers will be able to take guided tours of the school while classes are in session. Community volunteers that include other parents/caregivers, students, administrators, and volunteers will lead these tours from our network of partners. Parents/caregivers are encouraged and expected to visit campus to tour their child’s classes. The visits can be scheduled for any time of the day.

Volunteering: Our Monday afternoon 30-minute meetings are an ideal place for parent, community, and college student volunteers to get involved. At the 30-minute meeting, collaborations and projects are planned for the week, allowing volunteers access to the school’s inner workings and opportunities to work side-by-side with teachers and staff in school operations.

Student-led Conferences: Every grading period parents/caregivers will be invited to an evening for parent conferences, yet to continue our ongoing partnership with parents, the rotating bell schedule allows parents to schedule a meeting with a teacher at any time of the day, morning, mid-day, or afternoon. We will continue to develop our previously used student-led conferencing model, and advisors will work with students to prepare for their conferences each semester. Culminating projects make ideal content for exhibitions with parents, displaying the range and depth of students’ work.

Rites of Passage Ceremonies and Celebrations: To mark each student's progress and yearlong journey from one grade level to another, parents/caregivers will be invited to celebrate. Ceremonies will be student designed and performed, highlighting USES’s mission and vision, while reflecting upon important accomplishments and milestones from the year.

Parents as Experts: We often neglect parents’ expertise— and we hope to reverse this by finding parent volunteers to help with language translation, leading workshops and various other operations of the school. As we get to know our students’ parents and their various skills, we will find ways to meaningfully engage them in the collaborative work of running the school.

Programs and Resources for Parents/Caregivers

Additionally, if we are to have an effective school that augments the assets our students’ possess so they will excel through higher education in order to become our community, city and national leaders, we need to tap into and connect with the various community organizations in the area. Thus, the community partners we choose to work with are committed to our larger mission and vision for the success of every child.

College Workshops: Additionally, our university partners will support our *Schools for Community Action* campus-wide support for 11th graders researching colleges, meeting application deadlines, identifying

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financial aid sources and completing applications. An annual *Schools for Community Action* College Workshop, offered in English and Spanish, will support students and their parents/caregivers with the range of university and college systems and with financial aid resources. USES will specifically invite colleges and universities with existing urban planning, sustainability and environmental science majors.

Welcome Center: Our four schools will share a Welcome Center in the centralized administration area that will also serve as the headquarters for parents/caregivers, family, and community members to actively participate in our collective efforts to integrate our schools within the community in order to provide the most effective educational experiences for our students. All four SCA schools will collectively fund and share a Parent Liaison (see Section B-7.b. Leadership Team).

Resources to Health Services: With the help of our Psychiatric Social Worker (PSW), we will also make referrals for continuing services and programs to outside agencies. SCA will work with community based health organizations, such as Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic, to provide family services such as family counseling and access to other health services.

Adult Education: Through our summer SCA Community Workshops and community walks, a prevalent request was for adult education classes, such as parenting classes. Thus, we will work with LAUSD's Division of Adult and Career Education to connect parents with the following existing courses:

- Citizenship Preparation
- English as a Second Language
- Family Literacy
- Parenting and Family Education

B-5 c. – Key Community Partnerships

At USES, there will be various partners that will provide multiple levels of support. The Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action campus will foster and implement cross-campus partnerships and USES has specific partnerships aligned with our mission and vision.

Key curriculum partners will support on an ongoing basis for the first five years as we develop, adapt, and transform curriculum to best support USES students. In addition, our university partners will provide mentorship support and supplement our curriculum and add rigor to our courses. Other community partners will serve as possible sites for internships, professional mentoring and job shadowing

In our first year, a USES design team member will be the Community Partnership Lead, responsible for being the liaison between our community partners and our staff. After the first year, a new (or the same) Community Partnership Lead, will be democratically elected by the USES staff. In addition, teachers along with administrative team will maintain healthy relationships, evaluate yearly, and identify new potential partners that can augment the USES student experience. In order to track and evaluate partnerships USES

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will utilize the SCA Partnership Evaluation Tool (see attachment: SCA Partnership Evaluation Tool) that delineates type of partnership and how it furthers the SCA values in which all SCA sister schools were founded.

