



# **VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL**

Petition Respectfully Submitted to the  
Los Angeles Unified School District

January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013

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## **AFFIRMATIONS AND ASSURANCES**

Valor Academy Charter High School shall:

- ★ Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations.
- ★ Not charge tuition.
- ★ Not discriminate against any student on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code.
- ★ Admit all pupils who wish to attend the school. EC 47605(d)(2)(A)
- ★ Determine admission by a public random drawing, if the number of pupils who wish to attend the school exceeds the school capacity, and preference shall be extended to pupils who currently attend the Charter School and pupils who reside in the District. EC 47605(d)(2)(B)
- ★ Not enroll pupils over nineteen (19) years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements.
- ★ Not require any child to attend the charter school nor any employee to work at the charter school.
- ★ In accordance with Education Code Section 48200, if a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduation or completing the school year for any reason, the charter school shall notify the superintendent of the school District of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school District with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information.

## ELEMENT 1: THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

*“A description of the educational program of the school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the School is attempting to educate, what it means to be an ‘educated person’ in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.” Ed. Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(A)*



I hope I shall possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain what I consider the most enviable of all titles, the character of an honest man. **George Washington**

## **DISTRICT REQUIRED LANGUAGE**

- ★ The address of the Charter School is **TBD**.
- ★ The phone number of the Charter School is **(323) 954 9957**
- ★ The contact person(s) for the Charter School are **Hrag M. Hamalian** and Melissa Kaplan
- ★ The term of this charter shall be from **July 1, 2013 to July 1, 2018**.
- ★ The grade configuration is **9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades**.
- ★ The number of students in the first year will be **120**.
- ★ The grade level(s) of the students the first year will be **9th**.
- ★ The scheduled opening date of the Charter School is **August 26-, 2013**.
- ★ The admission requirements include:
  - Valor Academy High School shall admit all students who wish to attend Valor Academy, and who submit a timely intent to enroll form, unless Valor Academy receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case a public random drawing will be held. The enrollment capacity is **480**. (Enrollment capacity is defined as all students who are enrolled in Charter School regardless of student's residency).
- ★ The instructional calendar will be: **August 26, 2013 – June 18 2014**
- ★ If space is available, traveling students will have the option to attend.

### **Section 1: Identify and describe as clearly as possible the students the school proposes to serve.**

#### ***Parts A + B: Demographic data of the target population and academic achievement data***

In partnership with parents and the community, Valor Academy Charter High School prepares our students for success in college and life beyond. To achieve this goal, we provide a rigorous academic program, tools for good decision-making and a culture of accountability, creativity and compassion.

Students at Valor Academy Charter High School (herein referred to as "VACHS" or "Charter School") will enjoy several educational benefits:

- Team building and character education development;
- Out-of-class Educational Opportunities including Service Learning and experiential field trips throughout the county, state and country;
- Exposure to a culture of higher learning through dual enrollment at a community college.

All VACHS students will be part of a school environment where school administrators personally know each student and all the staff members know each other and the families they serve. Finally, students and parents will have the assurance from the school that students are given all the time they need to complete their educational experience prior to being promoted to the next grade, class or level if they have not yet mastered the requisite skills.

**Proposed Location:** Los Angeles Unified School District

**Proposed District Area:** Educational Service Center North

**Target Neighborhood:** Panorama City

### LAUSD- Overview

Los Angeles Unified District (“LAUSD” or “the District”) is the second largest school District in the United States, serving 667,251 students in the 2010-2012 school years. It is home to 544 elementary (and primary center) schools, 120 middle schools, 146 high schools, and 191 charters. Over 74% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch, 31.2% (2009-10) are classified as ELL, and 31.2% of students are classified with learning disabilities.<sup>1</sup> There are many extraordinary educators within the District, as well as initiatives to address the various needs of students, however, many schools are faced with overwhelming challenges. These challenges include overcrowded schools, unsafe physical spaces, and the academic underachievement of many at-risk students.

Middle schools and High Schools are a crucial transitional periods of learning in which many students develop the skills necessary to succeed in college and beyond or begin to encounter significant academic underachievement that leads to future school failure. Foundational gaps in basic skills in elementary and middle school often lead to greater disinvestment and disinterest in school for many students, making graduation from high school and transition into college difficult. As outlined in Table 1.1, the middle schools in the LAUSD are especially underperforming. Over 57% of middle schools ranked in deciles 1-3 of academic performance, and only 13.8% of schools ranked in deciles 8-10 during 2010-2011 school year. Similarly, over 61% of high schools ranked in deciles 1-3 of academic performance, and only 12.8% ranked in deciles 8-10 in 2010-2012.

<b>Table 1.1<sup>2</sup></b>					
<b>School Performance - API Base</b>					
<b>School Type</b>	<b>Schools in Deciles 1-3</b>		<b>Schools in Deciles 8-10</b>		<b>Total number of Schools</b>
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	
Elementary	197	36%	110	20.1%	547
Middle	71	57.7%	17	13.8%	123
High School	91	61.1%	19	12.8%	149
All schools w/ API rank	359	43.8%	146	17.8%	819

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/>.

<sup>2</sup> [www.ed-data.k12.ca.us](http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/).

Of the schools in the District, 50% of middle schools met AYP growth targets, in comparison to 66.7% of elementary, and 40.8% of high schools in 2010-2011, as seen in Table 1.2.

<b>Table 1.2<sup>3</sup></b>		
<b>Percentage of Schools that Met 2010-11 AYP Criteria</b>		
<b>School Type</b>	<b>District</b>	
	<b>Number of Schools w/Growth</b>	<b>% Meeting Target</b>
Elementary	499	66.7%
Middle	114	50%
Senior High	130	40.8%

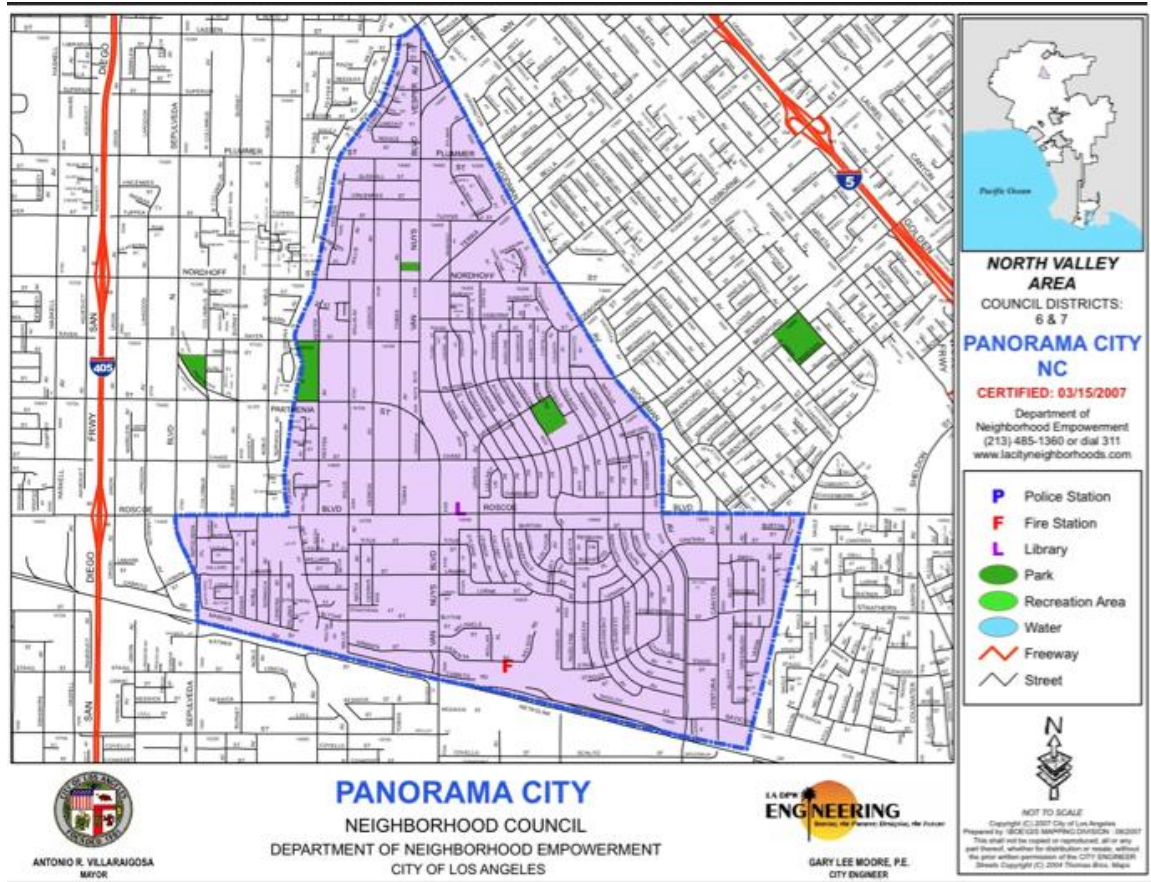
#### **District Area: Educational Service Center North**

#### **Target Community: Panorama City<sup>4</sup>**

The community of Panorama City lies in the San Fernando Valley region of Los Angeles, CA. Panorama City's location situates it within the boundaries of LAUSD's Local District 2. A mixed neighborhood with pockets of deep poverty, the Panorama City Neighborhood is beset by several challenges.

<sup>3</sup> <http://search.lausd.k12.ca.us/cgi-bin/fccgi.exe?w3exec=darc3>.

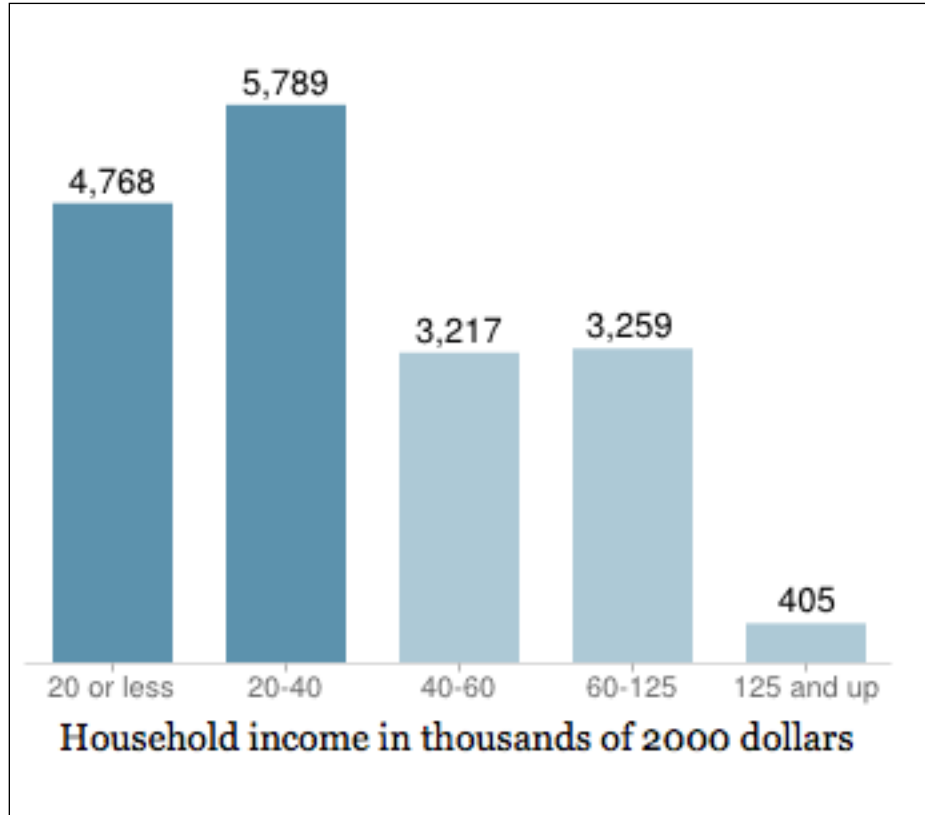
<sup>4</sup> <http://empowerla.org/pcnc/>



As seen in Table 1.3 there are presently 16,346 households in Panorama City with household income less than \$40,000 a year, which is low in comparison to the county and city averages.



**Table 1.3 Household Incomes<sup>5</sup>**



Studies continually indicate that students living in households at or below the poverty line are at a greater risk of academic failure than their peers who live in households above the poverty line.<sup>6</sup>

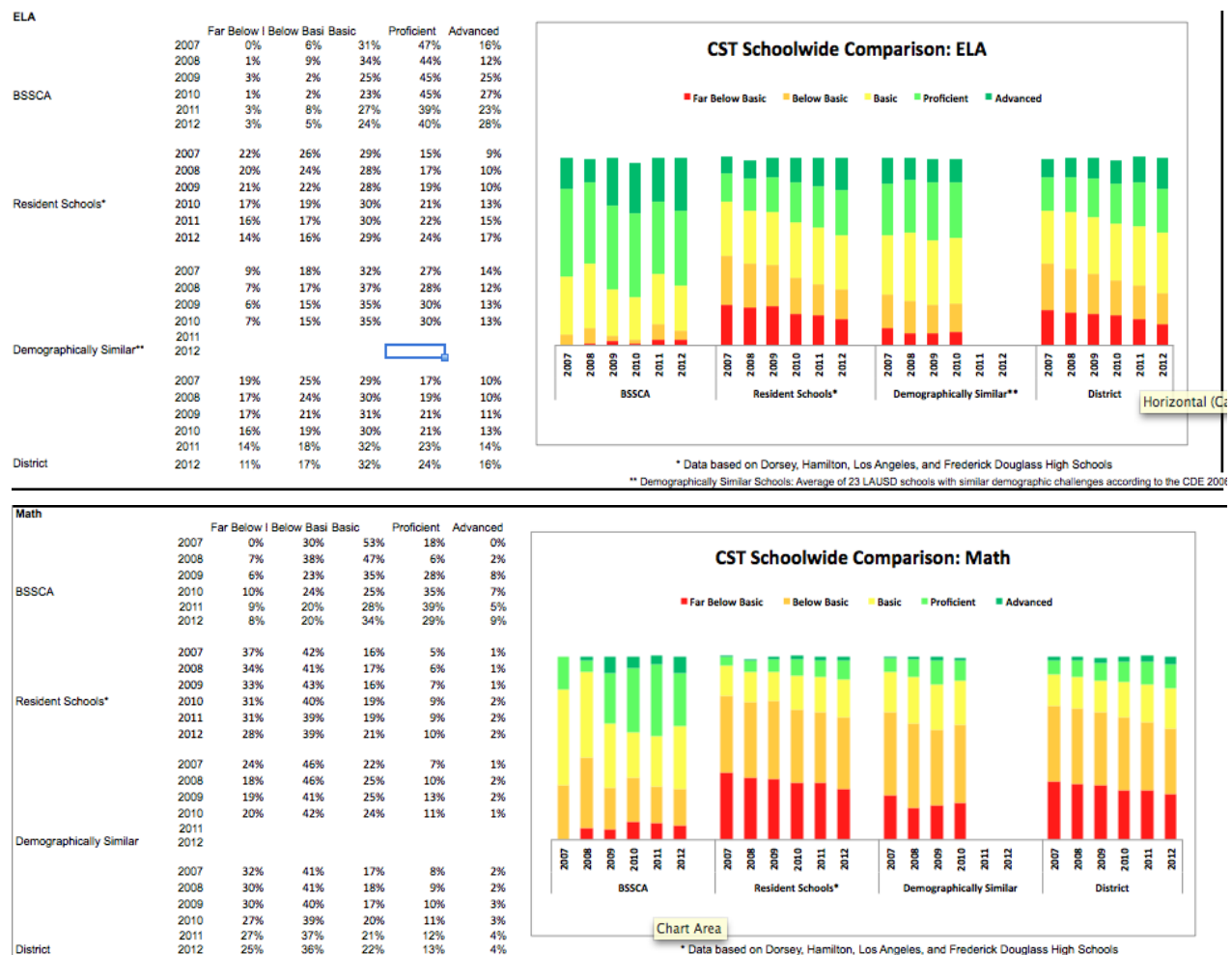
Middle school and High School are the critical foundational bridges in skill acquisition, content knowledge, and character development necessary to prepare capable and confident students relentlessly pursuing higher education.

<sup>5</sup> <http://projects.latimes.com/mapping-la/neighborhoods/neighborhood/panorama-city/>

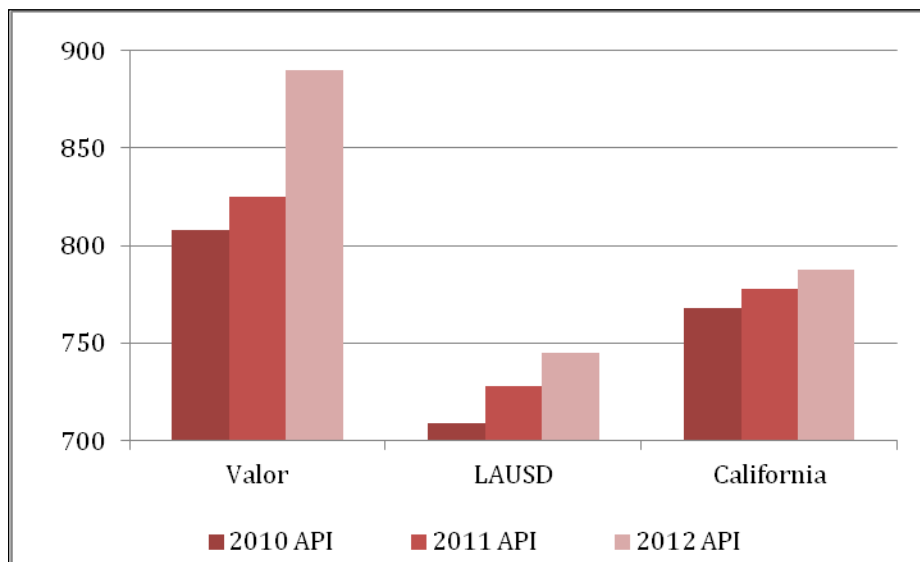
<sup>6</sup> Jean Le Tendre, "Title I Schoolwide Program: Improving Schools for All Children," *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, Vol.1 1996, 109-111.

**Table 1.4 – Bright Star Schools and Valor Academy Middle School Results**

By almost any measure, Bright Star Secondary Charter Academy is academically successful. Please see graphs below that compare Bright Star Secondary Charter Academy's (BSSCA) STAR ELA and Math scores to those of resident schools, demographically similar schools (as defined by California Department of Education, CDE) and Los Angeles Unified School District schools (District). BSSCA has earned high API scores and has demonstrated consistent growth since its founding.



. Valor Academy Middle School was specifically designed to address the community needs identified in the community profile above. Within a small school setting, Valor Academy middle school provides a free public college preparatory education to students in grades 5-8 residing in the Los Angeles Unified School District. The program's unique focus on frequent assessment and monitoring, multiple student supports, and introduction to principles of success through the life work course, in addition to character and personal development, promotes the personal and professional growth of middle school students. We believe these skills and character traits will translate to high performing high school scholars. Valor Academy Middle School currently holds a rank of 890 API and is the 5<sup>th</sup> highest performing middle school in the LAUSD. Valor Academy Charter High School will undoubtedly build upon our success at the middle school level and provide our students a clear path for access to college.



**Table 1.5: Demographic data of the target population**

**DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE SITE**

**(Surrounding Schools Data)**

<b>LAUSD Schools</b>	<b># of Students</b>	<b>Multi-Track School?</b>	<b>Program Improvement?</b>	<b>Met Schoolwide Growth Target?</b>	<b>Met all Subgroup Growth Targets?</b>	<b>API Score</b>	<b>API State Ranking</b>	<b>Similar Schools Rank</b>	<b>% Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch</b>	<b>% of Special Ed. Students</b>	<b>% of ELL Students</b>	<b>% Major Ethnicity #1</b>	<b>% Major Ethnicity #2</b>	<b>% Major Ethnicity #3</b>
Charles Maclay Middle	862	No	Yes, Year 5	Yes	No	660	1	5	89.0	15	37	Hispanic/Latino 94	African American 5	White 1
Francisco Sepulveda Middle	1799	No	Yes, Year 5	Yes	No	717	3	8	84.3	13	30	Hispanic/Latino 86	Filipino 4	African American 3
Pacoima Middle	1711	No	Yes, Year 5	Yes	Yes	716	3	6	85.6	10	22	Hispanic/Latino 94	White 3	African American 1
Richard E. Byrd Middle	1756	No	Yes, Year 5	Yes	No	710	2	4	89.2	14	25	Hispanic/Latino 91	White 3	Filipino 3
San Fernando Middle	1553	No	Yes, Year 5	Yes	Yes	674	1	3	80.6	15	29	Hispanic/Latino 97	White 1	African American 1
Vista Middle	1644	No	Not Title I	Yes	Yes	648	1	3	92.3	8	1	White 66	Hispanic/Latino 16	Asian 7
Arleta High	1909	No	Yes, Year 4	Yes	Yes	654	2	4	79.8	11	27	Hispanic/Latino 95	Filipino 1	White 1
James Monroe High	2747	No	Yes, Year 5	No	No	657	2	6	77.1	14	27	Hispanic/Latino 85	Filipino 5	White 4
John H. Francis Polytechnic	3041	Yes	Yes, Year 2	Yes	Yes	722	4	9	86.5	11	25	Hispanic/Latino 91	Filipino 3	African American 3
Panorama High	2210	No	Yes, Year 4	Yes	Yes	636	1	4	72.7	14	36	Hispanic/Latino 91	Filipino 5	African American 2
San Fernando Senior High	3212	No	Yes, Year 5	Yes	No	657	2	6	72.1	11	25	Hispanic/Latino 97	White 1	African American 1
Sun Valley High	1102	No	Not Title I	Yes	Yes	632	1	4	79.8	10	13	White 32	Hispanic/Latino 27	Two or More 14
<b>Charter Schools</b>	<b># of Students</b>	<b>Multi-Track School?</b>	<b>Program Improvement?</b>	<b>Met Schoolwide Growth Target?</b>	<b>Met all Subgroup Growth Targets?</b>	<b>API Score</b>	<b>API State Ranking</b>	<b>Similar Schools Rank</b>	<b>% Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch</b>	<b>% of Special Ed. Students</b>	<b>% of ELL Students</b>	<b>% Major Ethnicity #1</b>	<b>% Major Ethnicity #2</b>	<b>% Major Ethnicity #3</b>
Bert Corona Charter	362	No	Yes, Year 5	N/A	N/A	680	1	1	89.8	10	27	Hispanic/Latino 97	White 1	-
Community Charter Middle	325	No	Yes, Year 5	Yes	Yes	837	8	10	83.1	7	8	Hispanic/Latino 94	African American 3	-
Lakeview Charter Academy	313	Yes	Not in PI	Yes	Yes	867	9	10	90.1	12	12	Hispanic/Latino 92	African American 5	
Nueva Esperanza Charter Academy	213	No	Yes, Year 1	Yes	No	771	5	10	94.4	13	15	Hispanic/Latino 97	African American 2	-
Valor Academy Charter	235	No	Not in PI	Yes	Yes	848	7	10	91.1	8	33	Hispanic/Latino 82	White 7	Filipino 2
Community Charter Early College High	444	No	Not in PI	Yes	Yes	803	8	10	82.7	8	11	Hispanic/Latino 94	African American 4	White 1
Discovery Charter Preparatory No. 2	350	No	Not in PI	Yes	Yes	725	4	9	93.1	8	37	Hispanic/Latino 97	African American 1	Filipino 1
Lakeview Charter High	97	No	Not in PI	Yes	Yes	798	8	n/a	91.8	17	13	Hispanic/Latino 99	African American 1	-
North Valley Charter Academy	245	No	Yes, Year 2	No	No	684	3	3	87.8	13	13	Hispanic/Latino 76	White 11	African American 7

***PART C: Other applicable characteristics of the target population (does the school propose to target potential dropouts? Newcomer populations? Other?)***

**Whom the school will educate**

Valor Academy Charter High School will educate students in grades 9– 12 in the San Fernando Valley who want to enroll in a school where they spend more time in class and more time doing homework than their peers at other secondary schools. An extended school day and an extended school year ensure that students have enough time on task to cover all of the rigorous California content standards and A-G University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) college entrance requirements. Our students will commit to an educational program where they work harder and longer in exchange for a commitment from the school that all of its students will learn and will be prepared not only to be accepted to, but to be successful in college.

School Year	Grades Served	Enrollement
<b>2013 – 2014</b>	9	120
<b>2014-2015</b>	9 – 10 <sup>th</sup>	240
<b>2015-2016</b>	9 – 11 <sup>th</sup>	360
<b>2016-2017</b>	9 – 12 <sup>th</sup>	480
<b>2017 – 2018</b>	9 – 12 <sup>th</sup>	480

As part of our school program, additional hours spent outside of the basic curriculum will be used for instruction in enrichment including structured co-curricular activities (athletic programs, clubs and the arts). Extra academic tutorial sessions will be provided at no extra cost for those students needing to “catch up” academically so that they can compete with their peers for college admission privileges and scholarship awards.

## **Section 2: Describe the school's mission and vision.**

### ***Mission***

VACHS prepares high school students for educational success in college and life beyond. Within a rigorous, accountable, and supportive school community, students become high achieving, self-advocating, responsible scholars engaged in their community.

### ***Vision***

VACHS believe that all students, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, or language, are entitled to a high-quality education that will present them the opportunity to pursue college and a professional career. Valor Academy will employ rigorous academics marked with frequent assessment and evaluation in order to consistently set high standards for achievement and encourage students to transcend all obstacles. With high expectations for academics and behavior, and the supports and accountability measures to uphold those expectations, Valor Academy will provide a school culture that engenders strong character, self-advocacy, and a responsibility to pursue education at every level. Through transparency in all policies and structures, devoted school leaders and faculty will ensure that students' families and the communities in which they reside are invested in the success of their scholars. Preparedness, respect, engagement, and professionalism will be at the core of all Valor Academy staff, their defined practices, and finally in the students who will emerge with the skills and character necessary to realize their educational and professional aspirations.

### ***Core Values***

Valor Academy strive to provide students with a well-rounded education, including a rigorous academic program that prepares students for college, and life experiences that exposes students to a broad world beyond their current environments.

All of our programs are rooted in four core values:

- Our culture of **high expectations** emphasizes character development and strong values.
- Our **attention to detail** in all programs ensures we are thoughtful and effective in all we do.
- Our high **standards of accountability** ask the entire school community to strive for our shared success. One way we do this is by avoiding "social promotion" of our students before they meet grade level standards.
- Our openness to **continuous improvement** creates an atmosphere comfortable with change. We constantly evaluate and improve our curriculum and experiences as needed.

### **Section 3: Describe what it means to be an “educated person” in the 21st century.**

#### ***Part A: A 21<sup>ST</sup> Century Educated Pupil***

An educated person is a self-motivated, competent, lifelong learner who possesses the academic, intellectual, emotional and character skills necessary for success in high school, college and the world beyond.

For academic skills, such a person has a mastery of the English language along with a mastery of at least one other language. In addition to language, such a person demonstrates a fundamental understanding and fluency in mathematics, science, history, and the arts. An educated person has the ability to think both critically and creatively. Basic knowledge about the world and deep knowledge about subjects of interest and importance are essential, as are skills for effectively using technology and gathering information.

Being educated in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century requires an ability to work cooperatively and to understand and respect cultural and socio-economic differences between all people. An educated person understands the concept of global interdependence and sees clearly the need for greater social justice in the world.

An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century also must have developed an ability to monitor and maintain emotional and physical fitness. A quality education also instills habits that help one to have control of one’s life: to solve problems, to set and attain goals, to learn from experiences and to know when and how to follow social norms. Self-awareness involves recognizing one’s strengths and limitations, knowing what one wants to achieve in life and being reflective about one’s interactions and relationships with others.

An educated person participates constructively in society, for one knows that such participation is necessary for the benefit of society and for the individual as well. Such a person has developed a broad knowledge base and has acquired skills which allow one to enter the economic mainstream. Such a person works cooperatively to achieve constructive answers to difficult questions for the benefit of society. Such a person understands that every problem has some solution, although it often may not be a perfect solution.

An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century understands that character counts, and that we live on a planet where everybody and everything is interconnected, often in ways that we cannot see or comprehend. Such a person knows that one’s actions cause many further actions and reactions. Because of this, an educated person refers to and utilizes one’s own belief and value systems prior to making important decisions about oneself and about others.

### ***Part B: How Learning Best Occurs***

Our instructional practices and program design are largely informed by Marzano's research in *What Works in Schools* and *What Works in Classroom Instruction* and the guidelines for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners in David Conley's work. Here at Valor Academy, we believe that learning best occurs when students learn in an environment where they feel safe, where expectations for all students are clear and high and students are given the opportunity to make mistakes, learn from them, work hard and achieve their goals. We believe that all students can succeed academically when given the opportunity to learn through active participation in engaging activities. We further believe that all high school students need to develop high standards of honesty, industriousness, enthusiasm, kindness, compassion and generosity.

Learning best occurs when learners start with their own knowledge and experience as the basis for learning. Students must feel that new ideas, information and skills are relevant, useful or important. They must be motivated by genuine interest or purpose, and should be challenged to work to high expectations. Students construct meaning through their learning experiences by *doing* more often than seeing or listening. Additionally, students learn best when they practice and apply new skills and concepts to real-life situations.

A school culture where learning is fun, exciting and essential helps all students in that environment. When academic learning is coupled with emotional and physical development, students come to feel comfortable in their environment and thus work harder to achieve academic goals.

Learning best occurs when educational objectives are simple, measurable and attainable. Clear definitions of what students should know and be able to do in each academic content area at grade level determines the content of the curriculum, affect teaching strategies, provide a perspective for selecting and training teachers and help parents understand what is expected of the children.

Learning best occurs when class size and school size are manageable. Although there are no magic numbers or solutions for what is manageable, it is imperative that the members of the school community know one another as individuals. We also believe that learning is most effective when parents understand and are involved in the educational goals of the school.

VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL has short-term, intermediate and long-term goals. The short-term goal is to provide a meaningful educational experience; one that impresses upon students the amount they can accomplish in a single year of dedicated hard work and the level to which they can enhance their self-confidence through achievement. The intermediate goal is to help students carry this sense of academic commitment and accomplishment throughout their high school experience. The long-term goal is to instill in our students the belief that they should and be able to attend college, and through this process, provide them the tools to do so.



***Part C: How the goals of the program enable students to become self-motivated, competent and lifelong learners***

The fundamental goal of Valor Academy is to help its students become self-motivated, competent, life-long learners. VACHS strives to educate students so that they know and understand how they learn, and how they can continue learning in college and beyond. Students understand how to learn from a classroom situation or from a group interaction and (probably most importantly) how to learn *on their own*.

The fundamental educational objective for VACHS is to educate all of its students so that they are able to compete for selective and limited positions and/or scholarships at colleges and universities. An intense longer-day, longer-year schedule ensure that there is enough time to teach all materials covered by the California State Standards and the UC/CSU A-G requirements.

The school's program is rigorous and challenging. Students will start school early, stay for at least 8 hours and have about 2 hours of homework to do each night after they get home. Another goal of the program will be that nobody falls behind. We will train students to employ effective study habits by providing them support in school and after school so that they can reach their full potential. We know that if students put in the required time and effort, and get the additional support and resources they need, they can be successful in the academic program.

Students will work toward mastering skills: developing concepts, critical thinking and problem solving. Students develop self worth and respect for their heritage and the cultural heritage of others through arts, literature, social studies, science and math. Students receive an enriched curriculum in language arts, math, history and science through excellent teaching practice and exposure to the early college program. Students strive to become proficient in both English and Spanish. Students work towards demonstrating cooperative social behavior with a sense of responsibility toward their school, home and community through our connectors program, advisory and character building programs, and community service. Students are exposed to career, post-secondary opportunities and should begin to develop personal and professional life goals through exposure to local leaders and our partnerships with local businesses and community organizations. Student performance will increase as demonstrated by standardized, criterion-referenced and performance-based tests.