Partnerships University Programs

- Loyola Marymount's Center for Urban Resilience and Ecological Solutions (CURES) – USES will partner with CURES to help facilitate professional development of Project Based Learning and inquiry based instruction in core content areas. (See above section B2 & B3)
- UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs – USES will partner with UCLA to provide professional development for teachers around the use of geospatial technologies in secondary classrooms, develop curriculum that incorporates Sustainable Urban Planning principles in core content areas, and create internship and mentoring opportunities for our students. (See above section B2 & B3)

Partnership Organizations

- WestEd – USES will partner with West Ed along with the other Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action campuses to facilitate school specific Professional Development, develop systems of data collection and analysis, and build staff capacity to implement the mission and vision of the school plan. (See above section B-2 & B-3)
- OneLA – USES will partner with OneLA, a local affiliate of IAF organization, to help build relational trust with community members, coordinate systems to incorporate community voice in the school's operations, and build community capacity and leadership. Through a series of workshops and forums, OneLA will assist in providing venues to build awareness of pertinent community issues and organizing strategies to empower community members to take collective actions. The USES community will coordinate with the other Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action small campuses to host these community workshops at the school site to serve as a center for community information.
- St. John's Child and Wellness Center – USES, along with the other Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action small campuses, will partner with St. John's to help provide vital services to students and their families. These services include but are not limited to family planning, health screenings, and health education workshops.
- Community Services Unlimited (CSU) – USES will partner with CSU to create community projects for our students that focus on issues of community health and sustainability. The partnership will include activities such as developing community and campus gardens, urban sustainable farming, and coordinating community field trips.
- LA Child Guidance Clinic – Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic has committed to supporting the Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action campus by continuing to provide onsite mental health services, as well as facilitating ongoing services as their neighborhood clinic.

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Future Partnerships

Upon approval, we will foster a cohesive relationship for the variety of community based organizations in our community. Our goal is to meet the needs of our students by creating a central location for community groups. We will also reach out and assess future partnership with other organizations, because they are organizations in our community striving to support the various needs of South Central. These organizations include: National Association of Black Social Workers, Community Coalition (CoCo), Peace Over Violence, CADRE and Brotherhood Crusade.

To further support our students with disabilities, we will work with South Central Los Angeles Regional Center for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Inc. (SCLARC). Additionally, we will work with Professor John Davis from Cal State Dominguez Hills to support a more inclusive environment for all students.

Category Three: Leadership that Supports High Achievement for Students and Staff

B-6. School Governance and Oversight

B-6 a. – School Type

Not Applicable to new campuses under the LAUSD-UTLA local school stabilization and empowerment initiative of 2011

B-6 b. – School Level Committees

To foster a community of leadership and shared accountability, each faculty member will be required to be an active participant of one of the following subcommittees. We will also actively recruit parents, students, and community members to contribute in shared decision-making through participation on these committees.

English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC): The ELAC will advise and make recommendations to the School Leadership Council on four legally required topics: a) the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), b) Needs Assessment, c) Language Census, and d) efforts to make parents aware of the importance of regular school attendance. Teacher participants will work with parent participants to actively reach out to more parents and community members to continually increase participation.

Compensatory Education Advisory Committee (CEAC): The CEAC will advise and make recommendations in writing to the School Leadership Council on development of an effective educational program and plan that raises the achievement of disadvantaged students. The CEAC will participate in the assessment of educational needs, establish priorities, plan the educational program, budget resources, and evaluate the school and its academic effectiveness. Teacher participants will work with parent participants to actively outreach to more parents and community members to continually increase participation.

Student Action Committee (SAC): The CSA will advise and make recommendations to the School Leadership Council from the student perspective. Through a reflective process, students will be empowered

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to use their voices to become leaders in their school and community, as they engage in transformative action. This committee will have three student members from each grade level; a secretary, treasurer, and president and will be selected by the student body.

Professional Support Committee (PSC): The PSC will advise the School Leadership Council on teacher assessment and professional development. The PSC establishes the selection criteria and job description for peer observers/mentors, reviews applications from teachers, makes final selections, and evaluates the performance of observers/mentors. The PSC coordinates needs-based professional development (such as action research, guided inquiry, workshops, and conferences) and infuses the professional development into the teacher assessment.

Implementation Monitoring Committee (IMC): The IMC will review data to monitor the implementation of the Instructional Plan, including school-wide policy, and advise the School Leadership Council on possible responses to their findings.

Campus Committee (CC): The CC will be comprised of members from each of the four autonomous small schools on this shared campus to foster a culture of collaboration and resource sharing, resulting in interlinked strength that maximizes our available resources to improve the overall quality of the learning experiences for all of our students. The CC will advise the School Leadership Council on opportunities for cross-school professional development, campus-wide community partnerships, and strategic resource sharing to offset foreseeable budget constraints. The committee will also ensure the equitable access and logistical use of shared campus spaces and facilities. This committee will be comprised of the principal and one lead teacher from the USES campus.

B-6 c. – Governing Councils

Not Applicable to new campuses under the LAUSD-UTLA local school stabilization and empowerment initiative of 2011

B-7. School Leadership

B-7 a. – Principal Selection

The principal of the School for Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science must share the school's vision for Project, Inquiry, and Expeditionary based learning, and academic rigor. The principal will be a leader in implementing the school's plan, participating in collaborative work from the classroom into the community. The principal will also be the ambassador for the USES campus, promoting the mission of our campus to the broader Los Angeles community.

The daily duties of a principal must always be driven by the school's mission and vision as well as guided by the following five core values of the school: student centered, community collaboration, innovation and excellence, social justice, and sustainability.

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In addition to meeting the LAUSD guidelines to be a Small Schools Principal, the ideal candidate will be a caring, collaborative, and innovative instructional leader who wholeheartedly believes in distributed leadership amongst the entire school community. Through this our principal will be able to support our school community in the successful implementation of this plan that we are submitting, which is why it is so critical for our design team to exercise our autonomy to make the principal selection ourselves.

Our selection criteria also include the California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSELs):

Standard 1: Facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

Standard 2: Advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

Standard 3: Ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Standard 4: Collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

Standard 5: Modeling a personal code of ethics and developing professional leadership capacity.

Standard 6: Understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

The principal selection process will take place within the prescribed district window. It will begin with the posting of the job description. Design team members, including teachers, students, parents, and community partners, will develop a comprehensive set of questions that address the critical qualities of a successful principal at our school. The principal will be selected following policies set forth by the Local School Stabilization and Empowerment Initiative section IV.B. The final selection will be submitted to the Superintendent of LAUSD for approval.

B-7 b. – Leadership Team

All faculty and staff members will take on the responsibilities of leadership and share in the administration of the school as active participants in the School Leadership Council subcommittees. These subcommittees (described in B-6.b.) will work together, each with their specific focus, to continually improve student achievement. The requirement in our elect-to-work agreement that all faculty and staff participate in a subcommittee will ensure that everyone shares accountability for meeting our communal goals.

Four additional leadership positions include a Guidance Counselor, Bridge Coordinator, Campus Safety Coordinator/Athletics Director, and Parent/Resource Liaison.

Guidance Counselor: will guide and support students on their educational, personal, physical, social, and career needs. The counselor will also have the following responsibilities:

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- 1) Help develop and implement student support services, strategies, and systems, including the advisory curriculum and Positive Behavior Intervention Plan.
- 2) Develop the master schedule.
- 3) Ensure students meet A-G requirements.
- 4) Foster college-going culture among students, parents, and teachers.
- 5) Disseminate information on college entrance requirements, high school graduation requirements, and mandated testing schedule.

The Guidance Counselor will also participate in one of the School Leadership Council subcommittees.