VACHS' curriculum is based on the California Content Standards. In addition, VACHS offers many expanded options to meet the needs of all of its diverse students. These include more instructional time on task, life experience lessons outside the classroom and exposure to higher learning by attending a community college.

**Section 4: Include a brief narrative describing “a typical day” at the charter school. Describe what a visitor to the school should expect to see when the school’s vision is being fully implemented.**

A typical day at VACHS sees students arriving on our school yard between 7 – 7:15 a.m. They are greeted by the Principal or Administrative Designee during the morning assembly. By 7:25 a.m., all students are in their classrooms and begin the day by taking attendance and reviewing the night’s homework. Then they go through their typical academic day by rotating through teachers and course subjects by periods. If you visit and are able to walk through classrooms, you will see uniformity in that certain practices are common in all classrooms: common whiteboard configuration, day’s agenda and a common system of connections and rules.

You will also see however, variety in instructional styles among all of our different teachers. Beginning at 4 p.m., students begin a series of enrichment and catch-up activities. All students who are required to stay for partnerships (Tutoring/Silent Study Hall) stay on site until 5 p.m. All students who do not take part in our partnerships from 4 – 5p.m, may join after school extra curricular activities like school clubs, drama, and sports through our after school program affiliate or offered school based sports activities from 4-6 pm. It is a long day and a lot of hard work, but our results show that it serves our students well.

**Expanded Options – Things that set our program apart**

The expanded options are things that we believe set our school apart. They are important ways of getting students excited about the learning process and their capabilities to succeed, in addition to getting parents to become closer partners with the school.

**More Time on Task**

At Valor Academy Charter High School we realize that it takes time, effort, and hard work to meet the challenge of high academic standards. We believe that increased learning time is essential to enabling students who enter school with skills and knowledge deficiencies, those with disabilities, and English language learners to achieve at the highest levels. We have structured our school time efficiently through an extended school day and an extended school year. As part of our extended day there will be consistent tutoring, as teachers, informed through our frequent assessment system, will be able to help students individually and in small groups to master content with which they are struggling. Literacy support will also be offered for students who are struggling in ELA classes.

School time is further extended through significant amounts of content appropriate homework that allows students to practice and solidify skills learned in school. Valor Academy students will build a habitual practice of completing approximately two to three hours of homework a night, preparing and exposing them to the demands of rigorous college preparatory secondary school programs. We will work closely with parents who will serve as ambassadors to their learning by

consistently helping with and signing off on completed work. Assignments will be clearly detailed each week for each class through a syllabus that outlines daily class work and all nightly assignments.

### **A Rigorous Focus on Literacy**

Each year, students in the school's Literature courses read at least six novels, plays, or non-fiction texts in class, but must also read at least 12 books independently outside of class. About half of these books have been required novels and the remainders have been student choices. Some required selections have included: *Ender's Game*, *Oliver Twist*, *Wooden: A Lifetime of Observations on and off the Court*, *The Lords of Discipline*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Brave New World*, *Native Son*, *Last of the Mohicans*, *Warriors Don't Cry* (Little Rock High School Memoir), *The Stand*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, and *The Kite Runner*. Students are encouraged to select rigorous, challenging texts to prepare themselves for University-level study.

As required by the Common Core, and as supported by David Conley's work on college readiness, students must be able to read critically across the disciplines in order to succeed in higher education. In order to develop students' ability to read for a specific discipline, all teachers explicitly teach reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition strategies, such as those articulated in report *What Secondary Content Area Teachers need to know about Adolescent Literacy*.

In order to be successful in higher education, we understand that students will need to be able to both write to learn and to demonstrate their learning. In order to ensure that our students' are prepared for the rigors of college writing, students must pass four writing assessments each year in order to meet the graduation requirements. These prompts are designed to assess students' ability to write argumentatively across the disciplines. Especially so at the upper levels, where these assessments measure students' ability to accurately and convincingly develop an argument and support it with reasons and evidence. Writing assessments are double-blind graded by a panel of teachers across all disciplines.

### **Partnerships Program**

Our Partnerships program expands across all core areas of the curriculum and allows for students to work directly with their teachers or tutors in a smaller group setting after school on any work they need additional help on. Because students with missing work are required to stay after school to make up that work, parents can also come and talk with the teachers at the end of these Partnership periods. We believe that parent-teacher communication is essential for student success and finding the time to make it happen is a priority.

### **Experiential Learning**

VACHS is a site-based program, although curricular trips and outdoor education are a large component of the students' education. Bright Star Schools raises enough funds to allow each of its students and teachers to take several weekend trips and at least one week-long trip each year to places like Yosemite, Arizona and Washington D.C. Funding to cover the extra

instructional and co-curricular time is provided by careful financial planning and private fundraising.

We believe that our students must be given the opportunity to enhance their education with real-life experiences. These experiential learning trips are called Life Experience Lessons or LELs. LELs include physical challenges in other cities (biking from downtown Washington D.C. to Mt. Vernon along the Potomac River, walking from Central Park to the Brooklyn Bridge or hiking to the Havasupai Indian Reservation in Arizona). They also include visits to multiple universities as well as to national and historical sites. We want our students to come out of their “comfort zones” and become explorers of knowledge and new experiences. In the past they have included the following:

- A camping trip at the beginning of the year to Big Bear, Catalina, Arizona or Utah, focusing on team-building and creating bonds.
- A mid-year trip to the local mountains for experiencing the snow, skiing and snowboarding, designed to create new experiences and gain confidence.
- End-of-the-year journeys to places such as King’s Canyon, Washington D.C., Northern California or the Southern states, bringing science and history lessons to life while touring colleges and allowing students to envision the possibilities for their futures.

VACHS believes the education of students comes from many varied sources, many of which are outside the school facility. At least once each quarter (preferably during orientation week and at year’s-end) students should either be given or be able to earn a meaningful off-campus experience where they will have the opportunity to:

- (1) Experience something out of their daily, city-life routine that will involve both mental and physical challenges;
- (2) Build bonds with fellow classmates and teachers;
- (3) Share stories, songs, cheers, skits, and (preferably) campfires of some sort.

The most ancient human tradition is sharing these things at night around a fire. Based on past experiences, we have found that organizing the trips ourselves can cost about one half the price of having them organized by outside agencies. Self-organization also allows us much more time for the bonding experiences that we strive to offer our students.

All of Valor Academy’ co-curricular programs enrich and enhance students’ classroom experiences while encouraging personal creativity and understanding as well as confidence to actively participate in society.<sup>7</sup> Through these experiences, our students learn to strive for happiness and meaning in a diverse and broad world-view.

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<sup>7</sup> See Student Handbook in Appendix E for a detailed spreadsheet of the trips taken at each grade level each year.

## **Section 5: Describe the instructional program and curriculum the school plans to use.**

### **Curriculum**

- A longer school day (nine hours of instruction as opposed to the “required minimum” in public schools of six hours daily), allows for a full scope of instruction in history, science, arts, music, foreign language and physical education as well.
- We DO NOT socially promote our students before they meet grade level standards. These goals include GPA, completion of all assignments throughout the year, performance on summative exams, passing of writing exams and a rigorous independent reading program that encourages all students to read at 1400 Reading Counts each year outside of the four that they read in their literature classes.
- Our program includes safeguards to ensure that students learn the material and skills they need not only to be accepted into universities, but also to be successful once they get there—as noted below in explanations of our Grading System, Independent Reading requirement, and Graduation Requirements.

### **Grading System**

Letter Grade	Percentage	Rubric Score	Meaning
A+	98-100%	4	<b>A student earning an A in a course is consistently demonstrating advanced levels of mastery with the content standards.</b>
A	93-97%		
A-	90-92%		
B+	88-89%	3	<b>A student earning a B in a course is consistently demonstrating proficiency with the content standards.</b>
B	83-87%		
B-	80-82%		
C+	78-79%	2	<b>A student earning a C in a course is consistently demonstrating basic competency with the content standards.</b>
C	73-77%		
C-	70-72%		
F	<b>Below 70%</b>	<b>0 or 1</b>	<b>A student earning less than 70% in a course is not yet demonstrating a basic level of mastery with the content standards. Course credit can be earned through credit recovery options, but the student will need to demonstrate mastery of the standards before credit will be earned.</b>

Students who fail a class are required to replace the course using a credit recovery option, which includes summer or evening school offered by the school or enrollment in an online credit recovery course supported by the school, such as Aventa or BYU. Students may also enroll in the course again the following year. The school will accept other reasonable options for replacing the course not listed here, such as enrollment in a community college course, adult school, or

other accredited online or independent study provider, but will not reimburse the student or provide time within the regular school day to complete the course. Upon completion of the course with a grade of C or better, the passing course grade replaces the prior failing grade in the student's GPA. Students who pass our classes must show proficiency on summative end-of-term exams.

In addition to Student Success Teams and intervention programs, VACHS also offers remedial skills courses taught by credentialed teachers to help build the bridge to proficiency:

- **ELA course** - basic grammar, language usage and writing skills.
- **Writing Lab** – time with teachers to improve essay writing skills and development.
- **Algebra Study Review** – fundamentals of algebra.
- **I/A Subjects during II/B** – if a student fails the first semester of a course, if the schedule permits, the student repeats the course and recovers the credit immediately during their second semester.

### Independent Reading Requirement

Students in high school Literature read four to six major works in class and they also must earn 1400 points on Reading Counts over the course of their high school career. This is roughly the equivalent of reading 12 books per year outside of class. About half of these books are students' choices (but must be on the students' reading level), and about half are required novels. Some required selections by grade level include the following<sup>8</sup>:

- Ninth: *Ender's Game*, *Oliver Twist*, *Wooden: A Lifetime of Observations on and off the Court*.
- Tenth: *The Lords of Discipline*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Brave New World*.
- Eleventh: *Native Son*, *Last of the Mohicans*, *Warriors Don't Cry* (Little Rock High School Memoir).
- Twelfth: *The Stand*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *The Kite Runner*.

Many of these titles prove extremely challenging for our students to read independently, but they work through them, sometimes using audio-books, study groups, teacher led book clubs, assistance from their connector and/or TAs. Students with special needs may require accommodations which are explicitly included in their IEP, 504, or SST plan. Accommodations may include, but are not limited to, reduction in required Reading Counts points, reading the text in the student's native language, and replacement of the required texts with ones more appropriate to the student's ability level. Our school believes that independent reading is an essential skill for college preparedness and, thus, this requirement is closely monitored by both the student's literature teacher and connector. Students and parents can also monitor their own progress through online access at home and at school to the student's Reading Counts account.

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<sup>8</sup> An extended list is included under Element 1, textbooks and other instructional resources used.

## Graduation Requirements

All students currently are required to complete all A-G required courses.

- A-G course requirements passed with grades of C+ or better.
- Annual reading goals of 1400 points over the course of four years
- Passing scores on CAHSEE English and Math sections.
- Fifty total hours of community service to two different organizations.
- Schoolwide writing tests passed each year.. Students who cannot prove proficiency on the writing test are offered appropriate support and accommodations by TA's, RSP teachers, and ELA teachers and allowed to retake writing exams until they pass.
- Admittance to one four-year college/university. As all students will complete and pass the A-G requirements as a part of their instructional program, making the student eligible for acceptance into a CSU..

## IWOC Policy (Independent Work Outside of Class or Homework)

All students are required to write down their homework assignments each day in their school provided agendas. Students do not rely solely on a teacher's bulletin board or web page for homework information. However, all teachers keep an up-to-date homework binder, bulletin board or web site so that students and parents can be made aware of the daily and weekly assignments. The course syllabus informs parents and students as to which option the teacher chooses to keep the community informed.<sup>9</sup>

IWOC at Valor Academy has three distinct but important purposes:

1. To give students time to practice the essential skills that they need to learn (having them practice the skills daily at home gives more time in class for teaching).
2. To develop independent study habits and provide students practice in self-discipline and time management so that students are prepared to study independently for 2-4 hours per day in college.
3. To ensure that as much time as possible can be spent on direct teaching, discussions, guided practice of skills and other learning experiences.

IWOC is not supplemental; it is a core and integral part of the class. There is a systematic plan in place at VACHS for making sure that all assignments are eventually completed.<sup>10</sup>

## IWOC Expectations: Hours and Product

Different students work at different speeds. Because of that, the following "hours estimates" are merely a prediction of how long the work should take a typical student each night. However, Valor Academy does have a policy that every single student should have something to do every single night. All Valor Academy students consistently have ninety minutes nightly as follows for 9-12<sup>th</sup> grades of IWOC:

- Thirty minutes of reading each day (seven days per week).

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<sup>9</sup> Sample teacher syllabi included in Appendix (Tab 6, Section F).

<sup>10</sup> See Student and Family Handbook (Tab 6, Section F), page 23-24, regarding catching up on missing assignments.



- Thirty minutes of ELA practice each school day (five days per week).
- Thirty minutes of math practice each school day (five days per week).

This leads to a total of 8.5 hours per week as a baseline.

On top of this baseline for reading, writing, and math, students are assigned (a) traditional IWOC, (b) project-based work, or (c) study time in English language arts, math, science, social studies, Spanish or electives based on the following time guidelines. Grade-level teams of teachers work together to determine whose IWOC should fill the suggested timeframe for each week or month in their IWOC common planning time.

- Ninth grade: 5.5 hrs. per week for a grand total of 14 hours per week.
- Tenth grade: 6.5 hrs. per week for a grand total of 15 hours per week.
- Eleventh grade: 7.5 hrs. per week for a grand total of 16 hours per week.
- Twelfth grade: 8.5 hrs. per week for a grand total of 17 hours per week.

### **Study Island**

Study Island is a standards and skills-practice program that students must complete using an online account given to them by the school. Students with internet access complete their assignments at home; students without internet access may sign up for time in our afterschool programs to use the computers on campus. The program contains lessons and test questions. Students get immediate feedback, and their teachers get immediate results about which children are mastering their standards by overseeing their work on the program. We generally want our students to master standards at the 80-percentile level in all subjects. When students reach that level, they earn a “blue ribbon.” Students complete the program when they receive all of their blue ribbons for a subject or grade level.

While extended instructional time is offered to all Valor Academy students each year, we also offer structured programs beyond those hours known as daily Partnerships (tutoring) and Silent Study Hall (SSH) to students who are not on target so that they can achieve and succeed. Most of our students take these opportunities seriously and do what they must to meet their goals and promote.

### **Student Success Teams**

A Student Success Team (SST) is automatically formed for each student who repeats a grade level. SSTs are also conducted for any student that struggles in general. We provide SSTs three times annually for any student who repeats a grade level or who struggles with annual goals. The SST consists of the Principal, special education providers, the student’s grade level teachers and any other teachers or mentors interested in the child’s success. At least one member of the SST joins a repeating student’s parent/student conference each quarter. If any signs of a disability are present, the student is referred for an assessment process. A repeating student must attend all of the daily and additional supplemental programs, if s/he is not on target for the year in which s/he is repeating.

Students are typically referred by the classroom teacher, but any member of the school staff may request support from the SST for a student whose learning, behavior or emotional needs



are not being met under existing circumstances. All SST meetings are documented, and student progress is reviewed in subsequent meetings. If a student is following the SST plan and achieving, then a successive meeting is not necessary; rather additional meetings are planned for students who continue to demonstrate that they are struggling.

## ***PART A: Instructional Framework***

### **Graduation Requirements**

**Required Coursework—A-G Recommended Coursework:** All students must complete the A-G *Recommended* Coursework along with four additional college-prep elective courses. The A-G Recommended Coursework and Bright Star Schools University Prep Graduation Requirements are as follows.

**A:** History or Social Science, 2 years—including World History and US History

**B:** English, 4 years

**C:** Math, 4 years—including Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II, and one course beyond Algebra II

**D:** Laboratory Science, 3 years or two years of Lab Science and one year of college science

**E:** Foreign Language, 3 years

**F:** Visual & Performing Arts, 1 year

**G:** College Prep Electives, 4 years—Four additional courses in any of the disciplines in requirements A-F

9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Literature 9	Literature 10
Spanish I	World History 10
Biology	Chemistry
Instrument	Spanish II
PE/Health	PE/Health
Algebra I or Geometry	Geometry or Algebra II

11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Literature 11	Rhetoric and Composition
US History (AP option)	Physics =
Algebra 2 or Pre-Cal	Government
Spanish III	Pre-Calculus Math
SAT Prep/Junior Seminar	College Prep Elective
College Prep Elective	College Prep Elective

### ***PART B: Delineation of the core subjects***

Course descriptions for core subjects in ELA, math, science, history and Spanish for high school follow below. These courses have been aligned intentionally that our students meet not only the A-G required and recommended courses, but also fulfill general education units to transfer to a 4-year university. Students of Valor Academy will attain their A-G requirements through the classes offered on campus. It is the intention of Valor Academy to form a partnership with a local community college so that students will have the opportunity to supplement the required A-G courses with electives offered at a community college.

#### **Valor Academy's Recommended A-G courses**

- A) **History** – 2 years required: World History and US History
- B) **English** – 4 years required: Literature: all 4 years
- C) **Math** – 3 years required, 4 recommended: Algebra I, II ,and Geometry
- D) **Lab Science** – 2 years required, 3 recommended: Biology and Physics (Chemistry has been offered with Physics in alternate years.) All courses include lab work.  
We plan to offer all 3 subjects full time when we are over 250 students.)
- E) **Foreign Language** – 2 years required, 3 recommended: All 3 levels of Spanish
- F) **Visual & Performing Arts**—A full year course in Instruments where students learn to play the keyboard.

**College Prep Electives**—We hope to offer Instruments 2 and Korean 1 (or some other language), and Government.

#### **Course Descriptions for High School—ELA**

All courses will be aligned to the Common Core and California Content Standards. As Valor High School plans to open just before the full statewide implementation of the Smarter Balanced Assessments, all initial course planning will be aligned to the Common Core.

##### **Literature 9**

English 9 will be based on the California content standards for English-Language Arts and the Common Core with emphasis on the skills and knowledge that pertain to ninth grade. The course will cover the skills included in the concepts of word analysis and fluency, vocabulary development, comprehension of informational material, literary response and analysis, writing strategies, writing applications, written and oral English language conventions, listening and speaking strategies and speaking applications. Students are exposed to classic, modern, technical and electronic works of literature and information. Implementation of the course is in keeping with the guidelines of the Reading/Language Arts Framework for California public schools and the Common Core.

In covering the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts standards, students are able to read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature, write coherent and focused essays, demonstrate understanding of basic principles of research, write and speak with a command of standard English conventions and develop their personal vocabularies. In addition to assigned reading in literature and research, students will read independently in a wide variety

of genres and media, to include classical and contemporary literature. This independent reading is in part assessed and aggregated by the Reading Counts program.

### **Literature 10**

English 10 is based on the California content standards for English-Language Arts and the Common Core with emphasis on the skills and knowledge that pertain to tenth grade. The course focuses on word analysis and fluency, vocabulary development, comprehension of informational material, literary response and analysis, writing strategies, writing applications, written and oral English language conventions, listening and speaking strategies and speaking applications. Students will be exposed to world literature, technical and electronic works of literature as well as informational material. Implementation of the course is in keeping with the guidelines of the Reading/Language Arts Framework for the California public schools.

In covering the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade English Language Arts standards, students read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of world literature, write essays that convey a well-defined perspective and tightly reasoned arguments, demonstrated understanding of library skills including generating relevant questions and using current technology to find materials and formulate judgments about oral communications by analyzing logic and content in various media genres.

### **Literature 11**

English 11 is based on the California content standards for English-Language Arts and the Common Core with emphasis on the skills and knowledge that pertain to eleventh grade. The course focuses on the concepts of word analysis and fluency, vocabulary development, comprehension of informational material, literary response and analysis, writing strategies, writing applications, written and oral English language conventions, listening and speaking strategies and speaking applications. Students are exposed to classic American literature, technical and electronic works of literature as well as informational material. Implementation of the course is in keeping with the guidelines of the Reading/Language Arts Framework for the California Public Schools.

Students develop their skills in reading, thinking, writing, listening and speaking through in-depth study of American literature in a variety of genres and through researching informational materials. The course of study complements the student's study of U.S. history in the eleventh grade. Focus is also on characteristics of subgenres (including satire, parody and allegory), analysis of irony, tone, mood, style, voice and figures of speech. Readings trace the development of American literatures from the colonial period forward, contrasting major periods, themes, styles and cultures of each period.

### **Literature 12**

English 12 is based on the California content standards for English-Language Arts and the Common Core with emphasis on the skills and knowledge that pertain to eleventh grade. The course focuses on the concepts of word analysis and fluency, vocabulary development,

comprehension of informational material, literary response and analysis, writing strategies, writing applications, written and oral English language conventions, listening and speaking strategies and speaking applications. Students are exposed to classic World literature, technical and electronic works of literature as well as informational material. Implementation of the course is in keeping with the guidelines of the Reading/Language Arts Framework for the California Public Schools and the Common Core.

Students develop their skills in critical reading, thinking, writing, listening and speaking through in-depth study of World literature in a variety of genres such as short stories from the Czech Republic, British poetry, Latin Magical Realism, French novels and American & Asian autobiographies. The course of study complements the student's study of World and U.S. History. Course Goals are to help students become college ready writers and readers.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

### **World Geography & Cultures**

The course emphasizes the skills for grades 9-12 in the California content standards for Historical and Social Science analysis and the Common Core standards for Literacy. The focus of the content is on studying Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe and the peoples and cultures in each of them. Skills, including chronological and spatial thinking, historical research, evidence, point of view and historical interpretations. Students learn the skills necessary for astute investigation and analysis of historical events and documents that transfer to other disciplines. In addition, students investigate various disciplines within the social sciences, such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, geography, history, political science, economics and the future.

### **Modern World History**

This history/social science course examines the major turning points of the modern world from approximately 1750 to the present. Components of this class include: Historical Linkage, the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the Rise of Imperialism and Colonialism, World War I, Totalitarianism, World War II and Nationalism. Students develop an understanding of the historic as well as the contemporary geographic, social, political and economic consequences of the various areas and problems they review.

### **United States History**

The year begins with a review of the settlement of the colonies and the American Revolution, to westward expansion, the Civil War and Reconstruction. This provides the students with a connection to their past learning. Students then examine the major turning points in American History from the Industrial Revolution through the twentieth century. Emphasis is on the expanding role of the federal government and the federal courts; the balance of power between the right of the individual and states' rights; and the continuing struggle between minority rights and majority power. Importance should also be placed on the emergence of a modern corporate economy, the impact of technology on American society and culture, the movements toward

equal rights for racial minorities and women and the role of the United States as a major world power.

### **AP United States History**

This course covers the same standards and skills as United States History but do so at a more intensive level. Additional homework, reading and writing assignments are included to prepare students for the AP US History exam which earns college credit for those students who pass the exam.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – MATHEMATICS**

### **Algebra I**

Algebra I is based on the California content standards for grades 8-12 and the Common Core Standards. The course is designed to extend students' experience with patterns to a formal understanding of relations, function and the symbolic language and structure of algebra. Students will perform symbol calculations accurately and flexibly move between symbolic, graphical and reality numerical representations. The successful completion of Algebra I prepares students for Geometry. Dolciani's *Algebra 1* text will be used in this course at VACHS Those students who are not prepared to take geometry will take Algebra I in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **Geometry**

Geometry is based on the California content standards and the Common Core and presents geometrical concepts and patterns that are important to the development of students' thinking and problem-solving skills. Students learn geometry theorems involving two and three dimensions and will develop their ability to construct formal logical arguments and proofs in geometric settings and problems.

### **Algebra II**

Algebra II is based on the 25 California content standards for High School Algebra II from the California Department of Education and the Common Core. Algebra II complements and expands the mathematical content and concepts of Algebra I and Geometry. Students who master Algebra II gain experience with algebraic solutions of problems in various content areas including the solution of systems of quadratic equations, logarithmic and exponential functions, the binomial theorem and the complex number system.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS—SCIENCE**

### **Biology**

This course is a standards-based study of living things: origins, structures, functions, heredity, growth and development, interactions among and behavior of living things. Content is built around major biological concepts such as biochemistry and the biology of cells, genetics, evolution, ecology, physiologic systems and the diversity of living things. Emphasis is placed on the utilization of mathematical, analytical, data acquisition and communication skills as well as interdisciplinary approaches to discovery. Concepts and skills are reinforced by a strong emphasis on hands-on laboratory experiences and the integration of other branches of science. Applications to society, individuals and the utilization of technology are included, as is

consideration of the impact of human activity on biological systems. Literacy skills will also be reinforced in aligned with the Common Core Literacy Standards.

### **Chemistry**

This course is a standards-based study of fundamental chemical concepts, such as atomic theory and its relation to chemical behavior, chemical bonding, the mole and stoichiometry, molecular kinetics, energy relationships, solution dynamics, acids-bases, equilibrium, organic and biological chemistry and nuclear interactions. Emphasis is placed on the utilization of mathematical, analytical, data acquisition, and communication skills as well as interdisciplinary approaches to discovery. Concepts and skills are reinforced by a strong emphasis on hands-on laboratory experiences and the integration of other branches of science. Applications to society, individuals and the utilization of technology are included. Literacy skills will also be reinforced in aligned with the Common Core Literacy Standards.

### **Physics**

This course is a standards-based study of fundamental physics concepts, such as measurement, calculation and graphing in kinematics and dynamics, propagation and conservation of energy and momentum, gravitation and orbital mechanics, heat and thermodynamics, waves, optics, electromagnetic phenomena and relativity and quantum physics. Emphasis is placed on the utilization of mathematical, analytical, data acquisition, graphical and communication skills as well as interdisciplinary approaches to discovery. Concepts and skills are reinforced by a strong emphasis on hands-on laboratory experiences and the integration of other branches of science. Applications to society, individuals and the utilization of technology are included. Literacy skills will also be reinforced in aligned with the Common Core Literacy Standards.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

### **Spanish I**

Spanish I is an intensive introduction to Spanish emphasizing communicative-based competencies and Spanish language culture. Correlated to the curriculum are the broad Goals of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) which define the essential skills and knowledge that all students need to acquire. Students actively practice and learn to greet others, tell date and time, express likes and dislikes and ask and answer simple questions on a variety of topics. They will also learn to read, write and conjugate verbs in different tenses in Spanish. Students that start school with us at 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grades, take Spanish before they enter high school. This offers more time in their high school schedule to take other courses, electives and even community college courses.

### **Spanish II**

This comprehensive program builds on the communicative-based competencies, grammar and the Spanish language culture learned in Spanish I. Students that elect this course must have successfully completed Spanish I. Correlated to the curriculum are the broad Goals of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) which define the essential skills and knowledge

that all students need to acquire. Students express themselves using the present, past and future tenses on a variety of topics. The course is recommended for students who anticipate continuing on to more advanced levels of Spanish, including Advanced Placement and/or college entrance. Students also begin to read simply literature in Spanish and present projects that demonstrates their language development.

### **Spanish III**

Spanish 3 builds on the communicative-based competencies, grammar and the Spanish language culture learned in Spanish 1 - 2. Students that elect this course must have successfully completed Spanish I and II. Correlated to the curriculum are the broad Goals of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) which define the essential skills and knowledge that all students need to acquire. Students at this level speak Spanish conversationally and/or fluently. They can express themselves using the present, past and future tenses on a variety of topics, but also they learn how to conjugate in the imperfect tense; differentiate between the use of the preterite and imperfect tenses; conjugate in the future/conditional tenses; employ prepositional pronouns; form commands using the formal you—usted; differentiate between the two verbs "to be" ser and estar; employ double object pronouns, etc. Students also read literature in Spanish and present projects on their novel of choice in Spanish. This course is instructed exclusively in Spanish.

### **AP Spanish Language**

Advanced Placement Spanish Language covers the equivalent of a third-year college course in advanced Spanish composition and conversation. Students that elect this course must have successfully completed Spanish I, II and/or III. It encompasses aural/oral skills, reading comprehension, grammar and composition. The course seeks to develop language skills that are useful in themselves and that can be applied to various activities and disciplines rather than to the mastery of any specific subject matter. Extensive training in the organization and writing of compositions must be an integral part of the Advanced Placement Spanish Language course. Students who enroll should already have a basic knowledge of the language and culture of Spanish-speaking peoples and should have attained a reasonable proficiency in listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – MUSIC**

### **Music Instrument I**

Students will follow a basic beginning/intermediate method book provided in class. All lessons taught in the Music Instrument Lab course are aligned with the California Music Education Standards as part of the California Visual and Performing Arts Standards. VACHS' Music Instrument Lab course utilizes the Yamaha Music In Education (MIE) system. MIE is a unique, turnkey program that uses technology to make teaching and learning music more efficient and enjoyable. The curriculum is concept-based, teaching the same musical concepts (note reading, melody, harmony, rhythm, form, texture, etc.) as would normally be taught in general music programs. Although, MIE uses a classroom of state-of-the-art piano keyboards as the learning



interface, students still sing, move and discuss music that they are now able to play, compose and record.

Students will learn fundamentals of classical to modern piano/keyboard playing, including technique, interpretation, music theory and history as they relate to specific pieces of traditional (cultural), classical and modern piano repertoire. Students will also learn and polish pieces chosen to match each student's personal and technical level, applying appropriate expressive tools, such as dynamics and articulation. They will develop ear training and critical listening and thinking skills through exercises and exposure to audio and video recordings of historical pianists and musical groups. Supplemental rhythmic musicianship is practiced through hand drumming, movement (dance) plus sound recording (Garageband).

Students will become proficient in:

- Rhythm, notes/rests values
- Technique: Five Finger Patterns
- Note Reading by interval and note name
- Scales in order of Circle of Fifths
- Piano playing technique, hand position
- Correct fingerings  
Playing of primary chords in C, F and G
- Good hand shape, finger dexterity and (harmony/harmonization)posture
- Simple improvising and addition of left hand
- Solo material at the appropriate level bass to melodies
- Phrasing, Expression and Dynamics
- Nurturing and encouraging creative expression
- Becoming independent musical learners

Students are expected to develop the discipline of daily practice. This routine builds good, solid music skills (musicianship). Practice sessions are expected to include technical exercises. Beginners should practice in very short sessions. Students with limited or no practice time at home are expected to practice in the keyboard lab or on another piano in the music department during their unscheduled time of the school day.

### **Music Instrument II**

All lessons taught in the Music Instrument Lab course are aligned with the California Music Education Standards. Students will follow a basic beginning/intermediate method book provided in class. The VACHS Music Instrument Lab course utilizes the Yamaha Music In Education (MIE) system. MIE is a unique, turnkey program that uses technology to make teaching and learning music more efficient and enjoyable. The curriculum is concept-based, teaching the same musical concepts (note reading, melody, harmony, rhythm, form, texture, etc.) as would normally be taught in general music programs. Although, MIE uses a classroom of state-of-the-art piano keyboards as the learning interface, students still sing, move and discuss music that they are now able to play, compose and record.



Participation in the Instrument 2 class will provide students a chance to increase musical understanding beyond only reading notes by teaching students a vocabulary of chords and keys, accompaniment patterns, and improvisational techniques. Students will play melodies in several positions and have the opportunity to participate in ensemble playing. Students will develop good practice habits, and learn techniques to increase the muscular agility and flexibility of their hands. We will delve into music at its source, find out how music is constructed, and discover the composers and history behind the music.

Through the use of the MIE lab and Apple's Garageband software, students will have the opportunity to explore music technology and its applications to composition, arrangement, and even recording industry techniques. At the completion of this course, the student will have learned to play some of the standards of piano repertoire while gaining a thorough understanding of the history and basic concepts of music.

Students will become proficient in:

1. **Scales** – five finger patterns, all keys, major and minor, hands together. Major scales, all keys, one octave, in tetrachord style.
2. **Chords** – Arpeggios, all keys major and minor, hand crossing style. Block chords, major and minor, all keys, hands together, root position, 1<sup>st</sup> inversion and 2<sup>nd</sup> inversion.
3. **Progression** – I, V, I all keys major and minor, hands together.
4. **Harmonization** – Harmonize melodies in five-finger position using I and V chords, in all major and minor keys, showing chord symbols and or chord names. Harmonize simple melodies using root position, and inverted chords.
5. **Transposition** -Transpose simple melodies, including harmonization, as specified above.
6. **Sightreading**-Demonstrate ability to sightread music in five-finger position.
7. **Repertoire**-Learn and perform pieces assigned or approved by the instructor. The number and difficulty of pieces performed in class will have a part I determining your grade, with a minimum of five performances to pass the course.
8. Additional pieces or assignments may be added to the course requirements.

Students are expected to develop the discipline of daily practice. This routine builds good, solid music skills (musicianship). Practice sessions are expected to include technical exercises. Beginners should practice in very short sessions. Students with limited or no practice time at home are expected to practice in the keyboard lab or on another piano in the music department during their unscheduled time of the school day.

### ***PART C: The proposed teaching methodologies***

#### **Teaching Methodologies**

The mission of VACHS relies on outcome-driven, effective teaching. In order to support teachers to make strong academic gains with students, instruction is closely monitored, continuously improved upon and data driven. As certain practices in teaching have proven to engender student academic success, consistency in instruction is employed across classrooms to ensure a structured, safe and high performing environment. Structured lessons allow for clear

expectations from students and teachers, effective evaluation and improvement of teaching practice and most importantly, strong academic outcomes. We model our instructional methodologies and data driven practices after approaches utilized at high performing schools which have consistently and successfully led to strong academic and behavioral outcomes.

Valor Academy Charter High School subscribes to the following strategies in order to drive strong academic outcomes:

- Standards-based Curriculum and Instruction.
- Organized and Systematic Approach to Instructional Delivery.
- Schoolwide systems and structures
- Intervention Support Strategies
- Engagement Intensive Student-Teacher Interaction Techniques.

We have included the teaching methodologies and rationales for the core subjects.

### **Standards-based Curriculum and Instruction**

VACHS' curriculum is based on the California State standards. All teachers analyze state content standards, Common Core standards and internal school standards, such as reading and writing assessments, that correspond to their specific grade and content areas. They then frame their lessons to ensure that they align with the scope and sequence of their Standards Map.<sup>11</sup> The frequent use of standards-driven assessment data assist teachers and administrators in ensuring that content mastery occurs at the appropriate pace and in accordance with state standards.<sup>12</sup>

### **Organized and Systematic Approach to Instructional Delivery**

Consistent instructional approaches and strategies are part of our philosophy because effective classroom organization and management along with strategic instructional planning are cornerstones of a well-run educational program. We establish a system that sets clear teaching expectations every day; this ensures that all students learn their grade level standards and receive quality instruction.

- 1) **Standards Mapping** – all standards must be mapped out clearly and sequentially for learning to best occur with units that tie standards together.
- 2) **Syllabus** – Each course must have a delineated syllabus that describes the course, lists teacher expectations, student outcomes, unit titles, assignments, gradebook categories and breakdowns, along with teacher contact information.
- 3) **Study Island (SI)**—if the subject taught has an aligned Study Island testable subject, teachers must assign practice tests, schedule SI in-class assessments and calendar benchmarks throughout the academic year (included in syllabus).
- 4) **Reading Counts**—All ELA teachers and advisors monitor, track and support students with reading their independent novels once a month.

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<sup>11</sup> See teacher sample of a Standards Map in Appendix (Tab 6, Section F).

<sup>12</sup> See sample standards-based assessment created on Edusoft/Data Director and Item-Response Analysis in Appendix (Tab 6, Section F).

- 5) **Weekly overviews**—Teachers are responsible for submitting lesson plans on a weekly basis. Teachers who teach the same content for the same grades are expected to common plan to ensure instructional consistency. Weekly overviews are submitted to the Principal. S/he is responsible for the evaluation of the overviews and provides feedback to the teachers.
- 6) **Common Whiteboard Configuration**—Teachers use a common whiteboard configuration (WBC). Supported by the work of Dr. Lorraine Monroe, the founder of the Frederick Douglas Academy in Harlem, NY, the blackboard configuration (or whiteboard as we call it at VACHS) is an instructional accountability system that streamlines the content of that day's lesson. The WBC includes minimally:
  - The standard
  - SI Assignment
  - IWOC
  - Day's Agenda
  - Do Now
  - Important dates

The WBC sets clear academic expectations of what students learn during that lesson and also serves as a visual cue for the teacher to manage his/her instructional pacing more effectively. Administrators also use the WBC as a tool to identify how well the teacher follows the content, pacing and activities set forth in the lesson plan when they do their regular walkthroughs and evaluations.

Along with the WBC, administrators look for a student help desk/area. As VACHS believes in allowing students multiple chances to improve one's grade, teachers allow for missing assignments (MIs). Each classroom teacher has an area designated for students to help themselves: find additional copies of all assignments, a schedule of all IWOC missed and a clear procedure for submitting MIs, clearing their MI grade and receiving their grade back.

### **School-wide systems and structures**

We believe in implementing practices that maximize the amount of time a student is engaged in learning and that minimize the amount of time spent on non-instructional activities. Non-instructional activities include handing in homework, distributing class work, transitioning between classes, finding and retrieving class materials, etc. Administrators work with teachers to decrease any amount of time that is extraneous; the bell schedule reflects short passing periods; and returning teachers share with new teachers systems, strategies and procedures that have worked for them to maximize time on instruction. Throughout the school year, these systems are refined and new systems and structures are implemented as needed to achieve the same objective – utmost time spent on student learning.

More descriptions on school-wide systems and structures are provided under Section 5 *Description of Curriculum* on pages 45-48. More on school-wide assessments are on pages 118-119.

## Engagement Intensive Student-Teacher Interaction Techniques

Research indicates that students learn best in a stimulating environment – one that has a steady and consistently brisk pace, a high degree of teacher and student interaction and one that uses techniques that support a culture of high academic and behavioral expectations. We implement three components to ensure that teacher and student interaction is high:

- **Kinesthetic Learning.** Kinesthetic learning is an approach that uses physical activity to maintain student engagement and makes the learning process fun. Teachers strategically incorporate its use to teach students a new concept. It serves as a strong mechanism to provide physical movement during extended teaching blocks and extended school hours. Active student involvement also allows teachers to more effectively gauge the degree to which students are grasping the subject matter.
- **Checks for Understanding.** By including frequent and consistent checks for understanding through strategies such as use of whiteboards, reciprocal teaching, and think pair shares, teaching gain invaluable insight into student learning and are able to adjust instruction while keeping students actively engaged in the learning process.
- **Proven Instructional Techniques.** We will also use a variety of academic and behavioral techniques that reinforce student expectations. VACHS strategically selects two to three instructional techniques as a focus in professional development sessions such as reader's theater, Socratic seminars or community circles. Teachers engage in training and simulated role-plays, and they are observed and provided with feedback on their delivery throughout the school year by the administrator and fellow teachers.

## Language Arts – Instructional Methodologies and Rationales

Students work toward mastering word analysis, reading with fluency and systematically developing their vocabulary through close reading, academic discourse, and analytical writing. The English Language Arts department, with the approval of the Principal, selects the actual reading texts, with a focus on selecting non-fiction, cross- disciplinary texts to supplement the literature.. As the students progress through the school, they learn to form book clubs and to read more interactively, thinking through the text, its symbols, the author's intent, the characters, the historical context and other elements. Texts expand beyond novels to include poetry, lyrics, letters and non-fiction documents.

We supplement the standards-based reading program with grade-level appropriate literature that ties into the thematic units to be covered in our Social Studies and Science curricula. In addition, we plan to use the Reading Counts comprehension program to give students an engaging way to “test themselves” on the additional independent reading that they are required to do throughout the year. Students are taught to make reading a daily part of their lives, and

led to develop the habits of reflective readers and writers. Students are taught how to pick appropriate books, how to approach reading and how to analyze and learn from what they have read.

Our English writing program is based on teaching students (1) the fundamental mechanics of the grammar of the English language and (2) the writing process and (3) the ability to think critically about complex ideas and to express their thoughts in writing. . Writing instruction centers on discovering the student voice through expository narrative, persuasive essays, responses to literature and correspondences.

Written and oral English language conventions are emphasized at every grade level.

Teaching students how to listen and speak is another extremely important part of our program. Therefore, we reinforce correct oral English language skills in all their subjects. Even in Science and Math, students are corrected on their grammar. We also believe that public speaking is a necessary skill for our students and we teach it through modeling, correcting and oral presentation skills during portfolios and other projects.

### **History/Social Studies - Instructional Methodologies and Rationales**

Students at VACHS expand their understanding of history by studying people and events of the past. We make sure our students learn geography and the important facts associated with geography. Additionally, there is a strong focus on reading strategies specific to historical documents and writing analytical essays responding to interpretative issues in history. Students routinely read primary source documents and answer document based questions at every grade level. I

Emphasis is placed on the everyday lives, problems and accomplishments of people; how developing social, economic and political structures are necessary to maintain a civilization and a standardized culture of living; as well as in establishing and spreading ideas that help transform the world forever—are some of the concepts that students learn. Students develop higher levels of critical thinking by analyzing the interactions among various cultures, emphasizing their enduring contributions and the link—despite time, between the contemporary and historical worlds.

Fundamental to our students' understanding of history is the question of how is the past relevant to their lives today. In order for history to “come alive” they are able to relate it to their own lives, experiences and situations.

### **Mathematics – Instructional Methodologies and Rationales**

Instructional methods and strategies used in our Math department include: direct instruction and lecture, teaching models and problem solving, demonstration, explanation and teacher-facilitated discussions, cooperative learning groups, students solving problems and student practice materials. Assessment methods and tools used include teacher-designed tests,

publisher-made tests and assessments, class participation, notebooks, IWOC, performance tasks assessed using rubrics and midterm and final exams.

Following the 7-8<sup>th</sup> Math course of study, a large number of our students are ready for Geometry in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, while some take Algebra. In 10<sup>th</sup> grade, students matriculate to either Algebra 2 or Geometry. In 11<sup>th</sup> grade, students move on to either Trigonometry or Algebra 2. And 12<sup>th</sup> graders might opt for either Calculus or Trigonometry.

We believe that successful instructional strategies are contextual and practice-based in Math. Teachers employ instructional approaches appropriate for the material they are teaching with a focus on including complex real world problems which require students to generate and defend their own answers. One hallmark of teaching at VACHS is student engagement. Teachers endeavor to create interactive classrooms, both in teaching basic skills and posing probing questions to develop more complex, higher-order thinking. Teachers are responsible for driving the student learning deeper than the mere accumulation of skills and knowledge to conceptual understanding. They are supported with training and coaching on incorporating call and response, whole body “hands on” learning and role-playing to respond to kinesthetic-tactile learners. One might find in a math class, students working in groups on mini white boards with their own Expo markers to solve one problem that the teacher posed.

Because Math is best learned through practice, practice, practice and learning from one’s mistakes, daily IWOC in Math is mandated from all Math instructors. A large portion of the class is also spent in reviewing the skills, questions, answers and processes from the homework the night before. Students also frequently work in group settings so that they may also learn from each other. Sometimes, when a peer explains it—it makes more sense.

We believe that assessment must be integrated into the instructional program, and is as fundamental to good instruction as is lesson planning and teacher preparation. At VACHS, every instructional unit must have a clear final assessment to measure students’ overall mastery of that unit. Additionally, every lesson must embed checks for understanding to inform the teacher about the student’s skills and knowledge in order to help move the student towards mastery. Since units are connected to state standards, the assessments of those units align with state standards. We use the Edusoft/DataDirector program to create standards-based benchmark exams to check student progress at various points throughout the year.

### **Science – methodologies and rationales**

Our science program is textbook-grounded, but experiment-based. In other words, students read about the different concepts in science as defined by the state standards. Then, these concepts come to life through investigation and experimentation.

Our 9<sup>th</sup> graders take either Introduction to Sciences or Biology. 10<sup>th</sup> graders take Biology or Chemistry. 11<sup>th</sup> graders take Chemistry or Physics, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders take Physics or an additional elective.

***PART D: The scope and sequence of skills to be taught across the grade levels and the different subjects the school plans to teach.***

**Reading**

Reading proficiency is essential to the mastery of all other academic subjects. Our graduating seniors are ready to read college-level textbooks and write eloquently. Their abilities and skills reflect intensive Language Arts study and training. Such ability is dependent on a strong English Language Arts curriculum that ensures reading fluency and comprehension of fiction and non-fiction texts and a strong writing ability in a variety of genres. VACHS students read classical texts from diverse cultures in fiction, non-fiction and poetry, in addition to a book a month independently.

Teachers assess all students both at the beginning of the year and throughout the year. Our school also consistently shares and communicates with the student his/her progress. Students take reading assessments such as on the Northwest Evaluation Association to gauge general reading level and vocabulary knowledge. They also take a test of oral reading fluency and reading comprehension. Teachers develop unit plans based on the skill level of their students, including grade-appropriate novels, poetry, short stories and regular assessment of reading comprehension skills on Scholastic Reading Counts.<sup>13</sup>

There is also blocked time for writing and grammar. Our English Language Arts program builds a strong foundation in the English Language. The reading class focuses on fluency and comprehension of both fiction and nonfiction texts. Students practice their fluency through guided group and individual reading of a variety of texts and genres.

We are fully committed to ensuring our students are active and purposeful readers. Therefore, teachers and administrators develop a rigorous plan for introducing increasingly difficult texts and assignments to our students. Research indicates that the more reading materials children are exposed to, the easier it is for them to develop strong writing and comprehension skills<sup>14</sup>. The diversity of our texts and novels support students' development of their reading skills through many different contexts.

**Writing**

Written expression is closely linked with success in college-preparatory and higher education. While students will have some exposure to the other genres of writing, the vast majority of the writing required at VACHS will be argumentative in nature, including persuasive, response to literature and research papers. School leaders develop VACHS rubrics for assessing writing.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Please reference Appendix (Tab 6, Section F) for sample Scholastic Reading Counts and Study Island student progress reports.

<sup>14</sup> Armbruster, B., Lehr, F., and Osborn, J. (2001) "Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read." Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA).

<sup>15</sup> See Appendix (Tab 6, Section F) for Writing Rubrics and Prompts.



Write Source is published by Houghton Mifflin, but it is the product by educators and writers. It serves as a handbook for writing with rules, samples and challenges. It also includes components of the writing process, along with grammar and phonics lessons.

### **Mathematics and Our Approach to Numeracy**

Algebra mastery is considered by some to be the gateway to higher learning, and thus a modern reflection of the civil rights movement. For example, Robert P. Moses states that “[w]ithout these skills [of algebra] children will be tracked into an economic underclass.”<sup>16</sup>

Standards for each year of the mathematics curriculum will be developed using the California Public School standards and the item-analysis of all state and national assessments. To ensure teaching activities are consistent with best practices for math instruction, VACHS teachers will use a sequence of mathematics textbooks approved by the California Department of Education. Using these textbooks alongside a standards map that ensure that all skills and concepts taught at the school are standards driven will ensure an effective, standards-based approach to mathematics.

## ***PART E: How the curriculum addresses California Content Standards***

### **Aligning Curriculum and Internal Assessments to State Standards**

All of the curricular standards for VACHS are directly aligned with the California State Curriculum Standards. Where necessary for college preparation, VACHS’ curricula exceed these standards in a manner that is age-appropriate and simultaneously ensures the mastery of basic skills. For example, all California students complete Algebra by the eighth grade, a ninth grade requirement according to the California guidelines. Valor Academy Charter High School students must also read much more than an average student. More instructional time and a focused, accountable school culture allow for this intensified pace.

To accomplish our goals, we utilize Understanding by Design (UbD) as a framework for designing curricular units, assessments, and instruction. UbD is the framework that enables teachers to “plan backwards” to design a curriculum and lessons that are tied to state standards.<sup>17</sup> We believe in using the California Performance Standards, national standards, other challenging state standards, and the knowledge of our faculty to design specific internal standards informed by these external standards that clearly identify the content and skills that students should master in each grade level. In addition, to complement the UbD framework, During our summer orientation, school leaders supply incoming teachers with sample scope and sequences and internal standards and then guide teachers to critically analyze assessments from the CST and Common Core sample questions and standards to identify the skills and content areas needed

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<sup>16</sup> [www.algebra.org/apinfo/welcome2.html](http://www.algebra.org/apinfo/welcome2.html). “Excerpts from Remarks on the Struggle for Citizenship and Math/Sciences Literacy,” by Robert P. Moses, *Journal of Mathematical Behavior* 13, 107-111 (1994).

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.6a270a3015fcac8d0987af19e3108a0c/>.



for mastery at a specific grade level. Teachers blend the CA standards with the identified skills and content into smaller, measurable goals to create student-friendly VACHS standards. These standards drive the creation of quarter and semester-end assessments. The Curriculum Alignment Template (CAT)—a tool that allows the school and teachers to align each state standard with classroom lessons and assessments is also implemented guaranteeing a high degree of accountability to teaching the standards. The CAT includes CA standards and is used as a curriculum map that lists when standards are taught over the course of the year. In addition, it contains the lesson topic, essential skills/objectives/vocabulary and possible assessment methods. This detailed work enables teachers to have a solid plan before teachers work with students and acts as a general guide to assist them in their lesson creations.

### **Weekly Lesson Plans**

In addition to designing unit plans, teachers complete weeklong plans in advance to ensure that they are prepared and organized prior to teaching a lesson. Each weekly plan contains the standard for the week, IWOC, correlating Study Island objectives and/or Reading Counts goal. Under the supervision and support of the Principal and grade level cohort and department teams, all teachers have well thought out plans and strategic pacing charts within larger unit plans, and ultimately within the yearly curriculum. Professional development is scheduled after each quarter assessment for teachers to realign their pacing plans with the speed and accuracy of student achievement.

### **Courses and Standards**

The proceeding chart is not meant to be a complete or exhaustive listing of coursework or instructional strategies. Valor Academy's teachers consistently cover the California standards but bring their own methodologies and instructional strategies to each individual classroom assignment. Teachers at Valor Academy have significant input into their instructional materials, and therefore supplemental materials and programs and strategies change from year to year as new teachers come into our system. We hope that the proceeding charts for the selected courses have however, given some insight into how we align coursework and instructional strategies with the California content standards. Please also see Appendices L-O for sample copies of our curricula alignment with standards.

Coursework and instructional strategies	Courses as described are aligned with the following standards:
<p><b>9<sup>th</sup> Grade English</b></p> <p>English 9 is based on the California Content Standards for English-Language Arts with emphasis on the skills and knowledge that pertain to ninth grade. The course covers the skills included in the concepts of word analysis and fluency, vocabulary development, comprehension of informational material, literary response and analysis, writing strategies, writing applications, written and oral English language conventions, listening and speaking strategies and speaking applications. Students will be exposed to classic, modern, technical and electronic works of literature and information. Implementation of the course is in keeping with the guidelines of the Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools.</p> <p>In covering the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts standards, students will be able to read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature, write coherent and focused essays, demonstrate understanding of basic principles of research, write and speak with a command of standard English conventions, and develop their personal vocabularies. In addition to assigned reading in literature and research, students will read independently in a wide variety of genres and media, to include classical and contemporary literature. This independent reading will in part be assessed and aggregated by the Reading Counts program.</p>	<p><b>1.0 Word Analysis, fluency and Vocabulary Development</b> through the literature as well as vocabulary program.</p> <p><b>2.0 Reading Comprehension</b> will be developed through the literature, including informational documents, and critical study of expository materials.</p> <p><b>3.0 Literary Response and Analysis.</b> Students will read and respond to significant works of literature that reflect and enhance studies of history and social science as well as literature. Different forms of literature will be studied and characters will be analyzed. Students will begin to analyze characteristics of style.</p> <p><b>1.0 Writing Strategies:</b> Students will write coherent and focused essays. They will concentrate on organization and focus, precise language and details; they will learn to do a research paper with all of the appropriate elements; they will improve their evaluation and revision skills. They will write biographical narratives, response to literature, expository and persuasive essays, business letters</p> <p><b>1.0 Written &amp; Oral English Language Conventions</b> ~ standard English will be mastered and students will know the conventions of the English language. The literature, as well as a grammar text, will be used to demonstrate and master these conventions.</p> <p><b>1.0 Listening and Speaking strategies:</b> student oral presentation will be a part of English and history classes. Students will analyze famous speeches to learn the rhetorical devices and be able to evaluate the effectiveness.</p>

### Algebra I

Algebra I will be based on the California Content Standards for grades 8-12. The course is designed to extend students' experience with patterns to a formal understanding of relations, function, and the symbolic language and structure of algebra. Students will perform symbol calculations accurately and flexibly move between symbolic, graphical and reality numerical representations. The successful completion of Algebra I prepares students for Geometry. Dolciani's *Algebra 1* text will be used in this course at VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL.

The school's plan is to prepare our 7<sup>th</sup> graders to be ready for Algebra in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Those who are not will take the Math 8/Pre-Algebra course.

### Correlated Standards

- 1.0 Identify and use the arithmetic properties of subsets of integers & rational, irrational, , including closure properties for the four basic arithmetic operations where applicable.
- 2.0 Understand and use such operations as taking the opposite, finding the reciprocal; understand and use the rules of exponents.
- 3.0 Solve equations and inequalities involving absolute values.
- 4.0 Simplify expressions before solving linear equations and inequalities in one variable.
- 5.0 Solve multistep problems, including word problems, involving linear equations and linear inequalities, justifying each step
- 6.0 Graph a linear equation and compute the x- and y-intercepts. Able to sketch the region defined by linear inequality.
- 7.0 Verify that a point lies on a line, given an equation of the line. Can use the point-slope formula.
- 8.0 Understand the concepts of parallel lines and perpendicular lines and how those slopes are related. Can find the equation of a line perpendicular to a given line that passes through.
- 9.0 Solve a system of two linear equations in two variables algebraically and interpret graphically. Able to solve a system of two linear inequalities in two variables and sketch it.
- 10.0 Add, subtract, multiply and divide monomials and polynomials. Solve multistep problems including word problems by using these techniques.
- 11.0 Apply basic factoring techniques to second and simple third-degree polynomials. These include finding a common factor for all terms in a polynomials, recognizing the difference of two squares and recognize perfect squares of binomials.
- 12.0 Simplify fractions with polynomials in the numerator and denominator by factoring both and reducing them to the lowest terms.
- 13.0 Add, subtract, multiply and divide rational expressions and functions; solve both computationally and conceptually challenging problems by using these techniques.
- 14.0 Solve a quadratic equation by factoring or completing the square
- 15.0 Apply algebraic techniques to solve rate problems, work problems and percent mixture problems
- 16.0 Understand the concepts of a relation and a function,

	<p>determine whether a given relation defines function and give pertinent information about given relations and functions</p> <p>17.0 Determine the domain of independent variables and the range of dependent variables define a graph, a set of ordered pairs or a symbolic expression.</p> <p>18.0 Know the quadratic formula and are familiar with its proof by completing the square.</p> <p>19.0 Know the quadratic formula and are familiar with its proof by completing the square.</p> <p>20.0 Use the quadratic formula to find the roots of a second-degree polynomial and to solve quadratic equations.</p> <p>21.0 Graph quadratic functions and know that their roots are the x- intercepts.</p> <p>22.0 Use the quadratic formula to find the roots of a second-degree polynomial and to solve quadratic equations.</p> <p>23.0 Apply quadratic equations to physical problems, such as the motion of an object under the force of gravity.</p> <p>24.0 Use and know simple aspects of a logical argument; the difference between inductive and deductive reasoning; identify and give examples of each.</p> <p>25.0 Use properties of the number system to judge the validity of results, to justify each step and to prove or disprove statements.</p>
<p><b>Geometry</b></p> <p>Geometry will be based on the California Content Standards and presents geometrical concepts and patterns that are important to the development of students' thinking and problem-solving skills. Students will learn geometry theorems involving two and three dimensions and will develop their ability to construct formal logical arguments and proofs in geometric settings and problems.</p>	<p><b><u>Correlated Standards</u></b></p> <p>1.0 Demonstrate understanding by identifying and giving examples of undefined terms, axioms, through inductive and deductive reasoning.</p> <p>2.0 Write geometric proofs, including proofs by contradictions.</p> <p>3.0 Construct and judge the validity of a logical argument and give counterexamples.</p> <p>4.0 Prove basic theorems involving congruence and similarity.</p> <p>5.0 Prove that triangles are congruent or similar, and they are able to use the concept of correspondence of congruent triangles.</p> <p>6.0 Know and are able to use the triangle inequality theorem.</p> <p>7.0 Prove and use theorems involving the properties of parallel lines cut by a transversal, the properties of quadrilaterals and the properties of circles.</p> <p>8.0 Know, derive and solve problems involving the perimeter, circumference, area, volume, lateral surface area of common geometric figures.</p> <p>9.0 Compute the volumes and surface areas of prisms,</p>

	<p>pyramids, cylinders, cones, and spheres; commit to memory the formulas for prisms, pyramids and cylinders.</p> <p>10.0 Compute areas of polygons, including rectangles, scalene triangles, equilateral triangles, rhombus, parallelograms and trapezoids.</p> <p>11.0 Determine how changes in dimensions affect the perimeter, area, and volume of common geometric figures and solids.</p> <p>12.0 Find and use measures of sides and of interior and exterior angles of triangles and polygon figures and solve problems</p> <p>13.0 Prove relationships between angles in polygons by using properties of complementary, supportive vertical and exterior angles.</p> <p>14.0 Prove the Pythagorean theorem.</p> <p>15.0 Use the Pythagorean theorem to determine distance and find missing lengths of sides of right triangles.</p> <p>16.0 Perform basic constructions with a straightedge and compass, such as angle bisectors, perpendicular bisectors and the line parallel to a given line through a point of the line.</p> <p>17.0 Prove theorems by using coordinate geometry, including the midpoint of a line segment, the formula and various forms of equations of lines and circles.</p> <p>18.0 Know the definitions of the basic trigonometric functions defined by the angles of a right triangle; also know and are able to use elementary relationships between them.</p> <p>19.0 Use trigonometric functions to solve for an unknown length of a side of a right triangle.</p> <p>20.0 Know and are able to use angle and side relationships in problems with special right triangle and 30, 60, 90 degree triangles and 45 and 90 degree triangles.</p> <p>21.0 Probe and solve problems regarding relationships among chords, secants, tangents, inscribed and circumscribed polygons of circles.</p> <p>22.0 Know the effect of rigid motions on figures in the coordinate plane and space, including rotations, translations and reflections.</p>
<p><b><u>Biology</u></b></p> <p>This course is a standards-based study of living things: origins, structures, functions, heredity, growth and development, interactions among, and behavior of living things. Content is built around major biological concepts such as biochemistry and</p>	<p>Science: Biology (9<sup>th</sup> grade)</p> <p>1. Cell Biology</p> <p>The fundamental life processes of plants and animals depend on a variety of chemical reactions that occur in specialized areas of the organism's cells.</p> <p>Genetics</p> <p>2. Mutation and sexual reproduction lead to genetic variation in a population. As a basis for</p>

the biology of cells, genetics, evolution, ecology, physiologic systems, and the diversity of living things. Emphasis is placed on the utilization of mathematical, analytical, data acquisition, and communication skills as well as interdisciplinary approaches to discovery. Concepts and skills are reinforced by a strong emphasis on hands-on laboratory experiences and the integration of other branches of science. Applications to society, individuals, and the utilization of technology are included, as is consideration of the impact of human activity on biological systems.

understanding this concept:

3. A multi-cellular organism develops from a single zygote, and its phenotype depends on its genotype, which is established at fertilization. As a basis for understanding this concept:
4. Genes are a set of instructions encoded in the DNA sequence of each organism that specify the sequence of amino acids in proteins characteristic of that organism. As a basis for understanding this concept:
5. The genetic composition of cells can be altered by incorporation of exogenous DNA into the cells. As a basis for understanding this concept:

Ecology

6. Stability in an ecosystem is a balance between competing effects. As a basis for understanding this concept:

Evolution

7. The frequency of an allele in a gene pool of a population depends on many factors and may be stable or unstable over time. As a basis for understanding this concept:
8. Evolution is the result of genetic changes that occur in constantly changing environments. As a basis for understanding this concept:

Physiology

9. As a result of the coordinated structures and functions of organ systems, the internal environment of the human body remains relatively stable (homeostatic) despite changes in the outside environment. As a basis for understanding this concept:
10. Organisms have a variety of mechanisms to combat disease. As a basis for understanding the human immune response:

***PART F: How the teaching methodologies and instructional program address the needs of the targeted student population.***

**Reliance on Proven Instructional Programs and Methodologies**

The educational philosophy, teaching methodology and subsequent instructional program of VACHS are heavily informed by the practices utilized at Bright Star Secondary Charter Academy. Additionally extensive research into the elements that comprise the most successful schools in the country has been conducted to ensure a premier academic program. VACHS has recruited our best practices from schools that have had great success with students in underserved communities. School leaders have conducted many school visits and met with school leaders from:

- *Bright Star Secondary Charter Academy – Los Angeles, CA*
- Alliance College Ready #4—Los Angeles, California.
- Boston Collegiate Charter School—Boston, Massachusetts.
- Camino Nuevo Schools – Los Angeles, California.
- Granada Hills Charter High—Granada Hills, California.
- Green Dot Schools – Los Angeles, California.
- KIPP Houston High School—Houston, Texas.
- Synergy Quantum Academy Charter School—Los Angeles, California.
- Wildwood School—Los Angeles, California.

Schools in which economically disadvantaged students achieve mastery in the core subjects and experience academic success are those that offer:

- Extended school day and longer calendar year.
- Maintain an unyielding focus on ensuring students’ literacy and numeracy skills in the earliest grades.
- Adopt teaching methodologies that have proven successful in urban settings.
- Set high expectations both behaviorally and academically.
- Employ frequent assessments and data driven professional development.
- Develop a strict code of conduct and character building opportunities.
- Subscribe to masterful and specialized teachers.
- Involve parents and the community in the life of their scholars’ education.
- Treat each child as an individual, assessing them at their baseline, setting high standards and ensuring that they meet their goals through structured supports.

We believe that all students at VACHS including our targeted population will benefit from our highly structured instructional program.

***PART G: The evidence (research based) that the proposed instructional program has been successful with similar student populations and/or will be successful with the charter’s targeted population.***

The instructional program that we have developed for VACHS is critical to students’ academic success. In no way have we reinvented the wheel on instructional delivery, but instead studied models of success and recruited their best practices. Below is an example of design elements that we have replicated in the VACHS model.



School Design Element School Visited Best Practices	School Design Element School Visited Best Practices	School Design Element School Visited Best Practices
<b>Instructional Consistency</b>	Excel Academy Charter School, Boston, MA KIPP Houston HS, TX, BSSCA	BBC, common planning, Creed, extended day, high accountability and culture of “no excuses”
<b>College Practice Program</b>	Bright Star Secondary (BSSCA)	Innovative College Practice Program in conjunction with West LA College
<b>Character Development</b>	KIPP Aspire, San Antonio, TX	5 Pillars, Wooden’s Pyramid of Success
<b>Character Development</b>	Wildwood School, Los Angeles, CA	Advisory Curriculum
<b>Life Work Course</b>	KIPP Houston HS, TX; Yes, College Prep, Houston	College prep, career choices, service learning
<b>Professional Development</b>	KIPP Leadership Summit; California League of Middle and High Schools	Week-long development on a variety of topics for different school positions
<b>Curriculum Development</b>	Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, Boston, MA	Creation of Internal Curriculum with CAT Alignment, Procedures and Problem Solving in Math; assessment building
<b>Academic Accountability</b>	Achievement First, Crown Heights, NY;	Proven Instructional Practices, Curriculum, and Methods of Assessment
<b>Cultural Accountability</b>	Yes College Prep; Houston, TX Match Charter Public School; Boston, MA	Uniform, missing assignments, parent contracts, home visits, student discipline
<b>Student Discipline</b>	Self-Developed	William Glasser’s Choice Theory; Marvin Marshall’s Discipline without Stress
<b>Student and Staff Support</b>	Match Charter Public School, Boston, MA; Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, Boston, MA	Teacher Assistants, Match Corp of volunteers;
<b>Arts Program</b>	KIPP Schools; Renaissance Arts Academy	Music and Fine Arts Literacy, open room learning
<b>Assignment &amp; Grading Alignment with Standards</b>	Dr. Olga Mohan High School aka Alliance College Ready #4	Standards-based grading

## Research Base

Our approach is to use state approved texts in our classrooms, utilizing them as a resource to create an internally crafted curricula which (a) is developed through the curriculum alignment process outlined below and (b) is fully aligned with CA state standards. The process of curriculum development adopted by VACHS has been used by a number of high performing



charter schools nationwide serving a similar demographic. Our process for curriculum development and implementation has been adopted primarily from Roxbury Preparatory Charter School (Roxbury Prep) in Boston, MA.