Bridge Coordinator: will support the effective implementation of our inclusive academic programs within the four autonomous, yet interdependent, schools housed on this campus. The Bridge Coordinator will have the following responsibilities:

- 1) Provide professional development for special and general education teachers on effective strategies, accommodations and/or modifications.
- 2) Provide support and direction related to the integration of special and general education at the school site.
- 3) Support parent trainings on strategies that foster learning at home.
- 4) Collaborate with staff, students, and families to implement effective behavior strategies and alternatives to suspension.
- 5) Institute a coaching model to support students with disabilities in general education classes.
- 6) Support the interventions resulting from Student Success Teams or Coordination of Services Teams.
- 7) Provide support and monitor supplemental special education activities.

As a shared position amongst the four SCA schools on campus, the Bridge Coordinator will be a member of the Campus Committee, as well as lend expertise to our school's Inclusion and Equity Committee.

Campus Safety Coordinator/Athletics Director: will exercise safety oversight across the shared facilities and functions of the four autonomous, yet interdependent, schools housed on this campus. The Campus Safety Coordinator/Athletics Director is responsible for:

- 1) Campus safety, including: a) organizing emergency and safety plans and training, b) supervising security/campus aides, and c) informing principals, staffs, and parents on school safety matters, emergency preparedness and response, student discipline, and child abuse reporting.
- 2) Managing athletics program.

The Campus Safety Coordinator/Athletics Director will be a member of the Campus Committee.

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Parent/Resource Liaison: will help foster parent and community collaboration with the faculty and staff of all four schools. The Parent/Resource Liaison will have the following responsibilities:

- 1) Coordinate and conduct workshops for parents to be more effective decision makers and collaborators with the school and facilitators in their children's education.
- 2) Manage resources and information between parents, students, community, school faculty, and staff.
- 3) Recruit, process, train, and manage parent and community volunteers.
- 4) Manage Welcome Center.

The Parent/Resource Liaison will be a member of CEAC and ELAC.

B-8. Staff Recruitment and Evaluation

B-8 a. Staffing Model

First Year Staffing Needs

Projected staffing needs for USES are described below, and based on a projected population of 360-400 students in grades 9-11:

Small School Principal (Temporary Advisor)

See B-7.a. Principal Selection.

Guidance Counselor

See B-7.b. Leadership Team.

Senior Administrative Assistant

Manage small school office, student records, and payroll. Assist the Principal, Guidance Counselor, and Teachers as needed.

General Education Teachers (15)

Use standards-based instruction and appropriate strategies to provide students with a quality education and supports to be successful in college, career, and life. Must be willing to develop USES curriculum and foster our vision within instruction.

EL Teacher

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Work within the core content classrooms to support English Learners. Collaborate with all teachers in incorporating instructional strategies to support English Learners. Support English Learners during Morning Lab.

Resource Specialist Prog Teacher/Case Carrier

Collaborate with general education teachers to support students, as indicated on each student's IEP, within general education classes. Monitor student IEPs.

Special Day Program Teacher/Case Carrier

Provide in-classroom assistance to students and teachers, and conduct self-contained classroom time as indicated on the student's IEP. Monitor IEPs.

Itinerant Special Education Teachers

Depending on student population, visiting special education teachers may offer specialized services to students.

Shared Positions across SCA Campus

Because of the strong planned interdependence and collaboration between the four small schools on campus, we will share the following positions effectively and together budget for these positions that each small school would not be able to afford on their own (each small school will fund 25% of each position):

Parent/Resource Liaison

See Section B-7.b. Leadership Team.

Bridge Coordinator (out of classroom teacher)

See Section B-7.b. Leadership Team.

Safety Coordinator/Athletic Director (out of classroom teacher)

See Section B-7.b. Leadership Team.

School Nurse

Manage school health office/clinic. Facilitate emergency care. Manage student health records.

Psychiatric Social Worker (3 days/week)

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Support the social and emotional needs of all students (See Section on Social and Emotional Needs, B-4 c). We will also make referrals for continuing services and programs to outside agencies.

School Psychologist (2 days/week)

Participate on Student Study Teams at each small school. Conduct psycho-social assessments to determine eligibility for special education.