***PART H: The textbooks or other instructional resources to be used.***

**Selection of Instructional Materials**

Valor Academy plans to use textbooks and materials that are aligned with the school's mission and vision of helping students to meet or exceed the California content standards. Our texts will be selected from the list of State approved or recommended curricula. The process by which curriculum materials will be selected will include the involvement of teachers and administrators who will evaluate materials for potential use in the school. Valor Academy will ensure that connections are drawn between different curricular areas and that all curricular choices and resources are part of a comprehensive school wide plan. The materials and programs that Valor Academy purchases will be evaluated periodically and may be changed or augmented as deemed necessary, so long as the replacement materials or supplementary materials also contribute meaningfully to students' pursuit of meeting or exceeding the California content standards.<sup>18</sup>

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

For English Language Arts and high school Literature, the curriculum is based on a scope and sequence of novels listed below:

Grade Level/ Theme	In Class Novel
<i>9 Genre</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>-</li> <li>- <i>Fellowship of the Ring</i></li> <li>- <i>The Glass Menagerie</i></li> <li>- <i>Great Expectations</i></li> <li>- <i>The Odyssey</i></li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> Please see Element 1, Section 4 for the full Valor Academy Instructional Plan.

	- <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
<i>10 British/World</i>	- <i>Canterbury Tales</i> - <i>Walden</i> - <i>Frankenstein</i> - <i>1984</i> - <i>Importance of Being Earnest</i> - <i>Julius Caesar</i>
<i>11 US Lit/Hist</i>	- <i>Huckleberry Finn</i> - <i>Great Gatsby</i> - <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> - <i>Autobiography of Malcolm X</i> - <i>The Crucible</i> - <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>

High School Math, History, Language, and Science	
Algebra I	
Title	Algebra I
Publisher	<b>Glencoe/McGraw-Hill (2003); Hardback –ISBN 0-07-868170 -7</b>
Algebra II	
Title	Classics Algebra II with Trigonometry
Publisher	<b>Prentice HALL; ISBN 0 -13-133789 – X</b>

Title	Algebra II and Trigonometry by Dolciani
Publisher	<b>Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) (1992)</b>
Geometry	
Title	Geometry
Publisher	<b>Glencoe/McGraw-Hill (2003); ISBN 0078457734</b>
US History	
Title	The Americans
Publisher	McDougal-Littell © 2007
World History	
Title	Modern World History
Publisher	McDougal-Littell © 2007
Spanish	
Title	Realidades 1, 2, 3
Publisher	Prentice Hall © 2006
Biology	
Title	Biology, California Edition
Publisher	Glencoe/McGraw-Hill (2008); ISBN 0-07-875713 -4
Chemistry	
Title	Glencoe Chemistry: Matter and Change, California Student Edition
Publisher	Glencoe/McGraw Hill (2006); ISBN 0078772370
Physics	
Title	Physics, Principles and Problems; California
Publisher	Glencoe/McGraw-Hill (2008); ISBN 0078787356

***PART I: How the school will recruit teachers who are qualified to deliver the proposed instructional program.***

**Teacher Recruitment**

We take a local and national approach towards recruiting our teaching staff. A major resource for recruitment is the Teach for America Los Angeles office, which is a funnel for our mission aligned, like minded teachers who can deliver our rigorous instructional program. Valor Academy has contracted with TFA for placement of teachers and they fully support the mission of the organization. The school has strong access to the TFA network, and works closely with the organization to effectively support the teaching needs of VACHS along with other Principals.

We recruit at all of the major colleges and universities in the area such as: UCLA, Loyola Marymount, USC, Pepperdine and the Cal State Universities. In addition, we rely on word of mouth, advertise in the local papers, and participate in annual charter schools job fairs, visit private schools, and post on websites such as Edjoin. Additionally, we subscribe to headhunting services that recruit for charter schools such as Teach California Charter. Nationally, we contact the alumni networks of colleges and universities and organizations such as New Leaders for New Schools and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

VACHS will comply with the provisions of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act. In regards to certificated personnel, all teachers will be highly-qualified as defined by No Child Left Behind:

- Have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education;
- Hold full state certification; and
- Demonstrate subject-matter competence for each NCLB core academic subject they teach.

VACHS furthermore assures that all classroom based paraprofessionals are also NCLB compliant in accordance with Title I funding parameters. All paraprofessionals have:

- (1) Completed two years of study at an institution of higher education; (2) Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; or
- (3) Met a rigorous standard of quality and are able to demonstrate, through a formal State or local academic assessment, knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing and mathematics (or as appropriate, reading readiness, writing readiness and mathematics readiness).

All paraprofessionals however, in accordance with Title I funds respectively, shall have a secondary school diploma or equivalent.

***PART J: How the school will provide ongoing professional development to ensure that teachers have the skills to deliver the proposed instructional program.***

**Meeting Teachers' Needs and Driving Instruction**

As teachers are at different years in their careers, each one of their needs and motivations for improvement is different. Therefore, a survey is conducted at the end and the beginning of each

school year to ensure that all the teachers' professional growth needs are addressed, budgeted and met to the best of our resources.

Valor Academy shall use both student achievement data and instructional data to develop the school site professional development plan. At the beginning of each school year, the Head of Schools will review the CST data, diagnostic testing results (such as from the MDTP and reading assessments, and Study Island Pretests to determine the efficacy of the previous year's instruction and student and teacher needs. This information will be used to develop the schoolwide goals, which will ultimately inform instruction. Additionally, teacher observation and evaluation data will be closely tracked in our HR reporting system to determine trends in teacher needs. We have two positions to help in this endeavor: Head of Schools and Principal. Both experienced educators will perform routine observations, provide feedback and prepare professional development (PD) seminars for the professional learning communities (PLCs) as needed. Additionally, professional development will be provided by the Bright Star Director of Special Education, Bright Star Director of Curriculum and Instruction, external professional development providers as needed, administrators from other Bright Star schools, and teachers who demonstrate promising practices.

Beginning of the year professional development for the school's first year will include seminars in reading and writing across the curriculum, lesson planning to teach for conceptual knowledge, curriculum mapping to the Common Core Standards, best practices in assessment and use of classroom level data, and classroom management.

Teachers new to Valor have two weeks of orientation to devise the scope and sequence of their respective curricula, and to learn the philosophy and structures of the school culture, and all school policies and procedures. Existing teachers have at least one week before school begins. There is one day a quarter that is a pupil-free day where the teachers and administrators gather and assess student data on achievement, discipline and exam scores. With this information, teachers amend their instruction accordingly; student intervention placements are made, along with more follow-up meetings with families.

Seven pupil free days have been scheduled into the academic calendar to allow for mid-year professional development. Those days will include a combination of student achievement data review, presentations on instructional strategies, grade level and departmental meetings. Additionally, teachers will be contracted to stay until 5pm each Friday to allow for schoolwide PD and departmental meetings. Additionally, minimum days are scheduled every other month to allow for collaborative PD with other Bright Star Schools.

After a week of teacher PD, student orientation follows, allowing for the development of strong teacher-student relationships. This juxtaposition promotes the idea of school-wide, community-based building, rather than classroom-bounded teachers and students. The staff and students embark on a week long life experience lesson to Big Bear Camp or San Diego Camp Surf where both adults and adolescents learn and do fun things together. Student participation is highly encouraged but not mandatory

At the end of the school year, teachers and administrators, shall meet regularly by department, whole group and grade level to close out the year and prepare for the oncoming school year. Not including weekly PLC time, returning teachers receive a minimum of 20 days of professional development; new teachers have 25 days throughout the school year allowing for adequate teacher support and growth.

***PART K: The school's academic calendar and sample daily schedule, which explain the rationale for allocation of instructional time to different subject matter areas, as well as an assurance that the school will offer, at minimum, the number of minutes of instruction set forth in Education Code § 47612.5.***

### **Calendar and Schedule**

At VACHS we realize that the time students spend in school is directly linked to the success they will have in demanding colleges and work forces. We employ an extended school day, an extended school week (for students that need the extra time on Saturday), and an extended school year with a “more time on task” mentality, designed to provide academic rigor for all VACHS students. Included in the school design are a number of supports to ensure that students meet our uniquely demanding academic and cultural goals as we do not socially promote.

### **Assurance**

VACHS provide all students within grades 9-12 at minimum of 64,800 minutes as set forth in the Education Code § 47612.5105:

- a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law and as a condition of apportionment, a charter school shall do all of the following:
  - (1) For each fiscal year, offer, at a minimum, the following number of minutes of instruction:
    - (A) To pupils in kindergarten, 36,000 minutes.
    - (B) To pupils in grades 1 to 3, inclusive, 50,400 minutes.
    - (C) To pupils in grades 4 to 8, inclusive, 54,000 minutes.
    - (D) To pupils in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, 64,800 minutes.
  - (2) Maintain written contemporaneous records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.

### **Regular Day Sample Schedule**

Period 1 ELA	7:50-8:55
Period 2 Math	8:58-10:03
Break	10:03-10:18
Period 3 Science	10:18-11:23
Period 4 History	11:26-12:31
Lunch	12:31-1:10
Period 5 PE	1:10-2:15
Period 6 RtI/Advisory	2:18-3:23
Regular Day Minutes	390 minutes

### Minimum Day Sample Schedule

Period 1 ELA	7:50-8:30
Period 2 Math	8:33-9:13
Period 3 Science	9:16-9:56
BREAK	9:56-10:11
Period 4 History	10:11-10:51
Period 5 PE	10:54-11:44
Period 6 RtI/Advisory	11:47-12:27
Minimum Day Minutes	240

Instructional Days	Minutes	Total
163	390	63, 570
7	240	1, 680
TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES		65, 250

## Valor Academy Charter High School (VACHS): 2013-14 Operational Calendar

Notes:	
<b>Life Experience Lessons</b>	
End of the Year 2011 LELs	6/9-13/2014
First Day of School	8/26/13
Last Day of School (178 days)	6/20/14
<b>Holidays</b>	
Labor Day	9/2/13
Columbus Day	10/14/13
Veterans Day	11/11/13
Thanksgiving Break	11/20-22/2013
Winter Break	12/23-31/2013
New Years Day	1/1/14
Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday	1/20/14
Presidents' Day	2/17/14
Spring Break	4/14-18/2014
Memorial Day	5/26/14
<b>Pupil Free Days (School not in Session)</b>	
Teacher Professional Development Day's	10.11.13, 12.3.13, 1.6.14
Teacher Professional Development Day	14.14, 3.10.14, 4.21.14, 5.27.14
<b>Special Events:</b>	
Back to School Night	9/16/13
Fall Festival	10/25/13
Winter Holiday Show	12/13/13
Fall Semester Portfolio Presentation	1/13/13
Open House	3/21/13
Spring Sing	5/16/14
Spring Semester Portfolio	6/16-17/2014
Evening of Excellence	6/19/14
Field Day	6/19/14
Middle School Promotion	6/20/14
<b>Professional Development</b>	
Summer PD	8/5-23/2013
Teacher Mid-year PD	1/2/14

Aug-13						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Sep-13						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Oct-13						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Nov-13						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Dec-13						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Jan-14						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Feb-14						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

Mar-14						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Apr-14						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May-14						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Jun-14						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

170 days of instruction  
7 Pupil Free PD Days



## Rationales

The High School instructional minutes reflect a typical period of 56 minutes, but this is so we can accommodate students that attend Community College to earn college-level credits. There is also an Advisory Period that takes place daily. A student's advisory teacher will act essentially as the student's Homeroom teacher. Additionally, during the Advisory period, students will receive an appropriate grade level curriculum which may include sexual health, Life Skills, drug and alcohol education, career education, study skills, and seminars on social/emotional issues and push in services on college counseling from the student's Connector.(the hour before lunch.) During this time, as needed, students may have the opportunity to get extra help or receive tutoring from their teachers or to study or work in our computer labs.

## Section 6: Describe how the instructional program will meet the needs of:

### *PART A: English Language Learners (including reclassification)*

#### English Learner Instruction

VACHS is required to timely identify potential English Learner students and provide them with an effective English language acquisition program that affords meaningful access to the school's academic core curriculum. Instructional plans for English Learners (EL) must be (1) based on sound educational theory; (2) adequately supported with trained teachers and appropriate materials and resources; and (3) periodically evaluated to make sure the program is successful and modified when the program is not successful.

On an annual basis (on or about October 1), VACHS shall submit a certification to the District that certifies that they will either adopt and implement LAUSD's English Learner Master Plan or implement the Charter School's own English Learner Instructional/Master Plan. If Charter School chooses to implement its own EL plan, the instructional plan shall encompass the following, including but not limited to:

- ★ How ELs' needs will be identified;
- ★ What services will be offered;
- ★ How, where and by whom the services will be provided;
- ★ How the program for ELS is evaluated each year and how the results of this assessment will be used to improve those services (annual report of the assessments)

VACHS shall provide to CSD a copy of its entire, current plan upon request such as during the annual oversight review process.

VACHS shall administer the CELDT annually. Valor Academy Charter School shall also ensure that it will provide outreach services and inform parents with limited English proficiency with important information regarding school matters to the same extent as other parents.

For greater detail, an English Language Learner Plan for Bright Star Schools is available to view. English Language Learners are supported through a combination of modified instruction, a supportive school culture, and additional academic support as needed. Teachers provide sheltered instruction using SDAIE techniques when students have difficulty understanding English. The school also promotes the success of English Language Learners by valuing the Spanish language as a critical resource and fostering a bilingual culture. English Language Learners act as mentors to Spanish Language Learners as part of class assignments in the Spanish courses.

In accordance with SB 638, VACHS uses the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) to identify new enrollees with a home language other than English, to monitor their progress in learning English, and to help reclassify them in regards to proficiency in English. New enrollees are tested within 30 calendar days of enrollment. The following are procedures used to reclassify a student:

1. Score of Basic or above on the most recent California Standards Test (CST) or California Modified Assessment (CMA) in English-language arts
2. English proficiency on the CELDT: Overall level of Early Advanced (level 4) or Advanced (level 5) with each domain score (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) Intermediate (level 3) or higher
3. Teacher evaluation based on student grades/progress report marks
4. Parent consultation and approval

### ***PART B: Socioeconomically disadvantaged students***

VACHS, through its mission and vision seeks to empower socio-economically disadvantaged students and allow each and every student to succeed in demanding colleges and work forces. VACHS provides enrichment evenings, weekend and multiple Life Experience Lessons (LELs) throughout the school year in order to provide socio-economically disadvantaged students with firsthand experience outside of the classroom in order to strengthen their “cultural currency” which ultimately enhances their understanding of their grade level curriculum inside the classroom. During the year students participate in experiences such as plays and concerts aligned to curriculum at local venues, visits to local museums and cultural centers such as the California Science Center and Getty Museum, and visits to local universities like UCLA and USC. We intend to provide earned trips such as a weekend trip to Big Bear so that inner city students can learn to ski and snowboard, a week long civil rights tour of the South, and a trip to Washington DC. These trips are fully paid for by the school for all students who are eligible. Additionally, VACHS employs a longer school day and year, as well as a heavy focus on core subjects in the early grades to bolster all students’ skills and content knowledge. Additionally, multiple supports, afterschool intervention, and End-of-Year Remediation are provided for all students.

### ***PART C: Gifted students***

VACHS truly believes that all students are gifted and capable of academic excellence. Thus, any student who comes out of a GATE program and chooses to enroll at finds that the academic standards and expectations that they have grown accustomed to in their individual classrooms are now prevalent school-wide. Students working at different paces are sometimes paired so that students excelling in a particular subject can help students struggling with that same subject. Research shows that people deepen understanding through the process of teaching others, and students may develop greater curiosity as they consolidate their own learning. Furthermore, as other students benefit from the help, paired learning helps keep up the pace.

Teachers receive professional development in identifying exceptional students and may recommend a student for assessment, as may an administrator or parent. Students are then assessed by a contracted school psychologist. Students who are identified as gifted are monitored biannually by school administration to ensure that the student is working according to his potential. While VACHS does not offer a pull out gifted program, gifted students have opportunities to extend their learning through more rigorous reading and wider choice in the independent reading program, expanded options within the project based learning cycles, course compacting, course acceleration, and through AP Courses. Additionally, teachers integrate best practices for teaching students gifted students within the regular classroom, including Kaplan's elements of Depth and Complexity, Accountable Talk, and project based learning.

### ***PART D: Students achieving below grade level***

Students are considered "low achieving" if they meet any of the following criteria:

1. Performing more than one level below his/her actual grade level.
2. Not on track to make at least one grade level of growth in reading, writing, and math.
3. Earning below 70% in one or more core subjects and therefore in danger of failing the grade and not on track to make at least one grade level of growth in reading, writing, and math.

Students who meet more than one of the above mentioned criteria will be referred for an SST. Connectors monitor the progress of "low achieving" students very closely, conducting meetings and progress checks on a monthly basis. The connector then acts as the glue for all staff members serving the students. Teachers use the RtI model within the regular classroom, but this may not prove sufficient for our low achieving students who are likely to be scheduled into an RtI Math or ELA class during their advisory period.

VACHS' main goal is to ensure that all students are prepared for success in demanding colleges and work forces. Hence, our goals for academically low achieving students are the same as our goals for the entire student body. Our program and supports ensure that all students identified as low achieving have equal access to a rigorous, college-preparatory education. Based on the academic data of the elementary and middle schools in the area, VACHS expects that a great

number of its students may be classified as “low achieving.” As such, VACHS’ entire curriculum, program, and supports have been adapted to improve performance for traditionally low achieving students.

- We assess all students after enrollment to determine learning strengths and weakness, as well as overall proficiency in core subjects.
- We offer a number of supports to accelerate learning such as tutoring and homework help afterschool, or Partnerships.
- Our character building Advisory Program and our Expected Schoolwide Learning Results build habits for success.
- Low achieving students are also provided remediation during afterschool (Partnerships), vacation (aka Vacation Partnerships), Saturdays (Saturday Partnerships) and the last four weeks of school where they participate in an intensive remediation program and retake certain assessments in each course they have failed.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

### **1. *SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM***

All charter schools must adhere to all terms and conditions of the Chanda Smith Modified Consent Decree (“MCD”) and any other court orders and/or consent decrees imposed upon the LAUSD as they pertain to special education. Charter schools must ensure that no student otherwise eligible to enroll in their charter school will be denied enrollment due to a disability or to the charter school’s inability to provide necessary services. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure the recruitment, enrollment and retention of students with disabilities at charter schools.

Prior to Los Angeles Unified School District (“LAUSD” or “District”) Governing Board approval, Valor Academy Charter High School will execute a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) by and between LAUSD and Valor Academy Charter High School regarding the provision and funding of special education services consistent with the requirements of the LAUSD Special Education Local Plan Area (“SELPA”) Local Plan for Special Education.

### **SELPA Reorganization**

The Los Angeles Unified School District is approved to operate as a single-District SELPA under the provisions of Education Code § 56195.1(a) and intends to continue operating as a single-District SELPA as in the current structure but has created two school sections (District-operated Programs and Charter-operated Programs) under the administration of one single Administrative Unit pursuant to a reorganization plan approved by the Board of Education on January 4, 2011 (149/10-11). Full implementation of the reorganized LAUSD SELPA will begin in the 2013-2014 school year requiring all District-authorized charter-operated schools to elect one of the three options available under the LAUSD SELPA. Prior to an Option election, all District-authorized charter schools shall participate as a school of the District under the District-Operated Programs Unit. Prior to the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, all District-

authorized charter schools, other than those that have previously executed an Option 3 Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”), will be required to execute a new MOU setting forth the LAUSD SELPA option election for the remainder of the charter petition term. The Charter-operated schools will not have a LEA status but will function in a similar role in that each charter school will be responsible for all special education issues including services, placement, due process, related services, special education classes, and special education supports. Charter schools may apply for membership in the Charter-operated Program section of the SELPA. These schools will receive support from a Special Education Director for the Charter-operated Programs.

\*Modified Consent Decree Requirements -

All Charter Schools chartered by LAUSD Board of Education are bound by and must adhere to the terms, conditions and requirements of the *Chanda Smith* Modified Consent Decree (“MCD”) and other court orders imposed upon District pertaining to special education. The MCD is a consent decree entered in a federal court class action lawsuit initially brought on behalf of students with disabilities in LAUSD. It is an agreement of the parties approved by the federal court and monitored by a court-appointed independent monitor. The MCD includes nineteen statically measureable outcomes and facilities obligations that the District has to achieve to disengage from the MCD and federal court oversight. All charter schools are required to use the District’s Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual and Welligent, the District-wide web-based software system used for online Individualized Education Programs (“IEPs”) and tracking of related services provided to students during the course of their education.

As part of fulfilling the District’s obligations under the Modified Consent Decree, data requests from charter schools that are not connected to the District’s current Student Information Systems (“SIS”) are made on a regular basis. The requested data must be submitted in the Office of the Independent Monitor’s required format and are as follows:

- # The Independent Charter School Suspension/Expulsion Report, due monthly throughout the school year.
- # Paper SESAC Report and Welligent Student Listing Verification, due monthly throughout the school year.
- # CBEDS, which is due at the end of October of Each School Year.
- # All Students Enrolled December 1 of Each School Year, due at the end of December every school year.
- # Graduation Status of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Enrolled on December 1, due at the end of June every school year.

The MCD requires charter schools to implement the District’s Integrated Student Information System (ISIS). ISIS is a suite of applications which is designed to capture all District student data.

## **Section 7: Describe the implementation plan for the school's instructional program, including a timeline for implementation of various components of the plan.**

### **RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI) MODEL**

At Valor Academy, Response to Intervention is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with possible learning and behavioral needs. Struggling students are identified by procedures established by each school site, including CST results of Below Basic and Far Below Basic, student performance below 70% on the MDTP and/or a failing grade in a math course. These students are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity. These services are provided by a variety of personnel including paraprofessionals (i.e. Teacher Assistant) and teachers during a scheduled RtI period during the students' Advisory. Progress is monitored to assess the students' progress.

### **COMPONENTS OF RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI) MODEL**

There are four major components to the RtI model used by Valor Academy. They are:

1. **High Quality, Researched Based Classroom Instruction:** At Valor Academy, classroom teachers are expected to differentiate instruction to students through researched based strategies and techniques. The Director of Instruction works closely with each site to assist in the implementation of current instructional practices.

Classroom teachers are required to attend a two to three week-long professional development week prior to the start of the school year. During these weeks, teachers explore the most current instructional practices. Throughout the school year, each site is responsible for the implementation of professional development opportunities with the concentration being in classroom instruction. Valor Academy also requires the teachers to attend professional development sessions once a week and on six professional development days throughout the year. Teachers also have the opportunity to attend professional development workshops and conferences throughout the year.

The administrative staff is also required to attend monthly instructional meetings led by the Head of Schools. The site is formally visited by the Head of Schools each month. During those visits, the site administrator and the Head of Schools visit each classroom to review instruction. Accomplishments are acknowledged and, if needed, an action plan is developed to enhance instruction. The action plan is monitored by both the site administrator and the Head of Schools.

2. **Ongoing Student Assessment:** At Valor Academy, data drives classroom instruction. Students are consistently and regularly assessed through various tools that include NWEA, Study Island, teacher created tests, assignments, and quizzes. The information can be quickly assessed by the teachers and staff by using DataDirector, an online data and assessment management system. School personnel uses DataDirector to monitor all student progress throughout the year. Teachers meet regularly through collaboration and Student Success Teams to review the data and make educational decisions.
3. **Tiered Instruction:** The use of a multi-tiered instruction based on student data allows teachers to differentiate instruction for all students. A teacher assistant works with the classroom teacher in the implementation of tiered instruction through small group and one to one instruction. The classroom teacher and teacher assistant work together to deliver specific instructional strategies that will differentiate concepts for students considered at risk for academic failure.
4. **Parent Involvement:** Valor Academy strongly believe that instruction is best delivered and retained when there is an active relationship between the home and school. Through the Student Success Team approach, parents are involved in creating an individual learning plan for their students. Parents are also asked to volunteer at their child's school forty hours a year coordinating and participating in a variety of school activities. In order to assist parents in having a role in their child's education, Valor Academy has a full time Family Services Coordinator.

## **RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION AS A RESPONSE TO DISPROPORTIONALITY**

A key goal to the Valor RtI model is to improve the outcomes for all students. Through the RtI model instruction and intervention are aligned with students' needs. High quality instruction is delivered with good fidelity. The RtI model allows Valor Academy to monitor disproportionality, not based solely on a head count, but rather through a focus on differences in outcomes experienced by various groups.

## **VALOR ACADEMY' RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION MODEL:**

Valor Academy uses a three tier intervention model as its Response to Intervention. The three tiers are as follows:

1. **Tier One: Core Instruction:** Powerful instruction begins with the adoption and use of an evidence-based curriculum. Effective teachers do not simply teach such a program page by page for all students. Rather, they differentiate the instruction so it is designed to meet the specific needs of students. Research shows that there are five key components that are critical to effective and powerful instruction. They are:
  - A. Essential skills and strategies are taught regularly and in a timely manner.
  - B. Differentiated instruction based on assessment results is provided.



- C. Explicit and systematic instruction includes lots of practice, with and without teacher support and feedback.
- D. Opportunities are given to apply skills and strategies throughout the instructional day.
- E. Student progress is monitored regularly with re-teaching given as needed.

At Valor Academy, teachers are required to incorporate these key components in their daily instruction. Furthermore, school-wide prevention efforts have been established to promote learning for all students. Valor Academy anticipates that the majority of students will respond to these strategies and will not require additional interventions.

- 2. **Tier Two: Strategic Interventions:** The use of a multi-tiered instruction based on student data allows teachers to differentiate instruction for all students. A teacher assistant works with the classroom teacher in the implementation of tiered instruction through small group and one to one instruction. The classroom teacher and teacher assistant work together to deliver specific instructional strategies that will differentiate concepts for students considered at risk for academic failure.
- 3. **Tier Three: Intensive Interventions:** Students enter the learning environment with different skill sets. An individual student's Response to Intervention is unique and dependent on many factors. To reach desired outcomes in school, some students may require additional or unique instructional strategies or interventions beyond those typically available.

### **MAKING COLLEGE A REALITY NOW**

As VACHS hopes to expand our instructional program to include college course units for students after their 10<sup>th</sup> grade year. By the time our students finish our program, students will earn some college credit by being concurrently enrolled in both our high school and a community college (either Valley College or Mission College) Valor Academy offers all high school students with the unique opportunity to attend Community College while attending *Valor Academy Charter High School* and earn credits that count toward high school graduation that will transfer to most colleges and universities, including the University of California and California State systems. Students will complete their A-G courses at VACHS, on the school campus. However, dual enrollment in the community college will serve to supplement their educational experience through the breadth of electives that will be made available to them.

Less than 25% of all Americans choose to travel the road to college. From the neighborhoods where Valor Academy currently draws students, less than 10% are accepted to 4-year universities and less than 5% of students actually complete (by graduating) their roads to college.



## **OUT-OF-SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Valor Academy believes that all students are kinesthetic learners. We agree with the following adage: “I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”

We believe that our students must be given the opportunity to enhance their education with real-life experiences. These experiential learning trips are called Life Experience Lessons or LELs. LELs include physical challenges in other cities (biking from downtown Washington D.C. to Mt. Vernon along the Potomac River, walking from Central Park to the Brooklyn Bridge or hiking to the Havasupai Indian Reservation in Arizona). They also include visits to multiple universities as well as to national and historical sites. We want our students to come out of their “comfort zones” and become explorers of knowledge and new experiences. In the past they have included the following:

- A camping trip at the beginning of the year to Big Bear, Catalina, Arizona or Utah, focusing on team-building and creating bonds.
- A mid-year trip to the local mountains for experiencing the snow, skiing and snowboarding, designed to create new experiences and gain confidence.
- End-of-the-year journeys to places such as King’s Canyon, Washington D.C., Northern California or the Southern states, bringing science and history lessons to life while touring colleges and allowing students to envision the possibilities for their futures.

VACHS believes the education of students comes from many varied sources, many of which are outside the school facility. At least once each quarter (preferably during orientation week and at year’s-end) students should either be given or be able to earn a meaningful off-campus experience where they will have the opportunity to:

- (4) Experience something out of their daily, city-life routine that will involve both mental and physical challenges;
- (5) Build bonds with fellow classmates and teachers;
- (6) Share stories, songs, cheers, skits, and (preferably) campfires of some sort.

The most ancient human tradition is sharing these things at night around a fire. Based on past experiences, we have found that organizing the trips ourselves can cost about one half the price of having them organized by outside agencies. Self-organization also allows us much more time for the bonding experiences that we strive to offer our students.

All of Valor Academy’ co-curricular programs enrich and enhance students’ classroom experiences while encouraging personal creativity and understanding as well as confidence to actively participate in society.<sup>19</sup> Through these experiences, our students learn to strive for happiness and meaning in a diverse and broad world-view.

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<sup>19</sup> See Student and Family Handbook in Appendix (Tab 6, Section F) for a detailed spreadsheet of the trips taken at each grade level each year.

***Section 8: If the proposed school will serve high school students, describe the manner in which the charter school will inform parents about the transferability of courses to other public high schools and the eligibility of courses to meet college entrance requirements. (Courses offered by the charter school that are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may be considered transferable and courses approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the "A" to "G" admissions criteria may be considered to meet college entrance requirements.)***

Valor Academy Charter High School understands that parent involvement and engagement in our students' education is the other half of the puzzle to produce truly successful individuals. We have therefore implemented a two-prong approach to educating our students and parents about the processes of college admissions. The Connector works with the students and meets with families individually, while our Director of Student Services implements group parent workshops to educate parents by grade-level, whole school and by subject of the college application process. Within the context of the connector relationship with families as well as the presentations described parents will be informed about the transferability to other high schools and college.

### **Courses Approved**

VACHS intends on applying for and receiving an accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) validating our program, granting our curricula an official stamp of approval for UC and CSU recognition and our students access to all institutions of higher learning. Valor anticipates applying for WASC in its second year of operation.

The College Counselor supports all high school teachers to prepare their curriculum for the University of California or the California State University course approval process. Teachers receive course description instructions and a course description template on their particular subject in order to complete the syllabi appropriately before submitting to the University of California's Doorways web site.

The College Counselor submits the syllabi online and keeps track of email notifications to ensure all courses are approved.

### **Student Targets**

The College Counselor meets with small student groups and individual families to inform them of the following:

- ★ What A-G courses look like.
- ★ The minimum requirements to meet A-G status.
- ★ VACHS graduation requirements.
- ★ University prerequisites.
- ★ Financial Aid and Scholarships.
- ★ Undocumented AB 540 Status.
- ★ Exams such as CAHSEE, SAT, PSAT, ACT.

★ Application deadlines.

After the initial general meeting that usually takes place during the summer before a student's junior year, one-on-one appointments are also set to make individual course maps. During these individual meetings, the counselor discusses with the student his/her scope and sequence of all requirements and grade equivalents needed to ensure graduation and college acceptances. If a student is not on-target with his/her graduation road map, the counselor also helps amend his/her scope and sequence to earn necessary credit redemptions and all other prerequisites.

Additionally students may attend a senior prep class in order to receive assistance with:

1. Personal statements.
2. CSU, UC, Private, Out of State applications.
3. Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).  
Academic Advising/career advising.

The parent college workshop series consists of four monthly workshops from September-January, excluding December. The workshops are facilitated by the Family Services Coordinator, College Counselor, and Parent Liaison(s) and cover the following topics:

**1. The Four Higher Education Systems**

- a. Understanding the differences between community colleges, Cal State. Universities, UC's (University of California Institution), and private schools.

**2. Admission Requirements**

- a. A-G Requirements.
- b. Tests. (SAT, ACT, etc.)
- c. Personal Statement.
- d. Deadlines.

**3. Application Process**

- a. Working workshop to help parent familiarize themselves with applications and the information required.
- b. This workshop will take place before the November 30<sup>th</sup> application deadline.

**4. Financial Aid**

- a. Different forms of aid – scholarships, grants, loans.
- b. FAFSA.

The workshops were created to increase parents' college knowledge and provide them with resources that will aide them in supporting their students' path to college. This is supplemental to the individual support students receive from the College Counselor on campus.

## **ELEMENT 2: MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES**

*“The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. ‘Pupil outcomes’, for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school’s educational program.” Ed. Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(B)*



No man should bring children into the world who is unwilling to persevere to the end  
in their nature and education. **Plato**

## Section 1: List the anticipated skills and knowledge outcomes for students:

Along with proficient and/or mastery of grade-level standards for all core subjects, VACHS' curriculum also includes the whole child. Our advisory and learning goals outside-of-the-classroom include the following.

### Expected School-Wide Learning Results

1. A **Conscientious Learner** who:
  - a. Develops and monitors personal, educational and career goals.
  - b. Continually assesses, evaluates, and reflects upon schoolwork.
  - c. Demonstrates curiosity and the love of learning.
  - d. Prepares for acceptance into a four-year college or university.
  - e. Shows good character by doing the right thing when nobody is watching.
2. A **Compassionate Citizen** who:
  - a. Demonstrates love of country and service to others.
  - b. Shows concern for the environment and the planet.
  - c. Treats peers as he/she would like to be treated.
  - d. Works with others in a way that shows respect and mutual understanding when resolving conflicts.
3. A **Creative Thinker** who:
  - a. Seeks to solve problems with new and better solutions.
  - b. Uses existing information to make recommendations, predictions and decisions.
  - c. Plans, initiates and completes projects.
  - d. Develops his/her own, unique voice through written and spoken word.
4. A **Positive Person** who:
  - a. Models honesty, integrity and loyalty.
  - b. Demonstrates teamwork, respect and leadership.
  - c. Appreciates ethnic and cultural diversity.
  - d. Embraces challenges and thinks optimistically.
5. A **Proactive Planner** Who:
  - a. Understands the value of foresight and time management.
  - b. Gathers, synthesizes and evaluates information from a variety of sources in order to make informed decisions.
  - c. Ensures that conflicts among peers are addressed in a timely and productive manner.
6. A **Perseverant Student** Who Works Diligently to:
  - a. Understand the concepts in History/ Social Studies, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Science, English/Literature/Language Arts, Visual and Performing Arts and Physical Education.
  - b. Overcome challenges and test his/her limits without making excuses for failure.
  - c. Pursue his/her academic goals with tenacity until they are accomplished.

*Please see also Element 1, Part D, Scope and Sequence of Skills and Content.*

**Section 2: Set specific, measurable, and realistic student achievement targets as closely as possible for the anticipated student population for the following:**

**Accountability**

The principal, the Head of School and the Board are ultimately accountable to the LAUSD for students' success. Within a culture of mutual accountability, we have established a clear and specific set of measurable performance goals against which the school will measure the success of its academic program. All parties within the school are also accountable to one another. Everyone, from student, to parent, to teacher, to administrator holds some level of accountability in student performance. See the table below, which depicts accountability for student performance at Valor Academy.

**Table 2.1 – Accountability and Action**

Individual	Accountability	Action
<b>Student</b>	Held accountable through direct performance on standardized and teacher/publisher devised tests	Referral to Supports  Parent-Teacher Conference
<b>Parent</b>	Held accountable through checking weekly Prep Reports, weekly syllabus, and report cards  Held accountable through attending Parent-Teacher Conferences	Teacher Calls Home  Called in for Conference
<b>Teacher</b>	Held accountable for administering all tests and aligning instruction to California State and Common Core Standards  Held accountable for addressing weaknesses through Professional Development  Held accountable to administration	Observation and feedback from administrators  School wide Professional Development

	Held accountable through reporting to parent	
<b>Administrator</b>	<p>Held accountable for oversight of student and teacher performance</p> <p>Held accountable for reporting to District</p> <p>Held accountable for continuously providing professional development and feedback for improvement of systems</p>	<p>District Reporting</p> <p>Continuously investing self in developing and recruiting best practices</p>

All of our curriculum and resources will be selected to allow students to achieve at these high expectations.<sup>20</sup> Our school wide performance goals are ambitious for all students including high and low achievers, special education students (unless otherwise stated in IEP), socio-economically disadvantaged students, and English Learners. Due to the college preparatory nature of the school, high goals are imperative. Performance goals address student academic achievement and organizational success, and all students will be supported based on their needs to reach these academic goals. Please see Table 2.2 below for Valor Outcomes and Measurement in each subject =

### **PART A & B: API scores & AYP**

As Valor Academy grows, benchmark performance goals and exit outcomes will be adjusted over time as necessary. Valor Academy will pursue Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) in accordance with No Child Left Behind and will pursue its Academic Performance Index (API) growth targets as set by the California State Board of Education, both school-wide and within reportable subgroups.

In addition to our student performance goals, we have set school wide performance goals to adhere to the state and federal measures as well as our own internal standards. Please see Table 2.5 below for our school performance goals:

<b>2.3 - School Performance Goals</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Measure</b>
Demonstrate meaningful growth in overall academic achievement.	<i>Measure:</i> Meet annual AYP targets as set by the State
Demonstrate increasing mastery of state content standards.	<i>Measure:</i> Exceed an API score 750 within our first three years of operation and meet growth targets each year for each

<sup>20</sup> Please see Instructional Program section for possible curricular choices.

	subgroup. We hope to attain a minimum API of 800 by the end of our charter term.
The school will maintain high levels of student attendance.	<i>Measure:</i> Average Daily Attendance greater than 93% year one, 94% year two, and 95% years three and beyond.
Parents will be satisfied with the academic rigor, level of structure, and communication offered by the school.	<i>Measure:</i> Average annual parent satisfaction with the academic program will exceed 85% as demonstrated through a survey implemented at the close of the school year.

**PART C: CST scores**

Table 2.4 Student Performance Goals						
Subject	Measure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Students will be grade level proficient readers of the English Language and will continuously demonstrate growth throughout their four years at Valor Academy.						
ELA	CST (and new state common core assessment)			70% of all Valor Academy students will score proficient or above on the reading and writing components of the California State Test in English Language Arts		
	NWEA	In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual increase of percentiles among Valor Academy students on the NWEA Test (or similar nationally norm-referenced test) will average a minimum of 5 percentiles of growth per year. 70% of students will score proficient on end of the year administration of NWEA.				
	NCLB	Each sub-group of students will make Adequate Yearly Progress in reading & writing as defined by the No Child Left Behind legislation.				
	Publisher & Teacher Created Tests	At least 70% of students will score 75% or higher on standards based tests (Letter grade of C or above)				



Students will be grade level proficient in the skills and content knowledge of Mathematics and will demonstrate growth throughout their four years at Valor Academy.					
Math	CST (and new state common core assessment)				70% of all Valor Academy students will score proficient or above on the California State Test in Mathematics.
	NWEA	In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual increase of percentiles among Valor Academy students on the NWEA Test (or similar nationally norm-referenced test) will average a minimum of 5 percentiles of growth per year. 70% of students will score proficient on end of the year administration of NWEA.			
	NCLB	Each sub-group of students will make Adequate Yearly Progress in mathematics as defined by the No Child Left Behind legislation.			
	Publisher & Teacher Created Tests	At least 70% of students will score 75% or higher on standards based tests. (Letter grade of C or above)			
Students will be grade level proficient in the skills and content knowledge of Science and will demonstrate growth throughout their four years at Valor Academy					
Science	CST (and new state common core assessment)				70% of Valor Academy students will score in the Proficient or Advanced category on the Science CST in eighth grade.
	Publisher & Teacher Created Tests	At least 70% of students will score 75% or higher on standards based tests. (Letter grade of C or above)			
Students will be grade level proficient in the skills and content knowledge of Social Science - History and will demonstrate growth throughout their three years at Valor Academy.					
Social Science - History	CST (and new state common core assessment)				70% of Valor Academy students will score in the Proficient or Advanced category on the History CST in eighth grade.

	Publisher & Teacher Created Tests	At least 70% of students will score 75% or higher on standards based tests. (Letter grade of C or above)
ELL Students	CELDT	At least 75% of EL students will advance at least one proficiency level each two years at Valor Academy.

***PART D+ E: Graduation and Passage rates***

<b>Graduation Goal</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>CAHSEE Goal (ELA and Math)</b>	<b>90</b>

<b>Anticipated Percentage of Students that Participate on Life Experience Trips</b>	<b>9th grade: 60%</b> <b>10th grade: 40%</b> <b>11th grade: 30%</b> <b>12th Grade 20%</b>
<b>Anticipated Percentage of Students that Participate in College Practice Program</b>	<b>9th grade: 0%</b> <b>10th grade: 30%</b> <b>11th grade: 50%</b> <b>12th grade: 70%</b>
<b>% of Students that meet A-G requirements by 12th grade</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Section 3: Identify the frequency of when and how often pupil outcomes will be assessed, including innovative components and any additional specific, measurable student outcomes that the school will set for the students, and explain how these outcomes are consistent with the school's proposed instructional program.**

**Individual Student Progress Reporting & Communication**

Student progress reports are the primary record of student progress, where assessment results are interpreted clearly, meaningfully and consistently. Student and teacher attendance and retention rates are also monitored, as these are closely related to student success. Progress reports are distributed four times a year, after exams and portfolios have been evaluated. Student progress reports create a succinct written record of student performance by compiling data from multiple assessments. Progress reports are one of several ways to keep parents in the communication loop about student performance, and insure that data collection is regular and consistent.

Ongoing communication between teachers, parents, and students is an essential component of VACHS, and is triggered by the assessment timeline. Parents conference with teachers on an informal basis weekly or monthly, and on a formal basis two to four times per year to discuss students' progress reports and upcoming learning plans.

Students also conduct ongoing self-assessments and participate in assessments of their peers and of their teachers. Teachers meet throughout the year in Professional Learning Communities to discuss assessment results within subject areas, by grade levels, as a whole staff, and in dialogue with students, parents, and administrators. These conversations are used to improve curriculum and instruction as well as to evolve the assessment process itself.

#### Proficiency-Based Grading System (Grades 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>)

Letter Grade	Percentage	Rubric Score	Meaning
A+	98-100%	4	<b>A student earning an A in a course is consistently demonstrating advanced levels of mastery with the content standards.</b>
A	93-97%		
A-	90-92%		
B+	88-89%	3	<b>A student earning a B in a course is consistently demonstrating proficiency with the content standards.</b>
B	83-87%		
B-	80-82%		
C+	78-79%	2	<b>A student earning a C in a course is consistently demonstrating basic competency with the content standards.</b>
C	73-77%		
C-	70-72%		
F	<b>Below 70%</b>	<b>0 or 1</b>	<b>A student earning less than 70% in a course is not yet demonstrating a basic level of mastery with the content standards and needs to demonstrate mastery of the standards before credit will be earned.</b>

Students who fail a class are required to replace the course using a credit recovery option, which includes summer or evening school offered by the school or enrollment in an online credit recovery course supported by the school, such as Aventa or BYU. Students may also enroll in the course again the following year. The school will accept other reasonable options for replacing the course not listed here, such as enrollment in a community college course, adult school, or other accredited online or independent study provider, but will not reimburse the student or provide time within the regular school day to complete the course. Upon completion of the course with a grade of C or better, the passing course grade replaces the prior failing grade in the student's GPA. Students who pass our classes must show proficiency on summative end-of-term exams.

In addition to Student Success Teams and intervention programs, VACHS also offers remedial skills courses taught by credentialed teachers to help build the bridge to proficiency:

- **ELA course** - basic grammar, language usage and writing skills.
- **Writing Lab** – time with teachers to improve essay writing skills and development.
- **Algebra Study Review** – fundamentals of algebra.
- **I/A Subjects during II/B** – if a student fails the first semester of a course, if the schedule permits, the student repeats the course and recovers the credit immediately during their second semester.

### **Graduation Requirements**

All students currently are required to complete all A-G required courses.

- A-G course requirements passed with grades of C+ or better.
- Annual reading goals of 1400 points over the course of four years
- Passing scores on CAHSEE English and Math sections.
- Fifty total hours of community service to two different organizations.
- Schoolwide writing tests passed each year.. Students who cannot prove proficiency on the writing test are offered appropriate support and accommodations by TA's, RSP teachers, and ELA teachers and allowed to retake writing exams until they pass.
- Admittance to one four-year college/university. As all students will complete and pass the A-G requirements as a part of their instructional program, making the student eligible for acceptance into a CSU..

### **School-wide Annual Report of Progress**

Valor Academy Charter High School prepares for parents, community and the District an annual accountability report with additional elements reflecting on the school's performance toward meeting the provisions of the charter. The SARC report is available on the schools website ([www.valoracademy.org](http://www.valoracademy.org)), Principals prepare bimonthly/monthly newsletters—Family Fortnightly; the Charter Management Organization (CMO) similarly distributes one for external purposes for our community and interested sponsors at large, our Executive Director prepares reports for the board on a monthly basis and the Head of Schools prepares an internal report monthly for all Valor Academy.

### ELEMENT 3: MEANS TO ASSESS PUPIL PROGRESS

*“The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured.”*

*Ed. Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(C)*



Education is a social process. Education is growth. Education is, not a preparation for life; education is life itself. **John Dewey**

**Section 1: Describe the methods for assessing attainment of student outcomes and how these assessment measures are consistent with the school's proposed instructional program, use a variety of assessment tools.**

**ASSESSMENT**

The assessment plan for Valor Academy Charter High School (VACHS) is designed to be a tool for internal and external accountability as well as to improve instruction and student achievement. To best assure that the school is measuring what VACHS expects students to learn, assignments are aligned with state standards and the school's pupil outcomes and curriculum. All curriculum and assessments are standards-based as mentioned in Element 1. Ongoing benchmark assessments (created using the Edusoft/Data Director program or similar tool) are used to meet the following objectives:

- 1) To help teachers revise curriculum and instruction according to student needs.
- 2) To help principal and head of schools effectively manage their staffs for effective outcomes
- 3) To give parents and students meaningful, useful feedback on student progress.
- 4) To compare the school's progress to that of schools with similar student demographics.
- 5) To monitor the school's progress in meeting its missions, and to revise its activities accordingly.
- 6) To be accountable for meeting student exit outcomes.

In regards to the character component of our instructional program, we will deliver informal and formal assessments of student understanding through our advisory curriculum. On each report card home we will have a character component grade which will highlight students growth in this context.

We believe that all children can learn at high levels and can be held to the same high standards regardless of their academic level when they enter our school. In order to ensure that all students reach these goals, we must be able to accurately measure how well students are mastering core skills, content and standards. To do this, we establish a baseline measure of student achievement and then continuously monitor and assess progress from that point. This allows teachers to gauge content mastery levels and adjust instruction as needed. Students take the end-of-year exams, as well as a nationally normed tests on Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) during student orientation and then again each January and June thereafter.

The initial data collected from these results serve as the baseline data against which we compare all future growth. Such data allows us to measure academic growth longitudinally from year to year per cohort and per individual student after they have been accepted into our schools. In addition, this comparative data provides information on the strengths and weaknesses of our academic program and is used to modify and improve content delivery and instructional decisions from year to year.

## **Baseline Assessment**

Baseline assessment is obtained using data from both internal and external assessments. At the beginning of the year, all students take the end-of-the-year exams on NWEA for ELA & Math and from teacher-created pre-assessments for all of their other courses. Students' initial performance on these assessments is used as a baseline against which we can compare year-end results, and through which we measure longitudinal academic growth from year to year. In this way, the school can accurately interpret the results of these tests and the effectiveness of instruction during the year. These comparative results, in addition to data from internal assessments, are used to improve instruction for the following school year.

## **Section 2: Identify additional “in house” benchmark assessments to be used by the school to assess student progress on an ongoing basis and how frequently the assessments will be administered.**

### **In-House Benchmark Assessments**

There are two major types of assessments at VACHS: (1) Teacher created, assessments which measure the extent that the students understand and master the lessons presented by the teacher; and (2) Standardized assessments that measure how well the students have understand and master the more normalized standards-based assessments akin to those that they take for the State Department of Education at the end of each year.

### **Teacher Created Formative Assessments**

#### **IWOC**

The most frequently used form of assessment at Valor Academy Charter High School is nightly IWOC (Independent Work Outside of Class, commonly referred to as “homework.”) As previously mentioned, quantifiable, objective IWOC is given each night. The next day the IWOC is corrected (either students self-correct or teacher corrects the work) and recorded in the teachers' gradebooks. When an entire class scores poorly on an assignment, the teacher quickly realizes that s/he must re-teach a lesson to the entire class. When only some students score poorly, the teacher may re-teach a portion of the lesson to a group of students. In this way, daily assessment and practice inform daily instruction.

#### **UNIT TESTS**

In addition to IWOC, teachers create or compile course assessments. These assessments take place on a weekly, bimonthly or monthly (end of unit) basis. They inform current instruction by providing feedback to the teachers as to whether or not the students have grasped that which has been taught. Teachers generally key these assessments against their own lesson plans and the standards they have recently taught. At the beginning of the planning year, teachers get together to create some common subject-matter assessments so that the assessments are consistent throughout the school.

## **PORTFOLIOS**

Teachers create project-based assignments to culminate a unit or chapter throughout the year. Students can choose from all their assessments and projects to include into their overall Standards Based Portfolio at the end of the school year. Portfolio assignments are not only standards based, but they hit different learning modalities. There are a minimum of four portfolio assignments (one per quarter) per subject (including Music and PE). This means there are a total of 24 portfolio assignments based on 6 subjects by the end of the year.

Teachers take photos for performance-based and creative art projects as evidence for the portfolio artifacts section. Students have overall decision making power because they can choose which assignments they feel best illustrate their mastery of certain power standards. Students write a reflection per assignment and for their entire portfolio, they must write an introductory letter and include a table of contents.

After STAR testing, students begin to narrow down assignments for the End of the Year (EOTY) Portfolio Panel Presentation (PPP). From 24 assignments, students pick 1 artifact per subject, narrowing it down to 6 assignments. The EOTY PPP is graded by expert teachers, and students must be ready to discuss and present any one of the artifacts chosen for each subject.

## **WRITING EXAMS**

School-wide writing exams are administered four times a year on the following genres: Narrative, Expository, Response to Literature and Summary. As 11<sup>th</sup> graders must take a Standardized California Writing exam, we at VACHS believe that everyone should be assessed in their writing several times a year in order to improve in their skill and become college-ready writers.

Exams and rubrics are prepared before the school year begins by grade-level and by the English Language Arts (ELA) department. All exams are then double-blind graded on a 4-point rubric by all faculty and staff members during an allotted time period by those who have at least a college degree. To ensure accuracy in the scoring—similarly to how the state grades the writing exams, assessors are trained on a variety of sample anchor papers. The lead ELA teacher then compares some of the students' writing and sets them as samples to compare the remaining essays to the best of their peers' samples. If there is a significant discrepancy in the rubric-based scores, then a third teacher reads the piece of writing. Students must earn a 3 on a 4 point rubric scale in order to pass this exam.

The ELA teachers record an average grade into the gradebook and review the exam with the students. VACHS expects that students pass at least 2 out of 4 writing exams. Students are continually assessed to ensure they are on target and are provided additional support throughout the year to meet their writing goals. Students who are not writing on grade-level by the eighth month of school receive an opportunity to get additional writing support and instruction during the last month of school in order to earn their Writing promotion goal.



## **OTI REPORTS HIGH SCHOOL**

The On-Target Index (OTI) is a collection of data for every student in the High School. As the most important factor for completing high school is the passing of A-G courses, we believe that students should also have a diverse array of life experiences. In high school, we challenge our students to participate in all the experiential lessons offered. VACHS also expects its students to fulfill various goals throughout the year by certain deadlines to earn rewards. The data entered into the OTI include:

1. Grade Point Average (GPA) based on student class averages including CPP.
2. Volunteer hours.
3. Completion of required reading books, and the points accumulated.
4. Physical challenge attempts/completions.
5. Life Experience Lessons (LEL) and curriculum recommended trips.
6. Attendance

The purpose of the OTI is to track not only the academic growth of the student, but to provide data that tracks the diverse life experience lessons that we hope will encourage them to seek college and more life opportunities beyond their current scope of reality.

## **STANDARDIZED SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS**

At Valor Academy Charter High School, each year the school strives to ensure that students are “on track” before taking state exams. Valor Academy has a strict policy of “no social promotion” and believes that objective testing helps to truly assess whether the students are ready for the next grade level and are meeting the state standards. To this end, VACHS utilizes multiple standardized assessments, to determine student mastery of content and readiness for the next grade level.

## **STUDY ISLAND**

Students are tested on a weekly basis on their standards mastery through an online program called Study Island ([www.studyisland.com](http://www.studyisland.com)). Each state standard is broken down into lessons and practice questions. Students have two accounts for this program: a practice account and a test account. Throughout the year, after a teacher teaches a specific lesson based on a state standard, s/he asks the students to complete an assignment on Study Island. The program immediately assesses the student’s mastery of the given standard. If they master it (by answering 8 of 10 questions correctly) they earn a “blue ribbon.”<sup>21</sup> Throughout the year, students are rewarded for reaching certain benchmarks (10% completed, etc.) and some reward field trips or other incentives are provided. When students fail to meet their benchmarks, they are provided with additional tutoring help and support (generally after school or on weekends) to complete the program.

In addition to the practice account described above, each student has a test account. The test account assesses the same skills as the practice account, but students must be closely supervised by their teacher while completing these assignments. Students do not have to keep working

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<sup>21</sup> See Appendix (Tab 6, Section F) for sample Study Island student report.

until they earn their blue ribbons on the test account. Rather, students complete only ten questions per standard and their percentage correct is entered as an exam score in the gradebook. This enables teachers to quickly get a clear picture of students' mastery of individual standards.

#### **SUBJECT-SPECIFIC MIDTERM AND FINAL—EDUSOFT STAR-PREDICTOR EXAMS**

Since our first year, we have given our students quarterly midterms and finals as a STAR-predictor exam. These exams are our attempt to predict how our students will perform on their end of the year state exams. Each teacher creates an annual standards map and s/he determines which standards are covered during each quarter of teaching. During professional development, based on the maps, teachers create their midterms and finals before the school year begins using Edusoft/DataDirector, a computer program that generates a testable question based on an itemized standard-based question bank.

There are two versions of the exams to minimize cheating and exams are cumulative; by the end of the year, they mirror the number and type of questions that the students will see on the STAR state exams. Students take the final Edusoft/DataDirector exams about a week before the STAR tests. Teachers analyze the data, review the exams with the students, and re-teach any areas that have not been adequately covered for all or subgroups of students. Generally the exams have been very good predictors of how the students perform on their state testing. The results of these assessments can also provide a longitudinal analysis of ongoing performance.

#### **NORTHWEST EVALUATION ASSOCIATION (NWEA) TESTING**

NWEA is an assessment tool used to identify skills students have mastered in English Language Arts, Math and Reading. It is broken down into components that identify the students' areas of mastery, weakness and overall growth. The test is presented with questions at different levels of difficulty that adjust based on the students' responses, much like the Graduate Record Exam (GRE). At the end of a testing sequence, the student receives an overall score that indicates the instructional level appropriate for him or her and how well the student performed against the students across the country who also took the same test at that similar period in time.

Teachers use the data to amend their practices, with substantial results at every grade-level. NWEA offers classroom resources that offer several tools to translate data into lessons targeted to the exact things a student is ready to learn: such as his/her reading level and what books are appropriate for the independent reading level. It also has predictor markers based on at least two exam periods of how much the student will grow by the end of the year. \

Administration utilizes this data to effectively plan professional development, inform budgetary decisions and confer strategic plans for the future to all stakeholders.

#### **INDEPENDENT READING—SCHOLASTIC READING COUNTS (SRC)**

Each year, students in the high school Literature courses read at least four books in class and also must read at least 12 books independently outside of class. About half of these books are based on student choices (but must be on high school level) and about half are required novels.

Many of these titles prove extremely challenging for our students to read independently (See Independent Reading Charts in Element 1), but they will work through them, sometimes using audio-books and study groups. Our school believes that independent reading is an essential skill for college preparedness. Because of this, students who do not complete their independent reading do not receive credit for their Literature Course until such time as they finish this goal. If this scenario applies, they receive a grade of INC-R.

As VACHS grows, it will continue to build and develop a reading program that is more individualized to a student's reading lexile. VACHS will incorporate a structure for students to be able to select books for their Choice Novels based on their preference and reading comprehension levels. Students use both their California Reading number, provided by the CDE with student CST results, and a reading diagnostic to determine student reading level. Comprehension of independent reading is measured by book test administered in the Reading Counts program.

Each of these assessments is aligned with content and performance standards. This provides teachers with several opportunities to monitor student progress toward mastering content and performance standards. Teachers are encouraged to collaborate both with teachers within their department and teachers in other areas to develop rubrics for assignments and common assessments.

### **MORE NATIONAL EXAMS**

Students in Advanced Placement (AP) courses take the AP exams at the end of the course. Students also take the pre-Scholastic Aptitude Tests (PSATs) by 11<sup>th</sup> grade, SATs by 12<sup>th</sup> grade and SAT II subject tests as early as 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Some students also opt to take the ACTs (American College Testing).

Valor Academy Charter High School reserves the right to choose different methods and tools for assessment that are aligned to the state standards and common core will yield similar data and meet similar goals described above.

## **Section 3: Assure that state mandated assessments will be administered.**

### **Assurance**

VACHS administers tests required by California's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program in each year and subject as required by the state in Education Code §60602.5. As required by the LAUSD, California Department of Education, VACHS participates in all state mandated assessments.

VACHS also uploads all data requested by the California Department of Education (CDE) to complete a School Accountability Report Card (SARC). The Board of Directors issue an annual report that includes demographic data, academic achievement, financial reports and a summary of other significant developments and accomplishments over the course of each academic year. The school's leadership reports the results of state assessments to all community members including parents. The annual report is a public document, published on the school's website ([www.brightstarschools.org](http://www.brightstarschools.org)) and delivered to the District, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, CDE and any other parties who request it.

**\* Some STAR testing components will change during the charter term as the state transitions to Common Core Assessments**

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Aprendizaje 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple-choice</li> </ul>	whose primary language is Spanish and who have been enrolled in a U.S. school for less than 12 months	
Physical Fitness Testing (PFT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criterion referenced</li> <li>• Performance assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure physical fitness based on seven key elements</li> </ul>	• 9
California High School Exit Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards-based</li> <li>• Norm-referenced</li> <li>• Multiple-choice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve pupil achievement in public high schools</li> <li>• Demonstrate up to 10th grade level competency in reading, writing, and 6-7<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics (pre-Algebra).</li> </ul>	• All, beginning in 10 <sup>th</sup> grade

#### Section 4: Describe how assessment data will be used to inform instruction and professional development on an ongoing basis.

##### Data Analysis and Professional Development

At least one day is dedicated before school during professional development and several times during the school year to discuss data results based on the STAR tests and teacher created midterms and finals. This data is juxtaposed next to all the data points on the OTCU/OTI where the student data coordinator can search for trends and create intervention groups. Curriculum maps and assessments are therefore amended based on the findings that teachers conclude from aggregating the data through programs like DataDirector and by studying the results by grade level/departments.

Teacher assessments and summative assessments, particularly the NWEA, SRC and the OTCU/OTI translate into a meaningful analysis of student performance, with point values accompanied by explanations. These results are communicated to parents in student-led parent conferences at least four times a year. Results of standardized tests are distributed during one of the first parent meetings, along with the student progress report with explanations designed to help students and parents interpret their relationship to other assessments. Effort and improvement levels are noted as well.

Teachers interact with each other on an ongoing basis through, standards-based professional development in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Teachers meet by grade-level and subject-matter areas to discuss common planning, student progress and self-assessment issues. Teachers meet at least once monthly for structured, focused staff development instruction relating to standards-based subjects where the teachers themselves, have requested further instruction and support. These PLC sessions are led by the Head of Schools, Principal's and lead teachers themselves.

Valor Academy Charter High School uses every means possible to evaluate student achievement, including state-wide assessments as well as benchmark assessments unique to the charter. To

help collect and analyze the information, DataDirector—a web-based, online assessment management system will be used . During the first quarter of the school year, teachers will be trained on how to use DataDirector. Using the reports the system generates, teachers and administrators will analyze the CST results as a school, by subgroups and cohorts. From the data, teachers will create power standards or objectives for richer, standard-based learning experiences.

Based on the power standards, four data cycles are time-lined throughout the year aligned with midterms and finals. Teachers pretest students at the start of each quarter on the assigned power standards. After the pre-tests, teachers focus instruction on the assigned power standards. Immediately following the end of each cycle, students' scores are posted/celebrated. The data gathered from the pre and post testing is then collaboratively analyzed by teachers in vertical and horizontal meetings. Teachers can then use the analysis to drive future instruction. Administration can use this information to drive professional development, make budgetary decisions, or communicate strategic plans to stakeholders.

## **Section 5: District required language on testing.**

### **Testing**

The Charter School agrees to comply with and adhere to the State requirements for participation and administration of all state mandated tests. If the Charter School does not test (i.e., STAR, CELDT, CAHSEE) with the District, the Charter School hereby grants authority to the state of California to provide a copy of all test results directly to the District as well as the Charter School.



## **ELEMENT 4: GOVERNANCE**

*"The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement." Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(D)*



*Laws control the lesser man... Right conduct controls the greater one ... I've never let my school interfere with my education. **Mark Twain***



## **Section 1: State whether the school is proposing to be an independent or affiliated charter.**

### **Statement of Independence**

Valor Academy Charter High School is an independent charter governed by the Board of Directors of Bright Star Schools which is responsible for ensuring progress toward the mission, faithfulness to the charter, and fiscal viability.

## **Section 2: Affirm that the school will be operated by a nonprofit public benefit corporation.**

### **Affirmation of Non-Profit Status**

Bright Star Schools is an independent non-profit charter school management organization with 501(c)(3) status. Bright Star Schools is solely responsible for the debts and obligations of Valor Academy Charter High School.

## **Section 3: Provide articles of incorporation and by-laws for the nonprofit public benefit corporation.**

### **Articles of Incorporation (AOI)**

.Any amendments to the AOI, will be submitted to the District.

### **Bylaws**

Any amendments to the organization's bylaws will be submitted to the District.

## **Section 4: Describe the proposed school's governance structure and demonstrate how it will maintain active and effective control of the school.**

### **Governance Structure**

The work of Bright Star Schools' Board of Directors is organized to accomplish the following objectives:

- Ensure the mission and vision of VACHS.
- Ensure adherence to all state and federal requirements as well as those requirements set forth by VACHS in its charter.
- Evaluate the Executive Director annually and hold him/her responsible for meeting the academic and fiscal goals of the school.
- Ensure effective organizational planning for the school.





- Provide support and assistance to the school in its fundraising efforts, as well as other needs as they arise.
- Ensure the long-term financial stability of VACHS.
- Establish broad support and future partnerships to further the mission of Bright Star Schools to prepare students for college and career.