Librarian/Media Literacy Specialist

Collaborate with teacher teams to support the learning of the students within each school. Conduct PD for teachers on media literacy. After the first year, the Librarian will also collaborate with the Parent/Resource Liaison to expand library services to families and the community.

Plant Manager

Supervises, plans, coordinates, and participates in the cleaning, gardening and operation of the school.

School Police

Since our campus of 2000 students is in an area with high levels of gang activity, it is critical to have on-campus police support. The school police will work closely with the operations coordinator to create and implement a campus-wide safety plan and facilitate a safe community-policing environment.

Campus Aides

Support the operations coordinator and school police.

Building & Grounds Facilities Attendants Gardeners

Keep the school buildings and grounds clean.

Food Services Manager and Workers

Manages/work in the cafeteria

Second Year (and beyond) Staffing Needs

Starting the 2013-2014 school year, there will be a full cohort of 500 students in grades 9-12 and an addition of about 4 teachers. Depending on a needs assessment, available funding, and personnel, positions may be shared between schools. In addition to these foreseen staffing needs, the School Leadership Council will conduct a personnel review at the end of each school year, and determine if there are any additional needs or excess positions for the next school year.

B-8 b. – Recruitment and Selection of Teachers

The School for Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science teachers will be recruited and selected based on their desire to implement and further develop the mission and vision of the school. Teachers must be committed to our *Schools for Community Action* Core Values: student-centered, community collaboration, innovation and excellence, social justice, and sustainability.

In addition, USES teachers will:

- Commit to learn and explore the history, present policies, and lived realities of the South Central community, which they will become a part of
- Commit to ongoing learning and professional growth
- Commit to addressing homophobia, sexism and other forms of oppression in the classroom and the school environment
- Commit to seeking and applying for relevant grants and opportunities to further serve student needs
- Co-create and plan for Advisory curriculum and implementation
- Adept to working in a collaborative-learning community where teachers are empowered to take on multiple roles, including leadership and administrative roles
- Serving a population of Spanish speaking parents/caregivers and community members, teachers will make efforts to create and use bilingual materials
- Mentor or receive mentorship based on experience and role

Recruitment and hiring

- During the first year of operations we are required by UTLA to accept teachers from Manual Arts High School in relation to the number of students transferring. We expect to receive students receiving special education services (both RSP and SDP), which should translate into one RSP teacher and one SDP teacher. Our plan is to outreach to the special education department at Manual Arts as soon as we are approved for SRHS#3, share our plans with the teachers, and see who is interested in transferring. This recruitment process will also involve an introduction to our Commitment-to-Work Agreement, which will outline the additional responsibilities and time commitments required for all teaching staff at USES.
- Due to the highly collaborative nature of our work, it is crucial that we are permitted to use our autonomy to hire faculty and staff who are interested in participating in this collaborative work environment. USES will require "mutual consent" between our school and all applying employees, as granted under LIS Waiver #9.

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- To ensure stakeholders have a voice in staffing, Shared Decision Making will interview all applicants and vote to fill all positions. In the event that the vacancy to be filled is in a department that is not represented by an elected member of Shared Decision Making, a representative of that department will be included for purposes of interviewing and voting to fill the position.
- After our first year of operations, as our special education population grows with the overall population of the school (roughly 500 students with an expected special education population of 40-60 students), if the numbers increase enough to afford us additional special education position(s), we will recruit teachers based on word-of-mouth, through our connection at the teacher training program at UCLA's Teacher Education Program and through LAUSD job fairs. Applicants will be reviewed for the appropriate training, credentials and experience and then partake in an interview that will include the principal, a special education teacher, a general education teacher, a special education student (and parent/guardian if possible).
- Our hope is that through authentic collaboration with SEIU, we will also be able to identify, recruit and interview special education assistants/aids as well. Due to the highly collaborative nature of our work, it is crucial that we are permitted to hire staff who are interested in participating in a collaborative work environment.

B-8 c. – Performance Reviews

The Schools for Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science is committed to providing high quality support to its teachers to maximize the effectiveness of classroom instruction. To this end, we have adopted a formative (i.e., “no-stakes”) teacher assessment plan that is tied closely to each school’s professional development plan.

These plans are fully compatible with the 10 principles that were adopted recently by UTLA to guide the evaluation of the district’s teachers.

The purpose is to improve student learning by strengthening the quality of classroom instruction. Rubrics based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) will be used by teacher-selected peer observers to provide teachers with useful and reliable feedback on their instruction, to track improvement over time, to guide the delivery and content of professional development, and to provide useful support to teachers who need assistance.

The data from the observation forms will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development activities and to identify assistance that is needed by individual teachers. Administrators will not use this data as part of the formal Stull evaluation process. Teachers may, if they elect to do so, share their observation data and their professional development activities with the administrators who conduct their Stull evaluations.

Key elements of the Assessment and Support Plan

Professional Support Committee:

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- Teachers nominate and select members who agree to volunteer for this committee chaired by the principal.
- Establishes selection criteria and job description for peer observers/mentors; review applications from teachers; make final selections, and evaluate the performance of the observers/mentors.
- Advises the principal on teacher assessment, professional development, requests to attend conferences and other off-site events

Compensation of peer observers/mentors:

- Possibilities include release time, stipends

Training of Observers:

- Peer observers/mentors will receive training on the use of the instructional rubrics. Observations will be calibrated to ensure reliability and consistency.
- Peer observers/mentors will receive training and ongoing support with mentoring strategies.

Reciprocal Accountability in Action:

- All teachers will be expected to participate in observations, to take advantage of support options, and to demonstrate improvements in instruction after support has been received.
- Teachers will have regular opportunities to provide feedback about the evaluation process to the Professional Support Committee.

Data Management:

- Observation forms (with open-ended comments and scored rubrics) will be completed after each observation. Copies will be given to the observed teacher and the data entered into a confidential Teacher Assessment database. The database can produce numerous on-demand summary reports (e.g., by observer, by department, by SLC, by individual teacher, by timeframe, etc.) to track progress and to guide professional development and individual support for teachers.

B-9. Sharing a Campus

As with many other aspects of the USES, serving our students will be easier through the collaboration between all four *Schools for Community Action*. Throughout the school year, shared facilities such as the field, library, cafeteria, textbook room, student store, multi-purpose room, gyms, and performing arts rooms will be shared by all schools and coordinated by our shared Campus Committee.

Welcome Center/Family Headquarters

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Our four schools will share a Welcome Center in the centralized administration area that will also serve as the headquarters for parents/caregivers, family, and community members to actively participate in our collective efforts to integrate our schools within the community in order to provide the most effective educational experiences for our students. All four SCA schools will collectively fund and share a Parent Liaison (see Section B-7.b. Leadership Team).

Library/Media Center

Our school library will be open in the morning and into the evening to serve the needs of students lacking a space for studying and tutoring. The population we serve does not have a nearby Barnes and Noble or trendy cafes to serve as a resource-rich meeting place for access to large quantities of texts or for group study. This space will also provide access to high interest texts and other resources. By working with our community partners, including alumni from our relief school, the school library could also host a variety of services during the evening and on weekends to provide a type of support and incentive currently unavailable in this area. We will work closely with the Los Angeles Public Library—Vermont Square Branch to support library activities and incentives. All four SCA schools will collectively fund and share a Librarian/Media Literacy Specialist.

Morning Lab

The Augustus Hawkins campus has seven computer labs (each the size of two classrooms). By sharing funds and resources, all four schools can ensure that some of these labs will be open in the morning before school so that students can have access to computers for homework projects or receive additional supports, such as tutoring, credit recovery, support for English Learners and students with disabilities, or simply time to explore on the computers.