The Board governs the school, holds the school to its mission, ensures its financial viability over time and ensures that the school remains true to the terms of its charter. The Board delegates all management decisions to the Executive Director, who oversees the Head of Schools and Culture & Accountability Officer. The Head of Schools is responsible for the hiring, evaluation of the principals and for ensuring that the schools meet the performance benchmarks established by the Board of Directors. Day-to-day oversight of the school is the responsibility of the Principal, who hires, supports and evaluates all school staff, and monitors the implementation of the program. A strong working relationship between the Board Chair, Executive Director, Head of Schools and all administrators ensure the flow of information necessary for responsive, strong governance.

### **Board Members**

The role of a member of the Board is as follows:

- Advocate for Bright Star Schools and its mission of preparing students for college and career;
- Adhere to the Brown Act;
- Attend board meetings, committee meetings and important related meetings;
- Serve with professionalism, integrity and enthusiasm;
- Volunteer for and accept assignments and complete them thoroughly and promptly;
- Stay informed about committee matters, prepare well for meetings and review and comment on minutes and reports;
- Get to know other board and committee members and build a collegial working relationship that contributes to consensus;
- Actively participate in the board's professional development, annual evaluation and planning efforts;
- Participate in fundraising for the organization, cultivate prospective donors and volunteers and give an annual financial gift (determined by the board chair) to the best of personal ability;
- Abide by all legal responsibilities and comply with applicable rules and regulations; and
- Disclose any potential conflict of interest, whether real or perceived.

### **Officers**

#### **Chair**

It is the duty of the Board Chair to preside at all meetings, to guide the Board in the enforcement of all policies and regulations relating to VACHS and to perform all other duties normally incumbent upon such an officer. The Chair helps to direct and mediate Board discussions about organizational priorities and governance concerns and to ensure that the



Board engages in a self-evaluation at least once a year. In addition, the Board Chair works with the Executive Director, Board officers and committee chairs to develop the agendas for Board meetings.

### **Treasurer**

The Treasurer has a general understanding of financial record keeping, accounting systems and financial reports and works with the Executive Director and Controller to ensure that appropriate financial reports are made available to the Board on a timely basis. The Treasurer shall also assist in presenting the annual VACHS budget to the Board for review and approval and shall review the annual audit and answer Directors' questions regarding the audit. In addition, the Treasurer will ensure that current records are maintained to reflect the financial condition of VACHS.

### **Secretary**

The Secretary ensures that all actions of the Board are documented. The Secretary shall, in advance of all meetings of the full Board and Committees, serve or cause to be served all meeting notices and ensure that written agendas and support materials are provided to all members. The Secretary ensures that written minutes are provided to Directors within the specified time, approved minutes are filed and official attendance and votes of Directors are maintained in accordance with procedure and adherence to the Brown Act.

All Board Members of Bright Star Schools receive a board orientation packet and sign member expectations<sup>22</sup> agreeing to uphold the mission and vision of the school, advocate for VACHS and ensure organizational viability, student achievement and faithfulness to the terms of the charter.

### ***Part A: How often the governing board will meet?***

The Board of Directors of Bright Star Schools meets monthly except in August.

### ***Part B: What is the process for selecting governing board members?***

The process of selecting members of the Bright Star Schools Board of Directors is described in detail in the Bylaws of the organization included in this document. In summary, this process includes an initial interview with the Executive Director and school tour; interview with current board members; submission and resume, written responses, and board member questionnaire; and, reference checks. The Board is currently comprised of twenty four who serve three year staggered terms.

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<sup>22</sup> See Appendix (Tab 6, Section F) for samples of Board Commitment Contract and Member Expectations.

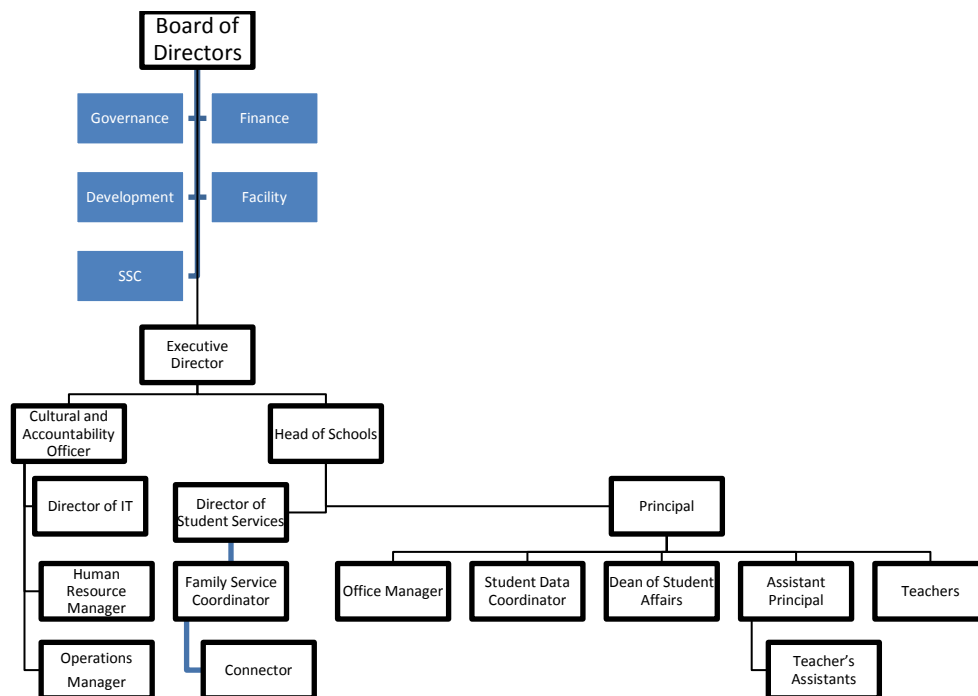


**Part C: What is the manner for posting meeting notices, distributing agendas and recording governing board actions?**

The Bright Star Schools Board will meet in accordance with California Law and the Brown Act. Per the Brown Act the time, place, and dates of such meetings will be made available 72 hours in advance to the general public via posting on our school website, around campus and in school newsletters. Should a previously posted meeting time or location change, Bright Star will give due notice by posting the new time and/or place in accordance with the Brown Act. Members of the public can request the minutes of any board meeting by directly contacting the Bright Star Schools Main Office.

Bright Star Schools will ensure that board meetings are accessible to both communities in the Valley and West Adams neighborhoods.

**Section 5: Provide an organizational chart showing the relationship of the governing board to the leadership of the school, as well as any relevant site committees, etc.**



The organizational chart demonstrates some of the committees that may be convened by the Governing board. The make up of these committees is strictly restricted to board members with the exception of the SSC (shown above) which is not a board committee. The Governing board makes all final decisions by board vote on all school related matters including but not limited to



curriculum, instruction, financial, facilities, etc. The committees will heavily inform these decisions, but all decisions will be made by Governing Board vote.

### **Board Committee Structure and Committee Responsibilities**

The Board of Directors may create or convene the following committees:

- Governance Committee
  - Recruit, nominate, train new directors;
  - Establish responsibilities and evaluate individual board members;
  - Review the performance of the Board as a whole;
  - Review Board Handbook;
  - Support and review performance of Executive Director;
- Finance/ Budget/ Audit Committee
  - Monitor budget implementation through periodic financial reports;
  - Approve accounting policies;
  - Provide for an independent annual audit by qualified CPA;
  - Ensure adequate insurance
- Development Committee
  - Identify fundraising opportunities;
  - Plan fundraising events or programs;
  - Develop and evaluate fundraising goals.
- Academic/ Personnel Committee
  - Review and support mission statement;
  - Ensure programs and services are consistent with mission & charter;
  - Develop and review measurable academic outcomes;
  - Review and approve guidelines for teacher evaluations;
  - Review and approve guidelines for administration/staff evaluations;
  - Monitor progress in achieving outcome and goals;
  - Develop and maintain adequate academic personnel policies and procedures.
- Facilities & Strategic Planning Committee
  - Review facilities maintenance requirements;
  - Review and negotiate lease agreements;
  - Develop and maintain adequate facility personnel policies procedures;
  - Supports Executive Director's efforts to explore growth and facility opportunities
  - Evaluate growth opportunities
  - Ensure growth implementations conform to mission statement.

## **Section 7: Provide an assurance that the governance meetings will comply with the Brown Act.**

### **Brown Act Assurance**

All meetings of the Board of Directors of Bright Star Schools have and will continue to comply



with the Brown Act, Government Code 1090 and all applicable laws relating to charter schools.

## **Section 8: Explain the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.**

### **Parent Involvement in Governance**

While parents of VACHS students do not serve as members of the Bright Star Schools Board of Directors, it is critical that they are invested in the success of the school and have a voice in matters critical to the school's success. VACHS believes that parental support is an integral part of a student's education, and makes every effort to ensure that parental input is considered in the Board's decision-making process. We have recently created a position titled Dean of Student Affairs who is a full time employee dedicated to bridging the gap between the school and families.

In addition, representatives of the parent body are encouraged and invited to address the Board regarding any input, comments or concerns they have about the school. Time is reserved at the start of each Bright Star Schools Board meeting for this purpose.

Parents will serve as members of the School Site Council (SSC). The VACHS SSC is comprised of ten members of the school community and includes the Principal, teachers, parents, and other staff members. There will be 4 faculty seats, 4 community seats, and 4 parents seats, and 5 students seats. The SSC is always comprised of an odd number of individuals as to avoid a tie vote situation. SSC members are nominated and elected by their peers and serve three year terms. As a member of the SSC, parents must attend monthly meetings and are responsible for examining student achievement data, revising and maintaining the Single Plan for Student Achievement, and for providing oversight of the Title I budget. Information from the SSC meetings will be communicated at board meetings through parent representative or minutes that will be shared by the principal of the school.

Other parent engagement strategies that we employ include:

- Parent education initiative featuring evening sessions on topics such as college admissions, financial aid, financial literacy, etc.
- Posting of Board agendas in the school's main office.
- Mid-year Parent Satisfaction Survey.
- End-of-Year Parent Satisfaction Survey.
- Regular parent newsletters.
- Multi-media communication strategy including mail, e-mail, text messaging, "robocalls," and regular parent meetings.
- Translation of all parent communication materials into Spanish.
- Frequent opportunities for parent involvement in school activities, including invitations to family dinners, Evening of Excellence, etc.
- Volunteer opportunities on campus including campus beautification and traffic duty.



**Section 9: Contain an assurance that members of the Charter School’s executive board, any administrators, managers or employees, and any other committees of the School shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards and LAUSD’s Charter School policies and regulations regarding ethics and conflicts of interest;**

**Assurance**

Members of VACHS’ executive board, any administrators, managers or employees, and any other committees of the Charter School shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards and LAUSD’s Charter School policies and regulations regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

**Section 10: Contain District required language regarding audit and inspection of records.**

Valor Academy Charter High School and/or its non-profit corporation is a separate legal entity and will be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of the Charter School.

VACHS will comply with the Brown Act.

The District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the charter school board pursuant to Education Code section 47604(b).

**Grievance Procedure for Parents and Students**

Charter School will designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) including any investigation of any complaint filed with Charter School alleging its noncompliance with these laws or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by these laws. Charter School will notify all its students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated employee or employees.

Charter School will adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action, which would be prohibited by Title IX, or Section 504.

Charter School will implement specific and continuing steps to notify applicants for admission and employment, students and parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional



organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the recipient, that it does not discriminate on the basis of sex or mental or physical disability in the educational program or activity which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and Section 504 not to discriminate in such a manner.

**\*LAUSD Charter Policy**

The Valor Academy Charter High School will comply with the District policy related to charter schools, as it may be changed from time to time after notice and reasonable opportunity for input from the Charter School Collaborative.

**\*Responding to Inquiries**

Valor Academy Charter High School and/or its nonprofit corporation shall promptly respond to all inquiries, including but not limited to, inquiries regarding financial records, from the District and shall consult with the District regarding any inquiries. Valor Academy Charter High School and/or its nonprofit corporation acknowledges that it is subject to audit by LAUSD including, without limitation, audit by the District Office of the Inspector General.

If an allegation of waste, fraud or abuse related to the Charter School operations is received by the District, the Charter School shall be expected to cooperate with any investigation undertaken by the District and/or the Office of the Inspector General, Investigations Unit.

**Notifications**

Notification is to be made to the Charter Schools Division in writing of any notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside regulatory agencies, lawsuits, or other formal complaints, within one week of receipt of such notices by [Charter School].



## **ELEMENT 5: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATION**

*"The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school." Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(E)*



*Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'  
**Martin Luther King, Jr.***





## **Section 1: Describe the necessary job description and qualifications for school employees.**

Job descriptions have been prepared by the Executive Director, Culture and Accountability Officer and the Human Resource & Operations Manager. The most updated descriptions are provided below. All job descriptions shall include, but is not necessarily limited to, the below duties specified per position.

### **BRIGHT STAR SCHOOLS—CHARTER MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION (CMO)**

#### ***1. Executive Director***

The Executive Director (ED) oversees and advances all Bright Star Schools. S/he embodies and advocates for the mission, vision, and strategic direction of the school. S/he is passionate and completely dedicated to Bright Star Schools' mission and has a steadfast belief that all students deserve an excellent public education in preparation for high school and college. The ED has an unwavering belief that all students, regardless of demographics, can achieve at the highest academic levels and can effectively communicate and inspire such beliefs to all aspects and positions of the schools. The ED directly manages all positions in the CMO.

#### ***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Bachelor's degree, Master's Degree in similar field with several years of urban teaching experience preferred.
- Training or relevant experience in management and development of a business or a non-profit organization.
- Demonstrated significant business/academic gains in past experiences leading a company or a school, with a preference in low income/urban demographics.
- Experience and success in management of higher-level positions.
- Critical thinker and decision maker who has overcome complex organizational challenges.
- Inspirational leader who has a proven record of success in driving individuals and organizations to succeed.
- Strong communicator capable of effective public speaking as well as persuasive writing and able to attract and maintain support from a broad range of constituents, both within West Adams & Westchester, as well as among the greater landscape of Los Angeles.
- Openness to feedback, willingness to take personal responsibility, and desire to learn from mistakes.



- Capability to oversee the complex administrative and financial responsibilities associated with opening and operating highly successful charter schools.
- Ability to attract, screen, develop, motivate and retain an exceptional team of administrators and leaders.

***Responsibilities:***

- Monitor, and help sustain the high standards of a rigorous school climate and school culture.
- Ensure compliance with accountability requirements set by the school's charter and all relevant laws and requirements set forth by the Los Angeles Unified School District, State of California and No Child Left Behind (NCLB).
- Communicate as the primary spokesperson for the school and advocate to all external audiences, including investors, media, community partners, government agencies, educational organizations, and local leaders.
- Serve as member of board committees, providing them with the essential data, relevant reports and information necessary to effectively govern the school in a timely manner.
- Provide leadership and professional development for the CMO and all other school leaders.
- Coordinate with external grant writer for an integrated comprehensive internal and external fund raising effort related to a major capital campaign, and fiduciary responsibilities related to the foundation.
- Work directly with the Culture and Accountability Officer (CAO) and Head of Schools (HOS) to ensure academic success and employee and family safety and satisfaction.
- Locate, secure and improve facilities for current schools and for future sites.
- Analyze and negotiate funding and contracts for facilities.
- Manage strategic planning process for all schools.

***2. Culture and Accountability Officer***

The Culture and Accountability Officer (CAO) is the leader for the cultural programs of the school. The CAO reports to the Executive Director.

***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Bachelor's degree, Master's Degree preferred in similar field with several years of urban teaching experience.
- California Administrative Credential preferred.
- Training or relevant experience in teacher management and development of school programs.
- Passionate and completely dedicated to Bright Star Schools' mission of preparing students for college and career and a steadfast belief that all students deserve an excellent public education in preparation for high school and college.



- Unwavering belief that all students, regardless of demographics, can achieve at the highest academic levels.
- Proven ability to work collaboratively with a diverse team of teachers.
- Ability to give constructive feedback on issues that will facilitate growth and achievement of both students and teachers.
- Professional demeanor, strong work-ethic, detail-driven work style with excellent organizational and communication skills.
- Ability to prioritize, multi-task, and lead by example.
- Ability to effectively set and communicate goals for teachers to achieve.
- An entrepreneurial spirit, who embraces the opportunity for creativity and hard work inherent in a start-up.
- Openness to feedback, willingness to take personal responsibility, and desire to learn from mistakes.
- Sensitivity to and respect for the great diversity of race, class, gender, ability and perspectives that come together in our school.

### ***Responsibilities:***

- Lead selected professional development sessions throughout the year.
- Collaborate with the Head of Schools and Executive Director concerning student achievement, student assessment, and student discipline.
- Communicate regularly with the Head of School & Executive Director regarding student achievement, curriculum development, professional development, staff evaluations, and the budgetary needs for each.
- Create a culture of high academic and behavioral expectations.
- Work with Head of School to plan and implement summer orientation for staff.
- Seek and share best practices from other schools and professional journals.
- Lead regular, school-wide staff meetings.
- Implement effective internal assessment systems and uses data to inform decisions.
- Implement external assessment systems and uses data to inform decisions.
- Maintain and develop relationships with school leaders to share and identify best practices and attempt to find solutions for similar small and independent school gaps and needs.

### ***3. Head of Schools (HOS)***

The Head of Schools is responsible for overall school performance and organizational management, and is the primary person responsible for the management of the school's growth, culture and the viability of the school over time. He or she manages all external and non-operational issues, such as working with the Board, reporting to and interfacing with the authorizer, fundraising, public relations and ensuring the finance and operation of the school. The Head of School oversees the Principals, Assistant Principal, the Director of Student Services, and



the Director of Special Education in their management and guidance of the VACHS staff. The Head of School is hired and evaluated by the Board of Directors of Bright Star Schools.

***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Bachelor's degree, Master's Degree preferred, and at least three years of urban teaching experience.
- California Administrative Credential preferred.
- Training or relevant experience in school management.
- Student-focused leader committed to implementing a standards based curriculum and using data and assessments to drive instructional decisions.
- Relentless achiever who works tirelessly towards achieving the school's mission.
- Flexible and able to adapt as situations require.
- Organized, systems-oriented leader who has experience in managing several different projects simultaneously.
- Subscribes to a similar educational philosophy to that espoused by VACHS's culture and curriculum.
- Capability to oversee the complex administrative and financial responsibilities associated with opening and operating a highly successful charter school.
- Ability to attract, screen, develop, motivate and retain an exceptional team of teachers, staff members and administrators.
- Competence at stewarding public funds responsibly.
- Openness to feedback, willingness to take personal responsibility, and desire to learn from mistakes.
- Sensitivity to and respect for the great diversity of race, class, gender, and perspectives that come together in our school.

***Responsibilities:***

- Ensure compliance with the school's charter and all relevant law and requirements set forth by the State of California.
- Ensure compliance with accountability requirements set by the Los Angeles Unified School District.
- Hire, coach, and evaluate Principals.
- Serves as instructional leader with Principals to oversee curriculum development and assessment.
- Ensure that schools meet performance benchmarks established by the Board of Directors
- Ensure curriculum alignment with California state standards and California Common Core Standards.
- Communicate regularly with the CAO & Executive Director regarding student achievement, curriculum development, professional development, staff evaluations, and the budgetary needs for each.
- Create a culture of high academic and behavioral expectations.



- Work with CAO to plan and implement summer orientation for staff.
- Seek and share best practices from other schools and professional journals.
- Lead regular, school-wide staff meetings.
- Provide daily coaching and feedback to instructional staff.
- Implement effective internal assessment systems and uses data to inform decisions.
- Implement external assessment systems and uses data to inform decisions.
- Set and monitor core subject grading policies and practices to ensure consistency across the school.
- Ensure that every student demonstrates achievement gains.

#### ***4. Controller***

The Controller provides proper financial oversight for the organization. S/he is primarily responsible for ensuring that the school's financial records are accurate and up-to-date. S/he also ensures that programmatic guidelines for reporting and implementation are properly followed on a timely basis. The Controller reports to the ED.

#### ***Qualifications and Experience***

- Bachelor's degree; advanced degree preferred.
- Five years of experience in operations and/or finance preferred.
- Passionate and completely dedicated to VACHS's mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve preparation for the college of their choice.
- Unwavering belief that all students can achieve at the highest academic levels.
- Results-driven business leader with experience in, and commitment to operational and financial excellence.
- Professional demeanor, strong work-ethic, detail-driven work style with excellent organizational and critical thinking skills.
- Ability to prioritize, multi-task, delegate and lead by example.
- Ambition and desire to grow as a leader.

#### ***Responsibilities***

- Coordinate federal forms, checks, payroll and benefits for Bright Star Schools staff.
- Administer Department of Education grants.
- Oversee school financial controls.
- Provide accurate, updated financial statements to the ED.
- Ensure that the school is in compliance with all programs, including, but not limited to attendance, fiscal policies, and HR policies.
- Work with the ED to create school budgets.



- Coordinate annual financial review.
- Record and track all income and expenses.
- Record all cash receipts, invoices for accounts payable.
- Prepare vendor checks.
- Apply for and manage grants, disbursements, guidelines, and reporting.
- Apply for and manage Title I funding and other applicable financial aid.
- Pursue timely receipt of Block Grant, Title I, and other payments to the school.
- Oversee all auditing measures and ensure Bright Star Schools meets all financial compliance and mandates by Federal and State laws.

## ***6. Human Resource Manager***

The Human Resource Manager job description namely involves coordinating hiring, supporting, and evaluating Bright Star employees. The HRM also manages the day-to-day HR operations and is responsible for overseeing HR policies, programs, services, recruiting and selection, payroll processing, workers' compensation claims, wage & hour, legal compliance and employee relations.

### ***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Bachelor's degree in appropriate field from a regionally accredited university
- 2-3 years of experience in related area.
- Strong communication skills to reach different levels of employees and outside vendors.
- Excellent organizational skills and detail oriented.
- Ability to multi-task and create systems for follow-through of employee requests and needs.
- Dedicated to the privacy of employee complaints and files.
- Able to maintain consistent professional relationships with employees at all levels.
- Passionate and completely dedicated to VACHS's mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve an excellent public education in preparation for high school and college.
- Unwavering belief that all students, regardless of demographics, can achieve at the highest academic levels.

### ***HR Responsibilities:***

- Oversee the organization's personnel benefits program; payroll and benefits administration and teacher credentials.
- Handle workers compensation claims and Family Medical Leave of Absences.
- Provides leadership and daily support to managers and principals relative to:
  - o Issue resolution;
  - o Policy and process development;



- o Adherence to federal and state regulations to ensure legal compliance;
  - o Exit interviews.
- Responsible for handling:
  - o Escalated employee relations issues;
  - o Policy issues;
  - o Answering questions about HR programs and practices;
  - o Implementing company-wide HR programs;
  - o Monitor unemployment claims and handles appeals process;
  - o Monitors company attendance records (Personal Time Off).
- Coordinate recruitment process; facilitate activities attendant to management of Job Fairs; and provide technical assistance to administrators in the employee selection process in addition to processing all new employees and all change-of-status forms.
- Maintain job vacancy posting and Human Resources web page.
- Design personnel forms and direct the maintenance of personnel records by all departments and is responsible for the release of any confidential information such as verifying employment or requests from agencies.

## **7. Operations Manager (OM)**

The Operations Manager (OM)'s job description is namely involved compliance with grants and programs as well as facilities. OM coordinates, participates and estimates time and material requirements for routine and special maintenance assignments and projects. S/he prepares contract specifications and requests for quotations; schedules maintenance work in accordance with labor, health and safety requirements. S/he also monitors the performance of contractors to assure compliance with contracts, timelines and perform various oversight functions concerning large facility construction and renovations.

### ***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Bachelor's degree in appropriate field from a regionally accredited university.
- 2-3 years of experience in related area.
- Strong communication skills to reach different levels of employees and outside vendors.
- Excellent organizational skills and detail oriented.
- Ability to multi-task and create systems for follow-through of employee requests and needs.
- Dedicated to the privacy of employee complaints and files.
- Able to maintain consistent professional relationships with employees at all levels.
- Passionate and completely dedicated to VACHS's mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve an excellent public education in preparation for high school and college.
- Unwavering belief that all students, regardless of demographics, can achieve at the highest academic levels.

***Facility Responsibilities:***

- Supervise the operations of the school in accordance with school policies.
- Plan, coordinate, evaluate and estimate time and material requirements for routine and special maintenance assignments and projects for school facilities, grounds and physical plant; plan specific projects to meet the needs of the District plan.
- Identify, schedule and oversee the removal of hazardous materials including asbestos and lead” added to the representative duties of his job description.
- Confer with administrators regarding work requests, priorities and maintenance needs at facilities; coordinate projects to cause minimal disruption to school activities.
- Conduct periodic building inspection to assure compliance with structural, roofing, painting, plumbing, heating and electrical requirements; make recommendations concerning needed repairs and appropriate priorities and follow up as needed.
- Maintain records relating to building projects such as architectural drawings, specifications, and construction cost breakdowns, bids, material and equipment specifications and job history files.
- Establish and maintain effective working relations with maintenance personnel.

***8. Director of Student Services***

The Director of Student Services (DSS) maintains lines of communication with parents and other family members to facilitate high levels of meaningful participation between the school and the communities we serve. The DSS acts as a liaison for family and community members to the Principal(s). S/he coordinates training of parents/guardians to act as partners in education and brings community members into the life of the school in ways that enhance the mission and vision of the school. The DSS directly leads the following outlets: The Connector Program, Counseling Services, Dean of Student Affairs, Parent Ambassadors and Parent Education. The DSS reports to the HOS.

***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- College degree.
- At least two years working in a school environment or as a community organizer.
- Evidence of strong organizational and interpersonal skills.
- Desire to be a team player; ability and willingness to lead community outreach.
- Passionate and completely dedicated to VACHS’s mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve an excellent public education in preparation for high school and college.
- Unwavering belief that all students, regardless of demographics, can achieve at the highest academic levels.





### ***Parent Ambassador Program:***

- Work with the Head of School and PTs to create programs and initiatives to increase family involvement in the school.
- Develop and help coordinate parent and school activities, to improve communication between the school and families.
- Act as a liaison/moderator between parents and the school over issues of conflict.
- Provide appropriate support and resources to the parent group (lead parents) to ensure that it meets its commitment to coordinate parent volunteer hours that is aligned with the mission of the school.
- Work with the leaders of the parent group to define annual goals, conduct local fundraising activity.

### ***Parent Education:***

- Work with the Dean of Student Affairs to define the scope and breadth of the parent education curriculum.
- Coordination of parent education program including organizing materials, speakers, venue, etc. for monthly parent education meetings.
- Develop a parent education curriculum that addresses a variety of topics of interest to our parent community: college readiness, financial literacy, how to pay for college, etc.

## ***8. Director of Special Education***

The Director of Special Education (DSE) will be responsible for the maintenance of records for special needs and will be the primary person responsible for ensuring that students with special needs receive the proper accommodations and/or modifications within the classroom.

### **Qualifications and Experience**

- Bachelor's Degree
- Certified Special Education teacher or administrator
- CLAD certification preferred
- Certified to administer CELDT preferred (can be trained)
- Teaching Credential
- At least two years of classroom experience working with students with IEPs
- Experience working with EL students and implementing SDAIE methods
- Passionate and completely dedicated to Valor Academy's mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve preparation for the college of their choice



- Unwavering belief that all students can achieve at the highest academic levels

## **Responsibilities**

### *Special Education Responsibilities*

- Coordinate and review special education needs of incoming students as indicated on the family questionnaire responses
- Provide direct special education services as needed
- Coordinate with schools to receive IEPs of all incoming students
- Facilitate review of intake assessments for incoming students
- Schedule and coordinate pull-out services for students on an as-needed basis
- Follow all Federal and District guidelines concerning the development and implementation of IEPs
- Facilitate necessary testing for evaluation process
- Ensure compliance with all Federal and District SPED regulations regarding parental consent
- Coordinate with Principals and grade-level teachers any pre-referral meetings and SST
- Ensure that all general education teachers know and understand classroom accommodations for the special needs students they serve
- Coordinate with DI and grade level teachers to monitor implementation of appropriate accommodations for students during instruction
- Serve as the point of contact for parents of students with special needs
- Organize and coordinate professional development opportunities for general and special education teachers
- Work directly with general education teachers on issues that may arise in classroom settings
- Facilitate the evaluation/reevaluation process
- Create and coordinate a master schedule for annual IEP meetings
- Be responsible for student files, including maintaining a system that monitors viewing of files and confidentiality, as well as ensuring that all files are current
- Assist with interviewing of special education teachers and related service professionals
- Coordinate annual or biannual formative and summative evaluations of the special education program
- Create and maintain a system for monitoring and compliance, ensuring that all federal and state rules and policies are followed
- Serve as the point of contact in matters involving special education due process



## **CAMPUS EMPLOYEES**

### ***1. Principal***

The Principal (PT) is responsible for driving the school's mission and vision. The PT accomplishes this through frequent observations and coaching, requiring peer cross-evaluations and by positive, constructive communication among Board Directors, administrative staff, teachers, students, & parents, especially as related to curriculum, instruction and assessment. The PT is a student-focused leader committed to implementing a standards based curriculum and using data and assessments to drive instructional decisions. S/he creates, monitors and sustains the high standards of a rigorous school climate and school culture. The Principal is directly responsible to the Head of Schools.

#### ***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Bachelor's degree; Master's Degree preferred.
- At least three years of urban teaching experience.
- California Administrative Credential preferred.
- Openness to feedback, willingness to take personal responsibility, and desire to learn from mistakes.
- Acknowledge praiseworthy efforts of staff, students, and parents.
- Collaborate with HOS and CAO concerning student achievement, student assessment and student discipline.
- Teach and lead one class per day when possible/necessary.
- Respond to complaints and suggestions from staff, students, and family members.
- Work closely with the Director of Student Services to ensure consistent and positive communication with all families.
- Communicate as the primary spokesperson for the school and advocate to all external audiences, including investors, media, community partners, government agencies, educational organizations, and local leaders.
- Along with the ED and Controller, oversee the school's finances: managing the budget, financial relationships, and relationships with vendors.

#### ***Staff Responsibilities:***

- Handle all matters regarding employment and dismissal of personnel; salaries and contracts; job assignments and performance evaluations; and orientation and training of new instructional staff.
- Facilitate collaboration among teachers in developing and implementing curriculum, instruction and classroom management.



- Support and evaluate the professional development and growth of all teachers and support staff.
- Support instructional practices through observation and discussion.
- Recruit, appoint, support, manage, and evaluate the Assistant Principal (APT), Student Data Coordinator (SDC), Principal in Residence (PTiR) and Office Support personnel.
- Recruit, appoint, support, and evaluate all instructional staff with support from the Assistant Principal.

***Student and Program Oversight:***

- Oversee staff and student scheduling.
- Day to day oversight of the school.
- Monitors implementation of the program through evaluating academic achievement and behavior through detailed data analysis of student and teacher performance.
- Oversee and assist with student discipline.
- Maintain and manage the enrollment, retainment and attrition of students.
- Ensure that students are passing the academic programs and those that need additional resources and interventions are receiving set support.
- Oversee Testing Coordinator to ensure timely submissions of all deadlines related to mandated state exams.
- Coordinate with the school's special education program Resource Teacher to ensure compliance with the school's charter and all relevant law and requirements set forth by the State of California.

***2. Assistant Principal or Principal in Residence***

The Assistant Principal (APT) or Principal in Residence (PTiR) has proven experience working with schools as an advocate, organizer or staff person. These candidates should have experience representing a constituency or coordinating group activities. The candidate also drives the mission and vision of the school; s/he effectively communicates this understanding to any personnel that is not a teacher, and coordinates participation and supervision in ways that support the school's charter. The Assistant Principal and the PTiR report to the Principal. Some of these responsibilities may be delegated to teachers interested in pursuing administration as their specialization track.