Campus Safety

Based on the feedback we received at our SCA Community Forums in the summer of 2011, we know safety is of utmost concern to families and the community, which is why all SCA schools will use the same bell schedule. Since we know John Muir Middle School (feeder school) starts school, at 7:50am, we are pushing our start time to 8:05am to allow siblings and parents/caregivers to escort younger students to school before heading to our campus. Through meetings with Captain Kato from the 77th Street Police Station, The Brotherhood Crusade, and GRYD, USES understands the convergence of several local gangs, which could take place at the Augustus Hawkins campus. In addition, the neighborhood served by the 77th Street Police has a large concentration of crime compared to other parts of the city. For example, in the week of August 1st-August 7th of 2011, there were 111 crimes reported to the 77th Street station, whereas on the same week, 38 crimes were reported to the West Los Angeles Station. Thus we will collaborate with programs such as Safe Passage to support safety to and from school. Because the safety of all students who set foot on the campus is of great importance, the Augustus Hawkins Schools for Community Action campuses will collectively fund and share a Campus Safety Coordinator.

All students will follow the behavioral expectations outlined in the Schools for Community Action expectations for common areas. These expectations will be developed by the complex-wide Campus Committee in the weeks prior to the school opening, communicated to students during orientation and reaffirmed in the classrooms during the first week of school. However, at this point, we can articulate the expectations agreed upon at this time:

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- Each school will have a uniform, or specific colored polo shirt
- All students will be at school and in class on time
- All students will respect school property (because it is their property too)

To support positive behavior across the campus, all small schools will agree to enforce common consequences for not meeting behavior expectations (to be determined during the Safe Schools Team meetings prior to the school opening). To monitor behavior on campus, the Schools for Community Action will employ LAUSD campus police, campus aides, and engage and train parent volunteers to create a strict but respectful community policing environment where students know and are known by the people there to keep them safe.

It is also important to note that the schools will participate in a healthy competition to encourage and celebrate positive behaviors such as regular attendance and minimal tardies by posting the small school's name on the Schools for Community Action brag board located in the Family and Community Welcome Center.

C. INTERNAL MANAGEMENT

C -1 – Waivers

The School of Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science is a new campus wherein all below referenced waivers are being requested in conjunction with the Local School Stabilization and Empowerment Initiative. Rationale has been outlined in the above corresponding sections of the plan. However, for the sake of clarity, the areas of this proposal that require waivers are outlined below and requested specifically in the Appendix.

Pre-approved Waivers

- Methods of improving pedagogy
- Curriculum
- Assessments
- Scheduling
- Professional Development
- Budgeting Control
- Mutual Consent for employees

Additional Waivers requested

Work Hours and Schedule (Article IX.)

- Additional on-site time requirement (1 hour)
- Participation in at least one School Leadership Council Subcommittee

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- Required (compensated) PD time (up to 25 days/year)

C -2 – Budget Development

As a small school in a school district constrained by continuing state budget cuts to education, USES will utilize Budgeting for Student Achievement. Our plan requires faculty to be committed to supporting and participating in school governance. We are not a traditional school. The utilizations of our autonomies will require the maximum budget flexibility and responsible oversight, afforded under Budgeting for Student Achievement. We will follow LAUSD governing guidelines when planning and implementing our annual school budget. Parents will have an opportunity to address budgetary issues through CEAC and ELAC. Students will provide input through the Committee for Student Action. Teachers will discuss the budget within the other subcommittees. Recommendations will then be taken to the School Leadership Council, comprised of all community stakeholders. The focus of our budget will be to promote the success of all our students. To ensure all stakeholders are included, we will adhere to the following timeline:

- August/September: Begin reviewing school budget
- October/November: Review budgets and make adjustments
- December/ January: Discuss and prioritize budget needs
- February/March: Principal presents draft budget from District's preliminary budget
- April/May: School ratifies budget for submission to District

Our focus in Year One of implementation is curriculum and instruction. Professional development time will ensure that teachers are trained in school-wide instructional strategies. Benchmark and common assessments will be developed to measure student progress, and identify areas of weakness. We will begin the process of developing Linked Learning interdisciplinary curriculum and projects. Additionally, we will set up teacher teams to begin collaboration. We will spend Year One establishing our school identity and culture as well as cultivating our new community partners.

By Year Two we hope to have more advanced PD on several of our teaching strategies and continue to refine our curriculum and assessment. We hope that in the first three years we will complete CTE-certified career pathways and develop ample community and business partners to engage our students in relevant work-based learning.

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