***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Bachelor's degree, Master's Degree preferred.
- At least three years of urban teaching experience.
- California Administrative Credential preferred.
- Acknowledge praiseworthy efforts of staff, students, and parents.
- Openness to feedback, willingness to take personal responsibility, and desire to learn from mistakes.
- Assist and collaborate with the Principal.
- Teach at least one subject or course to one group of students if possible/ necessary.



- Respond to complaints and suggestions from staff, students, and family members.
- People and activity/events planning oriented.

#### ***Staff Responsibilities:***

- Handle all matters regarding employment and dismissal of teacher's assistants (TAs); salaries and contracts; job assignments and performance evaluations; and orientation and training of new TAs and office personnel.
- Oversee staff to ensure safe and adequate departure and dismissal procedures.
- Supervise staff for transition into to the afterschool program smoothly.
- Recruit, appoint, support, and evaluate all support staff with feedback from the teachers.
- Support the professional development and growth of all TAs.

#### ***Student and Program Oversight:***

- Create supervision schedule for breaks and lunches.
- Create and manage individual TA schedules.
- Create, oversee and manage the cultural/extra & co-curricular programs i.e. Field Trips, Friday activities, Advisory Program and Dances.
- Oversee the lunch program, the people that serve and cater the food and all compliance issues with the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program.
- Manage transportation if applicable, i.e. bus schedule, bus company liaison.
- Oversee, schedule, staff and manage the afterschool program.
- Ensure accurate attendance tracking and compliance related to all grants per the afterschool program(s).

### **3. Teachers**

VACHS complies with the California Charter Schools Act with respect to teacher certification. All certified teachers teaching core subjects as per NCLB requirements, and uncertified teachers teaching non-core subjects, comply with subject matter competency and all other requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. Characteristics that add to the multilingual, multicultural nature of the faculty are valued as assets. Bright Star Schools' believe that part of the equation for a successful teacher includes a teacher who is willing to go above and beyond the call of duty when necessary. Our teachers are meaningfully committed to protecting the safety, interests and rights of all individuals in the classroom.

Teachers help develop and implement the curriculum. All teachers report to the Principal.

#### ***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Bachelor's Degree.
- NCLB Highly Qualified in core subjects.
- Two years of urban teaching experience preferred.



- Passionate and completely dedicated to VACHS's mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve preparation for the college of their choice.
- Unwavering belief that all students can achieve at the highest academic levels.
- High level of professionalism.
- Willingness to engage in frequent dialogue and to be relentlessly self-reflective with regards to personal teaching practices.
- Commitment to developing professionally as a teacher and as a leader.
- Commitment to analyzing student's academic achievement results and using assessment data to inform instruction.
- Teachers should possess an ELL authorization either embedded in their credential or added authorization issued by CTC.

***Instructional Responsibilities:***

- Ensure that the school's academic standards are rigorous, clear, measurable and aligned with California State Standards.
- Use the school's scope and sequence to develop unit plans and daily lesson plans when applicable i.e. for English Language Arts.
- Submit lesson overviews to the PT on a weekly basis.
- Work with grade level team, subject chair and PT to revise, edit and improve lessons.
- Develop curriculum that addresses different learning styles.
- Develop assessments that measure student progress.
- Create a course syllabus and write an introductory letter for students and families before the academic year begins.
- Use a variety of methods to engage students in the classroom.
- Assume responsibility for the progress of all students.
- Continuously use assessment data to refine curriculum and instructional practices.
- Communicate effectively with students, families and colleagues.
- Use planning periods for the advancement of student academics.

***Whole School Responsibilities:***

- Provide continual assessment of student progress and maintain accurate records of schoolwide promotion goals (OTCU).
- Support student discipline policies.
- Make meaningful connections with students who may engage in disruptive classroom behavior.
- Arrange for substitute teaching staff as needed.
- Communicate efficiently and timely with parents regarding child's progress in order to maintain close relationships with parents and guardians and involve them in their children's education.
- Also acts as advisor to his/her advisory and supports the advisory through the school's academic program.



#### **4. Dean of Student Affairs**

The Dean of Student Affairs (DSA) is the primary person responsible for the oversight of non-academic and behavioral concerns regarding students. S/he serves as the primary interface between the schools and the students' homes, ensuring consistent and timely communication from the school in regards to student discipline. The DSA must have experience with counseling students, supporting student discipline and instilling behavior interventions. S/he should have some experience working in a school. The DSA reports to the Principal and manages the Connecting Place Coordinators.

##### ***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Bachelor's degree.
- Fluency in Spanish preferred.
- At least two years of experience in the fields of Social Work, Counseling, Psychology or Family Therapy.
- Must have excellent communication and interpersonal skills for interaction with students, staff and parents.
- Able to supervise a classroom of 1 to 30 students.
- Proficient with Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Outlook.
- Highly organized and excellent with follow-through on tasks.
- Strong focus on the creation of an orderly academic environment.

##### ***Disciplinary Duties:***

- Organize meetings with Principal, and teachers to strategize individual student cases.
- Develop specific mentoring and peer counseling programs.
- Provide intervention for student discipline issues.
- Develop programs to promote positive student behavior by coordinating school activities to enhance discipline.
- Communicate student disciplinary concerns to the student's parent and staff timely and efficiently.
- Service as a liaison officer with community organizations, police and probation officers affected.
- Responsible for reports on investigations of offenses committed by students.
- Organize Staff Development Seminars and Workshops for parents on discipline.
- Perform other related duties assigned.

***Whole School Responsibilities:***

- Passionate and completely dedicated to VACHS's mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve preparation for the college of their choice.
- Unwavering belief that all students can achieve at the highest academic levels.
- Create, evaluate and seek to constantly improve overall school culture, with an emphasis on academic achievement, structure, discipline, and fun.

***5. Student Data Coordinator***

The Student Data Coordinator (SDC) has two years of experience working with data entry. S/he has experience with student information systems. The SDC is a bilingual speaker; fluent in Spanish/English with some experience working in a school environment. The Student Data Coordinator must be highly proficient with Microsoft Excel, Word, Access and Outlook.

***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Generate reports by operating the Eagle Aeries Student Information System.
- Assist with monthly reports to be submitted to the District and home office (LAUSD Classification, LAUSD attendance, Federal Food program, After School Education and Safety Program (ASES), and internal student progress reports.
- Ensure student data accuracy by developing and implementing standardized process around data entry and reporting of student information.
- Assist and coordinate in distribution of data to schools and home office.
- Assist and coordinate with yearly mandated exams (STAR, CELDT).
- Assist yearly District and state reports (CBEDS, R30 Language Census, SARC, CALPADS, STAR data growth reports).
- Assist in completing quarterly reports (Annual survey oversight, prep/accounting).
- Support Lunch Supervision, Friday Activities, Open Houses, etc.
- Assist in translating projects.
- Efficiently and timely print all student related reports such as report cards and transcripts.
- Maintain an excellent accounting system of all student cumulative files in VACHS's main office.
- Organize and aggregate data related to students including STAR scores/ paperwork and schoolwide promotion goals.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

***Whole School Responsibilities:***

- Passionate and completely dedicated to VACHS's mission and a steadfast belief that all students deserve preparation for the college of their choice.
- Unwavering belief that all students can achieve at the highest academic levels.
- Create, evaluate and seek to constantly improve overall school culture, with an emphasis on academic achievement, structure, discipline and fun.





## **6. Teacher's Assistant**

VACHS's teacher's assistants (TAs) are of great value to the overall academic program of the organization. Not only do they assist the teachers, but many TAs also serve as tutors and lead individual classes during the afterschool program. TAs are not only fully committed to the vision and mission of the school, but they are our primary source for substitute teachers and some even matriculate to become full-time teachers in the general education classroom with Bright Star Schools. As teachers teach the academic curriculum, our TAs have their own unique duties to drive the cultural framework of the schools during Friday activities, while teachers are in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and when we go on our intensive Life Experience Lessons. Our TAs help our schools realize our extensive academic and cultural programs.

### ***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Must be enrolled in a college or university, BA degree preferred.
- Must be organized, creative, independent and self-motivated, enthusiastic, dependable, detail-oriented, flexible in scheduling and prioritization and driven by excellence.
- Must possess good communication skills to present facts and recommendations effectively in oral and written form, including accurate grammar and business correspondence knowledge.
- Interpersonal skills to establish and maintain effective relationships; demonstrated ability to communicate in situations requiring tact and poise; skilled in confidentiality and discretion.
- Must present a neat, professional appearance.
- Must be able to adjust tasks and focus with composure, and in accordance with changing deadlines and priorities.

### ***Responsibilities:***

- Supervise children in all indoor and outdoor activities ensuring a safe environment, especially during transitions and bathroom breaks.
- Supervise children during breakfast, lunch and snack time, encouraging good eating habits are developed.
- Assist in teaching children to become responsible for their decisions and actions.
- Guide children's behaviors in a positive way that teaches self-respect along with respect for others and the community around them.
- Encourage children to interact positively with other children and people around them.
- Provide a wide variety of age appropriate activities that offers physical and emotional growth.
- Prepare instructional materials needed to implement the daily activity plans with the classroom teacher.
- Maintain open lines of communication with the classroom teacher and team to ensure individual needs of all children are met.
- Prepare and distribute healthy snacks as necessary for children.
- Lead the classroom if teacher is running late or requested a substitute.
- Help and supervise during any field trip and school-related activities.



## **7. Office Manager**

The office manager of VACHS ensures the efficient operation of the school's main office and work with members of the administrative team to ensure the success of the school. The office manager reports to the Principal. Office Managers should have at least two years of experience working as an office manager, administrative assistant, project manager or equivalent position. They effectively use standard office machines and computer software programs such as Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook. They speak, comprehend, read and write fluently in English and Spanish. They effectively attend to the details of work, and conduct all job duties with accuracy and preparedness.

### ***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- A minimum of an Associate's Degree or two years of college.
- A minimum of two years experience in a similar position.
- Demonstrated proficiency with letter and report writing, accurate mathematical calculations, word processing, record keeping and data collection systems.
- Perform clerical and administrative procedures for daily school operations.
- Interact pleasantly and professionally with all members of the learning community and the public.
- Maintain a neat and welcoming atmosphere in the office.
- Prepare correspondence, forms, reports, memoranda, and student attendance and enrollment data in an accurate and timely manner.
- Assure that student data, permission slips, and other required paperwork are kept current for each student as needed.
- Prepare and mail correspondence to students' parents.
- Exemplary communication skills in English and Spanish, including impeccable grammar and fluency in order to translate school documents and communications to Spanish or English as needed.
- Answer high volume of calls, return general voicemails or emails.

### ***Responsibilities***

- Monitoring the school's entryway, greeting parents and visitors to the school and maintaining school safety.
- Contacting parents regarding absences, missing assignments, teacher concerns or student illness.
- Implementing systems to support the work of teachers and administrative staff.
- Independently, or in accordance with administrative instructions, developing school communications in English and Spanish based on a thorough knowledge of school policies, programs and systems.
- Translating for parent meetings and school events.
- Preparing and maintaining a variety of student, personnel and school records.
- Maintaining and operating a variety of office equipment, such as the copy machine, printers, fax machine and scanners with speed and accuracy.



- Assisting in the coordination of special events.
- Place orders for office and classroom supplies.
- Collect necessary paperwork and assist in the full enrollment of a new student.
- Assist the Principal and members of the administrative team, as directed.

### ***8.Connector***

The connector educates students and parents about colleges, the college admissions process, trends, procedures, and testing; advising and supporting classes of 30-50 seniors and families as they go through the process; and helping students and families to choose wisely and realistically.

#### ***Characteristics and Qualifications:***

- Bachelor's degree in an appropriate field from a regionally accredited university, Masters preferred
- Must have strong communication skills and supervisory experience.
- Experience in college admissions
- Experience high school college counseling, teaching experience, and computer skill
- 

#### ***Responsibilities:***

- Meeting with all college admissions representatives who visit our campus and facilitating meetings between college representatives and our students.
- The College Counselor also serves as a liaison with College admissions offices throughout the year.
- Compiling an annual Profile of the School, as well as information on grade distributions in junior and senior courses and courses offered at our school.
- Working with Registrar to maintain records on seniors, including GPA's and transcripts.
- Writing an official school recommendation for each senior. To do so, the Counselor gathers information from parents, teachers, school records, and students themselves. The College Counselor also completes all School Report and mid-year report forms requested by colleges, including evaluations of students.
- Administering the College Counseling Office budget and purchasing, maintaining, and



sharing information on colleges, college guides, scholarships, financial aid, and paying for college.

- The College Counselor also keeps parents informed through a monthly column, a newsletter for parents, and in letters about test dates, local college events, and financial aid.
- Acting as lead advisor to the senior class as a whole and advising several individual seniors each year, providing academic and personal counseling. In addition to working with senior class on class events, class meetings provide an opportunity to disseminate information about the college application process.
- Making informational presentations to parents, such as the annual presentations to parents of 8th graders, parents of juniors, new parents, and the Parents' Association.
- Being aware of issues and trends in college admission, higher education, testing, as well as keeping up-to-date about specific colleges and maintaining membership in professional organizations.
- Maintaining and disseminating information about standardized tests such as SAT, ACT, and TOEFL, helping to administer PSAT exams and working with the Registrar to arrange for or extended time on these tests, as warranted.
- Coordinating selection of college book award winners and presents them on Graduation weekend. The College Counselor has also handled various aspects of Graduation such as the graduation photo, certificates, and creating programs for Graduation and Academic Convocation.
- Serving as a member of the Curriculum Committee, Head's Council

## **RECRUITMENT OF STAFF**

VACHS takes a local and national approach towards recruiting our administrative and teaching staff. A major resource for recruitment is the Teach for America Los Angeles office. We recruit at all of the major colleges and universities, such as UCLA, Loyola Marymount, USC, Pepperdine and the Cal State Universities. In addition, we rely on word of mouth, advertising in the local papers, participation in annual charter schools job fairs, visits to private schools and postings on websites such as Edjoin and Craigslist. Additionally, we subscribe to headhunting services that recruit for charter schools such as Carnie, Sandoe & Associates or Teach California Charter. Nationally, we contact the alumni networks of colleges and universities and organizations such as New Leaders for New Schools.

## **SELECTION OF STAFF**

Our selection process is designed to be rigorous and comprehensive to minimize the risk of hiring staff that are not suited for the unique responsibilities and demands of VACHS. The HROM is responsible for recruiting and posting the job openings; reviewing the applications and conducting the first informal phone interview. The hiring process consists of a multi-step application and interviewing process.

1. Application, resume and cover letter submitted by candidate.
2. HROM reviews and separates the applications into three categories: strong, proficient, and weak.
  - a. Weak candidates will receive a notice of acknowledgement.
3. Proficient and strong candidates are invited to a demonstration lesson or depending on the position, an interview.
  - a. A teacher will be scheduled for a demonstration interview observed by Principal and possibly the grade level or subject level chair.
  - b. A teacher's assistant will do walkthroughs with the Assistant Principal and do a series of questions and answers.
  - c. A full-time exempt classified position consists of a series of interviews ranging from the Board of Directors to the Principal(s).
4. Candidates whose mission is aligned with VACHS's values and needs are then assessed by all relevant members of the hiring team. The HROM requests for references from the candidate and follows-up on them
5. Any candidates who show potential, but are not hired for the year are placed in an internal database for possible future recruitment for six months.

## **EMPLOYEE APPLICATION PROCESS AND AGREEMENTS**

The application procedure includes a written application, review of references and a demonstration lesson for teachers. Prior to signing the agreements, applicants spend time with the Principal or other staff member(s) to ensure that they share the school's mission and vision.

Employee's job duties and work basis are negotiated in individual employment agreements. Full-time staff is hired for a one-year term. Agreements may be renewed based on demonstration of meeting or exceeding the requirements of individual contracts and adhering to policies, procedures and expectations. These expectations are designed to support the mission and vision of the school and comply with state laws.

These agreements may take the form of employment contracts, at-will employment agreements or other agreements. All agreements not specifically stating that they are Employment Contracts are deemed to be at-will employment agreements.



## **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

VACHS utilizes “360°/upward evaluation” where students, parents and staff members have an opportunity to provide feedback to the teachers, other staff members, the administrators and ultimately each other. These evaluations are within the formal evaluation process that is the responsibility of the Principal, Assistant Principal or Head of Schools. All evaluations—informal and formal, are based on a rubric that all employees understand and acknowledge.

The senior management team that consists of the Head of Schools, Principals, Executive Director and the Culture and Accountability Officer has all contributed to the development of a comprehensive rubric that encompasses both the California Standards for the Teaching Profession and employee qualities that are of value to the organization. Bright Star Schools has also adopted a new program called Echospa to streamline the evaluation process. New teachers and teachers that need improvement are assessed by their site-supervisor at least two times formally throughout a calendar year. Returning and high-performing teachers are evaluated formally at least once by their site supervisor. The Principal however, conducts many and frequent classroom visits and observations annually.

All teachers will participate in classroom observations, walkthroughs and peer evaluations of each other. In addition to a formal assessment conducted by the Principal, the teaching staff will continuously engages in reflection and discussion about instructional and management practices during Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and Professional Development (PD). Teachers will also be responsible for partially evaluating their TA’s performance. When the feedback is critical and there are unsatisfactory marks by a fellow teacher or the supervisor, the Principal will provides appropriate measures for improvement and place interventions as needed.

The Assistant Principal will be responsible for evaluating all non certificated staff, based in part on the evaluations by the teachers. The Principal will be responsible for annually evaluating all certificated teachers and the Assistant Principal, based in part on evaluations by staff, parents and students. The Head of Schools will be responsible for evaluating the performances of the Principal(s), based in part on the evaluations by staff, students and parents.

## **SALARIES FOR ALL EMPLOYEES**

Bright Star Schools has developed its own salary scale that is on average 5 – 15% above the LAUSD scale. The difference in salary is contingent upon the number of years served as a Bright Star Schools teacher. As Bright Star Schools teachers work longer hours during a regular school day (8 hours vs. 6 hour days), Bright Star Schools believes in compensating for how much our teachers go “above and beyond” the normal call of duty as best we can monetarily.

Teachers and administrators are also eligible for merit-based bonuses; it is an effective tool that drives staff achievement and morale. Bonuses are available to teachers approximately halfway through their second year of teaching. It is based on subject cohort growth or schoolwide growth coefficients (for teachers who teach a non-testable subject), and as long as the school budget allows. These bonuses do not track the typical school year, but instead are granted in December, based on a teacher’s track record for the prior school year and improvements

observed during the first quarter of the following school year. Bright Star Schools believes that every employee has areas for potential improvement and that bonuses should be based on those efforts.



**Section 2: State that the charter school will conform to the legal requirement that all charter school teachers shall hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold.**

#### **ASSURANCE**

VACHS conforms to the legal requirement that all charter school teachers shall hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold.

#### **PROCESS FOR STAFF SELECTION**

VACHS believes that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. VACHS shall not discriminate against qualified applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, or any other characteristic protected by California or federal law. Equal employment opportunity shall be extended to all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including recruitment, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall, and dismissal from employment.

VACHS adheres to California laws, including fingerprinting, drug testing and prohibitions regarding the employment of any person who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony. All employees must furnish or be able to provide:

1. Proof of negative tuberculosis (TB) testing or negative chest x-ray for TB.
2. Fingerprinting for a criminal record check. VACHS will process all background checks as required by Education Code Section 44237.
3. Documents establishing legal employment status.

The HROM is responsible for monitoring and maintaining documentation of medical and criminal investigation clearances, as required by California and federal laws.

**Section 3: Assure that the school will maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and that they will be readily available for inspection and procedure for monitoring credentials.**

#### **Assurance**

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(I), VACHS conforms to the legal requirements that all charter school teachers shall hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) certificate, permit or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. The school maintains current copies of all teacher credentials and/or

proof of credential clearances. Since starting on January 1, 2006, the CTC no longer issues paper certificates of clearance, but instead it posts such information on its website.



Appropriate record keeping of credentials held by teachers as well as other documentation are monitored and maintained on file by the administrative designees. Credentials are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that teachers carry the necessary certifications, as required by law. Teachers' credential information are readily available for inspection by the school's charter authorizer with the understanding that the charter authorizer agrees to uphold the confidentiality of the teachers' information in the same manner that the school is required to maintain the confidentiality of personnel records by law. Employees are responsible for monitoring and updating the status of their own credentials. Employees are also responsible for their own fees related to their credentials.

#### **Section 4: Assure NCLB compliance for teachers and paraprofessionals.**

VACHS will comply with the provisions of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act as they apply to certificated personnel. All teachers are highly-qualified as defined by No Child Left Behind:

- Have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher education;
- Hold full state certification; and
- Demonstrate subject-matter competence for each NCLB core academic subject they teach.
- Have an ELL authorization embedded in their credential or added authorization issued by CTC

VACHS furthermore assures that all paraprofessionals are also NCLB compliant in accordance with Title I funding parameters. All paraprofessionals have:

- (1) Completed two years of study at an institution of higher education; (2) Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; or
- (3) Met a rigorous standard of quality and are able to demonstrate, through a formal State or local academic assessment, knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing and mathematics (or as appropriate, reading readiness, writing readiness and mathematics readiness).

The above requirements do not apply to paraprofessionals working primarily as translators or solely on parental involvement activities. Individuals who work solely in non-instructional roles, such as food service, cafeteria or playground supervision, personal care services and non-instructional computer assistance are not considered to be paraprofessionals for Title I purposes. All paraprofessionals however, in accordance with Title I funds respectively, have a secondary school diploma or equivalent.





## **ELEMENT 6: HEALTH AND SAFETY**

*"The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school record summary as described in Section 44237." Ed. Code Section 47605(b)(5)(F)*



*Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are. **John***



**Section 1: Provide, if known, the address of the facilities to be used by the charter school; (If the charter is approved by the District, and the charter school wants to relocate to an area different from the targeted area originally designated in the charter, a material amendment will be required by the charter's board of directors, prior to opening the charter school in the new location).**

#### **School Address**

Currently unknown. In search of facility in Arleta or Panorama City community of Los Angeles.

#### **Staff Responsibilities**

All employees are responsible for their own safety, as well as that of others in their workplace. VACHS relies upon its employees to ensure that the work areas are kept safe and free of hazardous conditions. Employees report any unsafe conditions or potential hazards to their supervisor or the HROM immediately. If an employee suspects a concealed danger is present on the premises, or in a product, facility, piece of equipment, process or business practice for which the school is responsible, the employee brings it to the attention of the Principal, HROM or another member of the administration immediately. The school's administration arranges for the correction of any unsafe condition or concealed danger immediately and contacts the Head of Schools regarding the problem.

Periodically, VACHS will issue rules and guidelines governing workplace safety and health. All employees familiarize themselves with the rules and guidelines, as strict compliance is expected. Failure to comply with rules and guidelines regarding health and safety or work performance is not tolerated. All employees are required to maintain current First Aid and CPR certification. Annual trainings are provided on site by the American Red Cross or other authorizing agency.

#### **Fingerprinting and TB Test**

Prior to employment and within thirty (30) days of hiring, each employee submits a criminal background check as required by Education Code §44237 and 45125.1. VACHS adheres to California laws including fingerprinting and prohibitions regarding the employment of persons who have been convicted of a violent or serious felony. Fingerprint clearance for new employees are acquired through submitting the employee's fingerprints to the California Department of Justice. Employees may be fingerprinted at any local police station or at a site where "Live Scan" is utilized.

No employee is permitted to commence employment at VACHS until that employee has been cleared by the Department of Justice. This ensures that employees with prior criminal histories



do not commence employment with VACHS. Additionally, no person shall be employed by VACHS unless the employee has submitted proof of an examination that the employee is free of active Mantoux Tuberculosis (TB) within sixty (60) days prior to employment. This examination shall consist of an X-ray of the lungs or an approved intradermal tuberculin test, which if positive, shall be followed by an X-ray of the lungs.

### **Child Abuse Reporting Procedures**

VACHS shall comply with the Child Abuse Reporting Laws set forth in the California Penal Code. In accordance with state law, all VACHS teachers and staff are mandated to report any suspected child abuse. The report is filed with either the Police Department Child Abuse Unit or the Department of Children and Family Services. The mandated individual will meet with the appropriate authorities accordingly. Teachers and staff shall receive in-service training twice a year and sign documentation verifying notification and understanding regarding this responsibility. All staff will be required to follow federal guidelines to immediately notify DCFS and file the proper reports regarding any reported child abuse.

### **Immunizations**

VACHS shall require all enrolling students to provide documentation of immunizations for polio, diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella and Hepatitis B as described in California's Department of Health Services Document IMM-231. The immunization requirements of pupils as a condition of enrollment are applied to the same extent that it would be applied if the pupils attended a non-charter public school.

### **Drug Free/Alcohol Free/Smoke Free Environment**

VACHS functions as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.

### **Vision, Hearing, and Scoliosis Screening**

VACHS will provide vision, hearing, and scoliosis screening to students to the extent as would be required if the pupils attended a non-charter public school. The Charter School adheres to Education Code Section 49450, et seq., as applicable to the grade levels served by the school. For sections 2, 3 and 4, please see Element 16, Facilities.

## **Section 2: School Facility Assurance**

VACHS assures that the school's facilities will comply with state building codes, federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access requirements, and other applicable fire, health and

structural safety requirements, and will maintain on file readily accessible records documenting such compliance.



### **Section 3: Certificate of Occupancy Assurance.**

VACHS assures that a site will be secured with an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy. VACHS also assures that a comprehensive school safety plan will be developed and kept on file for review, and that school staff will be trained annually on the safety procedures outlined in the plan.

### **Section 4: Include District required language regarding health and safety procedures.**

#### **Insurance Requirements**

No coverage shall be provided to the Charter School by the District under any of the District's self-insured programs or commercial insurance policies. The Charter School shall secure and maintain, at a minimum, insurance as set forth below with insurance companies acceptable to the District [A.M. Best A-, VII or better] to protect the Charter School from claims which may arise from its operations. Each Charter School location shall meet the below insurance requirements individually.

It shall be the Charter School's responsibility, not the District's, to monitor its vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors for compliance with the insurance requirements.

The following insurance policies are required:

1. Commercial General Liability, including Fire Legal Liability, coverage of \$5,000,000 per occurrence and in the Aggregate. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles as named additional insured and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and the Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in the Charter School's policy. Coverage shall be maintained with no Self-Insured Retention above \$15,000 without the prior written approval of the Office of Risk Management for the LAUSD.
2. Workers' Compensation Insurance in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code adequate to protect the Charter School from claims that may arise from its operations pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Act (Statutory Coverage). The Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage must also include Employers Liability coverage with limits of \$1,000,000/\$1,000,000/\$1,000,000.
3. Commercial Auto Liability, including Owned, Leased, Hired, and Non-owned, coverage with limits of \$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence if the Charter School does not operate a student bus service. If the Charter School provides student bus services, the required coverage limit is \$5,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.
4. Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by the Charter School to cover all Charter School employees who handle, process or otherwise have responsibility for Charter

School funds, supplies, equipment or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be \$50,000 per occurrence, with no self-insured retention.

5. Professional Educators Errors and Omissions Liability coverage with minimum limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate.
6. Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage with minimum limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate. Coverage may be held as a separate policy or included by endorsement in the Commercial General Liability or the Errors and Omissions Policy.
7. Employment Practices Legal Liability coverage with limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate.
8. Excess/umbrella insurance with limits of not less than \$10,000,000 is required of all high schools and any other school that participates in competitive interscholastic or intramural sports programs.

\*Coverages and limits of insurance may be accomplished through individual primary policies or through a combination of primary and excess policies. *The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and the Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in the Charter School's policy.*

### **Evidence of Insurance**

The Charter School shall furnish to the District's Office of Risk Management and Insurance Services located at 333 S. Beaudry Ave, 28th Floor, Los Angeles CA 90017 within 30 days of all new policies inception, renewals or changes, certificates or such insurance signed by authorized representatives of the insurance carrier. Certificates shall be endorsed as follows:

*"The insurance afforded by this policy shall not be suspended, cancelled, reduced in coverage or limits or non-renewed except after thirty (30) days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, has been given to the District."*

Facsimile or reproduced signatures may be acceptable upon review by the Office of Risk Management and Insurance Services. However, the District reserves the right to require certified copies of any required insurance policies.

Should the Charter School deem it prudent and/or desirable to have insurance coverage for damage or theft to school, employee or student property, for student accident, or any other type of insurance coverage not listed above, such insurance shall not be provided by the District and its purchase shall be the responsibility of the Charter School.

### **Hold Harmless/Indemnification Provision**

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Charter School does hereby agree, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorney's

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

### **Health, Safety and Emergency Plan**

VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL will have a Health, Safety and Emergency Plan in place prior to beginning the operation of the school. The [Charter School] will ensure that staff has been trained in health, safety, and emergency procedures and will maintain a calendar and conduct emergency response drills for students and staff.

### **FERPA**

VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL and its employees and officers will comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) at all times.

### **Criminal Background Checks and Fingerprinting**

Charter School shall require all employees of the Charter School, and all volunteers who will be performing services that are not under the direct supervision of a Charter School employee, and any onsite vendors having unsupervised contact with students to submit to criminal background checks and fingerprinting. The Charter School will maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that the Charter School has performed criminal background checks for all employees and documentation that vendors have conducted required criminal background checks for their employees prior to any unsupervised contact with students.

## ELEMENT 7: RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE



*“The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school District to which the charter petition is submitted.” Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(G)*



Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments.

***Chief Justice Earl Warren***



## **Section 1: Include a thorough description of the annual outreach efforts of the charter school.**



### **OUTREACH EFFORTS**

VACHS implements a coordinated advertising and recruiting strategy that ensures all parents and families are notified about the educational opportunities we offer. These efforts will be carried out from December–August. VACHS is committed to serving all ethnic groups and thus, uses various advertising techniques to recruit students from all backgrounds.

Each year Bright Star Schools conducts an analysis of enrollment trends in order to optimize our efforts to recruit and retain students. A committee, comprised of various stakeholders from the instructional, administrative and operational sides of the school, meets regularly to complete a complex problem solving model. Using both quantitative and qualitative feedback from the previous year, the model allows the team to work together to clearly identify enrollment trends and their root causes, determine potential solutions, and generate strategies to successfully implement and track solutions in the upcoming year. One of the most valuable sources of data for this exercise comes from non-mandatory exit interviews (of families that have transferred from Valor to another school site) through which feedback is gathered by VACHS administrators from the students and parents who choose not to enroll or re-enroll at VACHS.

Externally, VACHS will address retention and attrition through the development of school-based family engagement systems and strong partnerships that support teaching, learning, and student achievement. Director of Student Services will oversee coordinated efforts to strengthen two-way communication between parents and the school. This includes projects that give parents immediate access to critical information, help them better navigate the school and communicate possible concerns. The bi-annual parent surveys are an important component for they provide feedback that guides our parent engagement efforts. Because we understand parents play a fundamental role in their child’s education, we do our best to support parents in their role as parent educators by providing them with resources to develop their skills and monitor their children’s learning at home. Resources will include parent workshops and meetings, skills development opportunities and online tools. This collaboration not only helps parent relations, but also increases student achievement and hopefully retention.

### ***PART A: What methods the school will use to advertise and recruit students (flyers, newspaper advertisements, informational fairs, etc.)***

#### **Recruitment Plan**

Some of the methods shall include, but are not limited to the following:

- Distribution of informational materials to community organizations including Panorama Neighborhood Council, Arleta Watchdogs, CD7 and CD\*, community religious institutions, and other organizations that serve various racial and ethnic populations, such as the Panorama City libraries, recreation centers, local businesses, middle schools and faith based organizations.
- Presentations at various multi-ethnic events, including community fairs and festivals.



- Announcements in local media, such as “The Neighborhood News” serving the communities of Arleta, Panorama City, Pacoima, North Hollywood, and others.
- Outreach meetings in several educational areas of the District to reach prospective students and parents.
- Providing opportunities for parents to speak to our representatives outside popular shopping venues.
- Development of promotional materials in various languages, including Spanish, Tagalog, Armenian and others to inform non-English speaking populations about our school.

Our efforts are centered on providing equal opportunities to all residents of the District, regardless of racial and ethnic background. Our student body is comprised of Latino/a, African American, Asian, Armenian, Pacific Islander, and other students.

### ***PART B: What geographic areas will be targeted in outreach efforts?***

#### **Targeted Areas**

Our efforts target Panorama City, Arleta, Pacoima, and North Hollywood communities is based on our desire to serve students who will matriculate from our 5-8<sup>th</sup> grade middle school program.

### ***PART C: What languages will be used to do outreach?***

#### **Outreach Languages**

The primary languages for outreach are in English and Spanish. If Tagalog or Armenian translation is needed, VACHS has staff members to accommodate the language barrier. VACHS provides translation services for in-person interaction requiring translation to the extent we have those language services available.

### ***PART D: How these outreach efforts will attain a racial and ethnic balance at the charter school that is reflective of the District?***

#### **Achieving Racial and Ethnic Balance**

VACHS will keep on file documentation of the efforts made to achieve racial and ethnic balance and the results achieved, as well as an accurate accounting of the ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled in the school. VACHS seeks to serve the families of Los Angeles, with a particular emphasis on reaching out to and recruiting in the underserved communities of Panorama City, Arleta, Pacoima and North Hollywood. The local public school population has a high Hispanic demographic, as well as a high socio-economically disadvantaged population. VACHS’ demographics also reflect such statistics.

As stated in our vision, VACHS seeks to narrow the achievement gap by offering all students, regardless of background, an excellent public education. As such, VACHS is committed to maintaining a racial and ethnic balance of its students that is reflective of the general population residing within the Los Angeles Unified School District’s (LAUSD) territorial jurisdiction. In order to accomplish this, VACHS conducts the following recruitment efforts, outreach programs and activities:

- Maintain student demographic data to ensure accurate accounting of racial and ethnic balance of students enrolled in the school.
- Develop and distribute flyers or brochures, applications and other recruitment materials that reflect the diversity of the community in English and Spanish (the languages of the families in the surrounding neighborhood).
- Use various distribution channels to enable public relations efforts to reach a wide audience, including community presentations, flyers, the school website and/or sending out press releases to the local media.
- . Since Valor Academy Charter High School plans to be located near Valor Academy Charter Middle School its intentions are to recruit and work with educationally disadvantaged students in this direct area.

### **Court-ordered Integration**

The Charter School shall comply with all requirements of the Crawford v. Board of Education, City of Los Angeles court order and the LAUSD Integration Policy adopted and maintained pursuant to the Crawford court order, by the Office of Student Integration Services (collectively the “Court-ordered Integration Program”). The Court-ordered Integration Program applies to all schools within or chartered through LAUSD. The School will provide a written plan in the charter petition and upon further request by the District outlining how it would achieve and maintain the LAUSD’s ethnic goal of 70:30 or 60:40 ratio. (Ratio represents the percentage of Predominantly Hispanic Black Asian Other (PHBAO) compared to Other White (OW). The written plan should list specific dates, locations and recruitment activities to achieve the District’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal.

The District receives neither average daily attendance allocations nor Court-ordered Integration Program cost reimbursements for charter school students. Instead, the District now receives the Targeted Instruction Improvement Grant (TIIG) for its Court-ordered Integration Program. The District retains sole discretion over the allocation of TIIG funding, where available, and cannot guarantee the availability of this Funding.

### **No Child Left Behind-Public School Choice (NCLB-PSC) Traveling Students**

The District and VACHS are committed to providing all students with quality educational alternatives in compliance with all federal and state laws, including students who are enrolled in schools of the District identified by the California Department of Education as in need of Program Improvement. No Child Left Behind-Public School Choice (“NCLB-PSC”) placement with charter schools is an alternative strongly encouraged by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001(“NCLB”).

VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of accepting for enrollment District students participating in the District’s NCLB-PSC program. The parties agree to memorialize separately any agreed-to number of NCLB-PSC placements of District students at the school.

As required under NCLB, all NCLB-PSC students attending [charter school] shall have the right to continue attending [charter school] until the highest grade level of the charter. However, the

obligation of the District to provide transportation for a NCLB-PSC student to VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL shall end in the event the NCLB-PSC student's resident District school exits Program Improvement status.



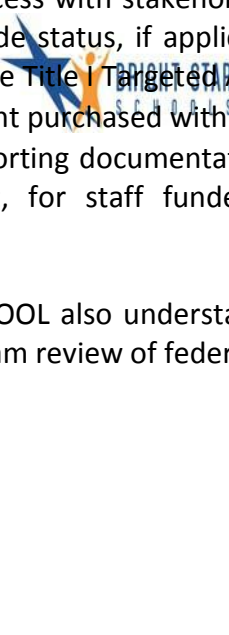
VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL will ensure that all of its NCLB-PSC students are treated in the same manner as other students attending the school. NCLB-PSC students are and will be eligible for all applicable instructional and extra-curricular activities at the school. VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL will make reasonable efforts to invite and encourage the participation of the parents of NCLB-PSC students in the activities and meetings at the school.

Determination of student eligibility for this NCLB-PSC option, including the grade level of eligibility, will be made solely by the District, based on the District's NCLB-PSC process, guidelines, policies and the requirements of NCLB. In the event demand for places at VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL under the NCLB-PSC program increases in subsequent years, VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of increasing the number of NCLB-PSC places available at the school.

### **Federal Compliance**

As a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL has agreed to meet all of the programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and other applicable federal grant programs. VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL understands that it is a local educational agency [LEA] for purposes of federal compliance and reporting purposes. VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of NCLB and other applicable federal programs, including, but not limited to, documentation related to funding, required parental notifications, appropriate credentialing of teaching and paraprofessional staff, the implementation of Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services, where applicable, or any other mandated federal program requirement. The mandated requirements of NCLB, Title I, Part A include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Notify parents at the beginning of each school year of their "right to know" the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teacher including a timely notice to each individual parent that the parent's child has been assigned, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified.
- Develop jointly with, and distribute to, parents of participating children, a school-parent compact.
- Hold an annual Title I meeting for parents of participating Title I students.
- Develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy.
- Submit biannual Consolidated Application to California Department of Education (CDE) requesting federal funds.
- Complete and submit Local Education Agency (LEA) Plan to CDE.

- 
- The logo for Bright Star Schools is positioned in the upper center of the page. It features a stylized star with a blue outline and an orange center, with the words "BRIGHT STAR" in blue above "SCHOOLS" in orange.
- Complete reform planning process with stakeholders and submit to CDE all appropriate documents for Title I schoolwide status, if applicable; otherwise, identify and maintain roster of eligible students for the Title I Targeted Assistance School Program.
  - Maintain inventory of equipment purchased with categorical funds, where applicable.
  - Maintain appropriate time-reporting documentation, including semi-annual certification and personnel activity report, for staff funded with categorical resources, where applicable.

VALOR ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL also understands that as part of its oversight of the school, the District may conduct program review of federal and state compliance issues.



## **ELEMENT 8: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

*“Admission Requirements, if applicable.” Ed. Code Section 47605(b)(5)(H)*



The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically...  
Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education. Martin Luther King, Jr.

## **Section 1: State that the charter school will admit all pupils who wish to attend as outlined in Education Code § 47605 (d)(2)(A)**



### **Assurance**

As a public school, VACHS admits all grade-level eligible pupils who wish to attend up to capacity, in accordance with California Education Code § 47605 (d)(2)(A).

Valor Academy Charter High School:

- Is non-sectarian in all areas of operations, including student admission.
- Not discriminate against any student on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code.
- Does not charge tuition.
- Accepts all students who are California residents.
- Does not require any pupil to attend the charter school.
- Does not enroll pupils over 19 years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements.
- Complies with all laws establishing minimum age for public school attendance.
- Adheres to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children.

Valor Academy Charter High School adheres to all provisions of No Child Left Behind regarding:

- Receiving students from Program Improvement schools as part of Public School Choice.
- Providing the Principal's attestation of highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals.
- Meeting the needs of "at-risk" students if the school is designated a targeted assistance school.

If the number of pupils who wish to attend the Charter School exceeds the school's capacity, attendance, except for existing pupils of the Charter School, shall be determined by a public lottery. Preference is extended to pupils as described in Part F below except as provided for in California Education Code § 47614.5. Charter schools are schools of choice and VACHS's admissions policies reflect this compliance with state and federal requirements. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605 (d)(2)(A), VACHS admits all students who wish to attend, up to the school's enrollment capacity.

### **McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**

The Charter School will adhere to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.

The Charter School will include specific information in their outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings notifying parents that the

school is open to enroll and provide services for all students which shall include a District standard contact number to access additional information regarding enrollment. A student's IEP will never be required prior to participation in any attendance lottery or as a condition for enrollment.



## **Section 2: Describe any specific admissions requirements of the proposed school, and provide an assurance that they are consistent with non-discrimination statutes.**

### **Attendance Requirements**

VACHS abides by California Education Code § 47605 (d)(1) and does not charge tuition. VACHS shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code.

## **Section 3: Describe the efforts the school will employ to recruit academically low-achieving, economically disadvantaged students, and special education students.**

### **Efforts to Recruit Categories of Students**

By charter school law, VACHS has open admission for any student who seeks to enroll in our academic program. Our recruitment efforts reflect our objective nature as a charter school and in no way favor or bias any demographic. When students with IEPs enroll, it is the school's policy to collect any and all information pertaining to the student's IEP. VACHS is committed to serving academically low-achieving and economically disadvantaged students to offer them a seamless path to success in high school and college. We have proposed our location in a community where on average 80-95% of the students in our target population qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch according to federal guidelines. We are dedicated to making sure that all community members are equally aware of the alternative we are providing to high school students in the communities of Panorama City, Arleta, Pacoima, and North Hollywood.

Our school recruiting team conducts student outreach activities from December through August annually. A variety of techniques are utilized including canvassing, local school visits, community-based organization visits, public business tabling (sitting outside markets and other businesses that allow us to pass out flyers to the public) and various advertising in Los Angeles-based English and Spanish publications. In order to ensure we attract low-achieving, economically disadvantaged and special education students, we plan to conduct our outreach in communities with similar demographics. VACHS marketing and recruiting materials highlight that our program is available to all students with a variety of needs and backgrounds. Our recruiting teams are trained to ensure all families are notified that our program currently serves a large population of economically disadvantaged students and that we accept students regardless of past academic performance.

When students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) enroll, it is the school's policy to collect any and all information pertaining to the student's IEP, in that VACHS can provide all necessary and timely services.



#### **Section 4: Describe the manner in which the school will implement a public random drawing in the event that applications for enrollment exceed school capacity.**

Our admissions process will begin with the submission of an Intent to Enroll Form at any time during the year. Once a student is offered a space in the school, families will complete an enrollment packet. In the late spring and summer months, families will attend a "Welcome Meeting" where the school culture and academic policies will be reviewed prior to the first day of school. At this orientation, students and parents are encouraged to sign our Commitment to Excellence Form. By reviewing and signing this form, parents acknowledge that they will be actively involved in their child's education, both at home and at school. School staff is flexible and reasonable in working with parents to determine various ways that they can be supportive of their child's education. While parents are encouraged to sign the Commitment to Excellence form, it is their decision and a choice not to sign the form does not in any way impact their enrollment or admission.

#### **Summary of Valor Academy Charter High School's Application Process**

1. Open Enrollment Period (In year 1: Date of charter petition approval through April; In years 2-5: Beginning of active academic year (late August) through March)<sup>23</sup>.
  - a. submission of intent to enroll forms
  - b. Recruitment/Informational Meetings.
2. Random Public Drawing (In year 1: sometime in May, if necessary; In years 2-5: sometime in April, if necessary).
  - a. Lottery (if necessary).
  - b. Notification of families.
  - c. Acceptance letter signed and mailed to school by parent/guardian.
  - d. Completion of all necessary enrollment paperwork, including but not limited to:
    1. Proof of age.
    2. Immunization records.
    3. Home language survey.
    4. Emergency medical information.
  4. Welcome Meeting (May-August).
    - a. Parent & Student attendance at Welcome Meeting.
    - b. Parent and student signature of school Commitment to Excellence.

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<sup>23</sup> Enrollment during years 2-5 will be open year round at our school, beginning at the start of the prior school year and continuing into the active school year, as seats are available. However, the official "Open Enrollment" period before the Public Random Drawing is held begins the first day of school during the active academic year and continues through March.



***PART A: The method the school will use to communicate to all interested parties the rules to be followed during the lottery process.***



**Open Enrollment**

All students interested in attending VACHS are required to complete an application packet and submit an application directly to the school before the annual open enrollment period deadline. Applications are available digitally online on the Bright Star Schools and VACHS web pages and hard copies are available at the school site during a publicly advertised open enrollment period each year generally beginning the first business day of school during the active academic calendar and continuing through late March. Typical methods for advertising the open enrollment period include, but are not limited to, web advertising, newspaper and magazine ads, home mailers, fliers in the communities of Panorama City, Arleta, Pacoima, and North Hollywood, and sign/billboard advertising. Submitted applications are date-and-time stamped and student names added to an application roster to track receipt.

Following the open enrollment period, Intent to Enroll forms are counted to determine if any grade level has received a number of applications which exceed available seats. In this event, the school holds a public random lottery to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level. The public is notified of the public random drawing through written notices posted on our website and fliers in the community. For applicants who have submitted an Intent to Enroll form, they are notified of the public random drawing via automated phone messages, email notifications, and letters sent to the home addresses. These notices outline admissions policies and highlight the lottery process and timeline on the School Calendars. Completion of these tasks is ensured by the Outreach Coordinator.

***PART B: The method the school will use to verify lottery procedures are fairly executed.***

**Method**

The lottery is led by our Outreach Coordinator. Given the native languages of the anticipated target community, all proceedings are conducted in English and Spanish. The names of each prospective student are put on cards that are of equal size and shape. The cards indicate if the applying student has any siblings that are applying for admission the same year<sup>24</sup>. The name on each card is read as it is placed into a container or lottery device that randomly mixes the cards. A person assisting with the lottery, a non-interested party, draws the cards one at a time and reads the name on the card. As each card is pulled it is posted visibly on a display in the order it was chosen. Names are given a numerical ranking based on the order they were chosen. The drawing continues until all cards have been drawn and all names have been assigned a numerical ranking. These rankings are recorded in an electronic database that is double checked by the Outreach Coordinator.

Separate lotteries are conducted for each grade in which there are fewer vacancies than pupils interested in attending. All lotteries take place on the same day in a single location, typically in the school multi-purpose room or a local community center. Lotteries are conducted in

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<sup>24</sup> If a student is drawn who has a sibling, then the sibling who has enrolled in the same open enrollment cycle will receive an admissions preference according to #1 under "Admissions Preferences".

ascending order beginning with the lowest applicable grade level. Due to preference given to students as listed below in Admissions Preferences, if a card is drawn that indicates said student, the student will be assigned the next available numerical ranking for the appropriate grade level.



The lottery is open to the public and families are encouraged to attend, however, families are not required to be present at the time of the drawing to be eligible for admission. Results are published in English and Spanish and are posted online and in hard copy in public locations at the school site such as the school office. Results are also mailed to all applicants and follow up phone calls are made by the Outreach Coordinator.

In the event of a Public Random Drawing, admission to the school is offered to pupils according to their numerical ranking until capacity is reached. All remaining names are placed on a waiting list in order according to their numerical rank. Families who have been offered admission are notified of acceptance within 3 business days of the lottery and must accept enrollment for their students at VACHS within two weeks of notification by confirming in writing their intent to enroll by returning the Enrollment Packet to the Outreach Coordinator. Any families who decline admission or who fail to confirm lose their position to the next name on the waiting list.

The waiting list is kept on file at the school and is valid for the duration of the school year for which students applied for. Parents who do not want their child to remain on the wait list provide, in writing, their request for removal. If no request is received, the student's name remains on the waiting list until the end of the school year they have applied for.

Intent to Enroll forms received after the public random drawing has occurred are marked with the date and time of receipt and added to the waiting list on a first come, first served basis.

The lottery process is conducted by our Outreach Coordinator, including organizing the public random drawing, ensuring proper communication to all stakeholders, and management of all waitlists

***PART C: The timelines under which the open enrollment period and lottery will occur.***

Please see above under Section 4 for timeline of enrollment and lottery activities.

***PART D: The location where the lottery will occur and the efforts the school will undertake to ensure all interested parties may observe the lottery.***

The lottery will take place at Valor Academy Charter High School once the location of the facility is determined. Until then, the lottery for Valor Academy Charter High School will take place at Valor Academy Charter Middle School. Currently, the middle school is located at 8755 Woodman Ave. Arleta CA 91331. The lottery process is open to the public.

***PART E: The date and time the lotteries will occur so most interested parties will be able to attend.***



### **Time of Lottery**

The lottery will be held sometime between the hours of 6pm and 8pm on a weeknight.

***PART F: The preferences to be granted, if any, to potential students and the basis upon which those preferences shall be granted.***

### **Admission Preferences**

Exemptions and preferences will be offered in the following categories in accordance with reconciliation of state and federal laws<sup>25</sup>:

After the initial year of school operation, existing pupils of the charter school will be exempt from the lottery.

1. Sibling(s) of current Valor Academy Charter High School students will be exempt from the lottery.
2. Children of VACHS founders and/or teachers will be exempt from the lottery and admitted to the school as long as the number admitted by this exemption does not exceed 10 percent of total enrollment at VACHS. VACHS will comply with the District's Founding Family Preference Policy<sup>26</sup>.
3. In-District Students – in accordance with state law, Valor Academy Charter High School will employ a single lottery with a higher weighting for students in this category. All students in the lottery living in the Los Angeles Unified School District boundaries will receive weighted drawing preference over students living outside the LAUSD boundaries by having their names submitted twice in the lottery pool (a weighting of 2:1).
4. Other California residents.

***PART G: The procedures the school will follow to determine waiting list priorities based upon lottery results.***

In the event of a lottery, admission to the school will be offered to pupils according to their numerical ranking until capacity is reached. After the lottery all remaining names will be placed on a waiting list in order, according to their numerical rank. New applicants after the lottery who fall within the above admissions preferences will be provided a numerical ranking in the waitlist based upon those preferences. As a seat becomes available, the student with the lowest numerical ranking will be offered that seat.

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<sup>25</sup> Admissions Preferences will be in accordance with federal non-regulatory guidance per the CDE requirements for an application to the Public Charter School Grant Program (PCSGP). See the PCSGP guidelines at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/r1/pcsgp12rfa.asp>

<sup>26</sup> See POLICY FOR CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZING, LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, Revised February 7, 2012. View on web [HERE](#).

***PART H: The means by which the school will contact the parents/guardians of students who have been promoted off the waiting list and timelines under which parents/guardians must respond in order to secure admission.***



### **Waiting List**

The waiting list is established from the names of students drawn in the public random drawing that do not receive admission and is used to fill enrollment vacancies that occur during the year. If a position opens during the school year, the Office of Advancement staff contacts the family at the top of the wait list by telephone and/or emails to offer their student admission to the school. The student and family has two weeks to either come in person or contact the School Office by phone or email to secure admission. Should the family decline the seat or fail to respond within two weeks, the next family on the list is contacted until the open position is filled.

***PART I: The records the school shall keep on file documenting the fair execution of lottery procedures.***

Copies of all application packets, lottery results and waiting lists shall be made readily available for inspection at the school office. These records will be maintained by the Outreach Coordinator. The school has developed a Lottery Policy document that has been approved by Bright Star Schools Board of Directors. It is available to the public at any time by contacting the Outreach Coordinator at the Bright Star Schools CMO office..

Acceptance letters are distributed to families whose students earn space through the lottery. All families, including those whose children are admitted through the lottery but are not present at the time of the drawing, are notified by mail. To secure their set, all admitted students must return acceptance letters within two weeks of receiving the notification.

### **Attendance Accounting**

VACHS shall utilize an appropriate student information system for attendance tracking and reporting purposes and utilizes attendance accounting procedures that satisfy requirements for LAUSD, LACOE and CDE. Required reports are completed regarding daily attendance and submitted to the requesting agencies. This includes reporting enrollment and attendance figures to LAUSD as required by the District.

VACHS provides to LAUSD the following information for each academic year:

- Norm Day Classification.
- List of all highly qualified Certificated Personnel in core subjects as defined in No Child Left Behind and State policy and regulations.
- Total School Enrollment.
- List of Emergency Credentialed Teachers in non-core subjects.
- Number of Students by Grade Level.
- Unfilled Classroom Teacher Positions.
- Number of Students by Ethnicity & Grade Level.
- Fiscal Year-End Financial Report.
- Number of Students Living Outside LAUSD Attendance Area.

## ELEMENT 9: FINANCIAL AUDITS

*“The manner in which an annual, independent financial audit shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority.” Ed. Code Section 47605(b)(5)(I)*



*Never regard study as a duty, but as the enviable opportunity to learn to know the liberating influence of beauty in the realm of the spirit for your own personal joy and to the profit of the community to which your later work belongs. **Caine & Caine***

## **Section 1: Ensure that annual, independent financial audits employing generally accepted accounting principles will be conducted.**



### **Independent Charter Status**

VACHS is a fiscally independent, directly funded charter school.

### **Assurance**

Each fiscal year an independent auditor will conduct an audit of the financial affairs of VACHS to verify the accuracy of the school's financial statements, attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and to review the school's internal controls. VACHS will retain auditors to conduct independent financial audits, which employs generally accepted accounting principles and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Controller General of the United States.

To the extent required under the applicable federal laws for audits of the major federal programs, the audit scope expands to include items and processes specified in any applicable U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars.

The financial audits will be conducted by a qualified Certified Public Accountant familiar with school finances and operations. The audits assure that the school's money is being handled with responsibility and that financial statements conform to the Government Accounting Standards. Audit exceptions and deficiencies will be resolved in conference with the auditor to the satisfactions of the auditing agency prior to the completion of the auditor's final report. Audit exceptions and deficiencies are resolved to the satisfaction of LAUSD. The first financial audit will be completed approximately three months after the last day of the school's first complete year. VACHS provides LAUSD with final audit results within 60 days of completion or December 15<sup>th</sup>, whichever is earlier.

In addition, financial statements audited by a Certified Public Accountant are submitted to the District within four months following the close of the fiscal year.

## **Section 2: Describe the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies will be resolved.**

### **Resolving Exceptions and Deficiencies**

Valor Academy Board Finance Committee reviews any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report recommendations to the full Board as to how these have been, or will be, resolved. Valor Academy Board acts upon these recommendations, and reports its action to Los Angeles Unified School District to the satisfaction of the District, and within an outlined timeline.

### **Section 3: Describe the plans and systems to be used to provide information for an independent audit.**



#### **Annual Audit**

Adequate cash flow for VACHS is ensured by maintaining a funds balance (reserve) of its expenditures as required by section 15450, Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. The Executive Director and Controller regularly prepare financial reports, including balance sheets and cash flow statements that the Board of Directors reviews during their board meetings. The Head of Schools and back office maintain financial documents and supporting documentation such as receipts, invoices and credit card statements in a uniform and orderly fashion for easy accessibility by the auditor(s).

The above-mentioned plans and systems are used to provide information for an annual, independent financial audit. On an annual basis, the Head of Schools is responsible for contracting services with an independent Certified Public Accountant who has been certified by the State of California Controller's Office on its list of education auditors with education finance experience to audit the school's financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and in accordance with the provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller's Guide.

Any audit exceptions or deficiencies are resolved to the satisfaction of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

The following reports will be submitted to LAUSD, in the required format and within timelines to be specified by LAUSD each year":

- a. Final Budget – Spring prior to operating fiscal year
- b. First Interim Projections – November of operating fiscal year
- c. Second Interim Projections – February of operating fiscal year
- d. Unaudited Actuals – July following the end of the fiscal year
- e. Audited Actuals – December 15 following the end of the fiscal year
- f. Classification Report – monthly according to school's Calendar
- g. Statistical Report – monthly according to school's Calendar of Reports

In addition:

- a. P1, first week of January
- b. P2, first week of April
- h. Instructional Calendar – annually five weeks prior to first day of instruction
- i. Other reports as requested by the District

#### **District Oversight Costs**

The District may charge for the actual costs of supervisorial oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 1% of the Charter School's revenue, or the District may charge for the actual costs of supervisorial oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 3% if the Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District may charge the maximum supervisorial oversight fee allowed under the law as it may



change from time to time. The supervisory oversight fee provided herein is separate and distinct from the charges arising under the charter school/facilities use agreements.



### **Balance Reserves**

Additionally, it is recommended that the Charter School maintain a funds balance (reserve) of its expenditures as outlined in section 15450, Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

### **Special Education Revenue Adjustment/Payment for Services**

In the event that the Charter School owes funds to the District for the provision of agreed upon or fee for service or special education services or as a result of the State's adjustment to allocation of special education revenues from the Charter School, the Charter School authorizes the District to deduct any and all of the in lieu property taxes that the Charter School otherwise would be eligible to receive under section 47635 of the Education Code to cover such owed amounts. The Charter School further understands and agrees that the District shall make appropriate deductions from the in lieu property tax amounts otherwise owed to the Charter School. Should this revenue stream be insufficient in any fiscal year to cover any such costs, the Charter School agrees that it will reimburse the District for the additional costs within forty-five (45) business days of being notified of the amounts owed.

### **Audit and Inspection of Records**

Charter School agrees to observe and abide by the following terms and conditions as a requirement for receiving and maintaining their charter authorization:

- Charter School is subject to District oversight.
- The District's statutory oversight responsibility continues throughout the life of the Charter and requires that it, among other things, monitors the fiscal condition of the Charter School.
- The District is authorized to revoke this Charter for, among other reasons, the failure of the Charter School to meet generally accepted accounting principles or if it engages in fiscal mismanagement.

Accordingly, the District hereby reserves the right, pursuant to its oversight responsibility, to audit Charter School books, records, data, processes and procedures through the District Office of the Inspector General or other means. The audit may include, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Compliance with terms and conditions prescribed in the Charter agreement,
- Internal controls, both financial and operational in nature,
- The accuracy, recording and/or reporting of school financial information,
- The school's debt structure,
- Governance policies, procedures and history,
- The recording and reporting of attendance data,
- The school's enrollment process,
- Compliance with safety plans and procedures, and
- Compliance with applicable grant requirements.



The Charter School shall cooperate fully with such audits and shall make available any and all records necessary for the performance of the audit upon 30 days notice to Charter School. When 30 days notice may defeat the purpose of the audit, the District may conduct the audit upon 24 hours notice.



VACHS will develop and maintain internal fiscal control policies governing all financial activities.



## ELEMENT 10: STUDENT EXPULSIONS

*"The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled." Ed. Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(J)*



*It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.*

## **Section 1: Describe rules and procedures for suspension and expulsion that are consistent with state and federal law:**



### ***Part A: Grounds for Suspension***

VACHS does not use at-home suspensions unless a student poses a clear and present danger to students, faculty or staff. Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

#### **1. Conference**

- a. Suspension is preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted with the Dean of Student Affairs with the student and his or her parent(s) and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student is notified of the student's right to return to school for the purposes of a conference.
- b. At the conference, the pupil is informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him/her and is given the opportunity to present his/her version and evidence in his/her defense.

#### **2. Notice to Parents/Guardians**

At the time of suspension, the Dean of Student Affairs or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian is notified by phone and then in writing of the suspension and the date of return following the suspension. This notice states the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice states the date and time when the student may return to school. If the Dean of Student Affairs or designee wishes to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

#### **3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Placement/Expulsion**

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days and shall not exceed twenty (20) school days per school year. Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Principal or designee, the pupil and the pupil's guardian or representative is invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination is made by the Principal or designee upon either of the following determinations:

- a. The pupil's presence is disruptive to the education process; or
- b. The pupil poses a threat or danger to others.

Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension is extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing. Students will be provided with a packet of assignments to complete during suspension and will be expected to make up all missed assignments, projects, and assessments within three schools days of returning to school.

## ***Part B: Grounds for Expulsion***

VACHS informs parents and students of all discipline policies and procedures, including grounds for suspension, expulsion, and due process, through the annual Student and Family Handbook. the Principal shall automatically recommend expulsion for the following Mandatory Expellable Offenses:

### **Non Discretionary Mandatory Expellable Offenses**

1. Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense. E.C. 48915(a)(1); 48900(a)(1), maybe also 48900(a)(2).
2. Possession of ay knife or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the pupil. E.C. 48915(a)(2); 48900(b)
3. Unlawful possession of any controlled substance, except for the first offence of less than an ounce of marijuana. E.C. 48915(a)(3); 48900(c).
4. Robbery or extortion. E.C. 48915(a)(4); 48900(e).
5. Assault or battery upon any school employee. E.C. 48915(a)(5); 48900(a)(1) and 48900(a)(2) or committing a sexual battery” (as defined in 488900[n]). E.C. 488915(c)(4); 48900(c)
6. Possession of an explosive, as defined in E.C. 48915(c)(5); 48900(b)
7. Violation of the Federal Guns Free Schools Act

A student may be expelled for prohibited misconduct, if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring anytime including but not limited to any of the following:


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

### **May Suspend or Expel – Discretionary Offenses**

Students may be expelled or suspended for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
2. Possessed, sold or otherwise furnished any knife or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee with the Principal or designee’s concurrence.
3. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
4. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another

liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.

- 
5. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
  6. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
  7. Engaged in any form of dishonesty (lying, cheating, or stealing).
  8. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
  9. Possessed or used tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel.
  10. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
  11. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5.
  12. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
  13. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
  14. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
  15. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
  16. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold any prescription drug.
  17. Engaged in or attempted to engage in hazing as defined by ed code as  
"hazing" means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events."
  18. Aiding or abetting as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person.
  19. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property.
  20. Committed sexual harassment.
  21. Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence.
  22. Committed any repeated willful violation of the suspendable offenses as specified in the student handbook.
  23. Bullying defined as intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect

of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261 of the California Education Code, directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel. "'Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a pupil or group of pupils as defined in Section 48900.2, 48900.3, or 48900.4,..."

24. Any other serious violation of school policy regarding student conduct or behavioral expectation as set forth in the student handbook.

### ***Part C: General Discipline Policies in Place at the School***

#### **Student Handbook**

VACHS has implemented a comprehensive connections policy, which is outlined in more detail in the Student Handbook (SHB). All students and parents receive and acknowledge the stipulations written in the SHB upon enrollment. The policy clearly describes the school's expectations regarding attendance, mutual respect, violence, safety and work habits. The policy is not discriminatory, arbitrary or capricious and follows the general principles of due process.

The connections policies are subject to review and revision by VACHS' Governing Board. When a policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend a pupil from regular classroom instruction and/or expel a pupil from the charter school.

Each student and his or her parent or guardian are required to verify that they have reviewed and understand the policies prior to enrollment. By signing the school's handbook acknowledgement forms (Commitment to Excellence Form), the students and parents acknowledge their understanding of/and the responsibility to the standards set forth in the connection policy. The policy defines student responsibilities, unacceptable behavior and the ways that the school attempts to connect students and their parents to the school's culture and expectations.

Our suspension and expulsion policy is only needed when all of the connection attempts outlined in the SHB have been exhausted or when an immediately expellable offense (drugs, violence, or weapons – as defined in the SHB) has put our school community in danger.

### ***Part E: Suspension and Expulsion Procedures***

#### **Expulsion Procedures**

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to an evidentiary due process hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed upon parent request and for good cause—e.g. parent needs additional time to prepare—the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Principal recommends the pupil for expulsion. A hearing will

only be held when by the student's parent or guardian in writing or by telephone to the Principal or Student Services Coordinator. The Principal makes a recommendation to disciplinary administrative panel for a final decision whether to expel. The panel shall comprise of at least three members of the Bright Star Board of Directors; the Principal is not part of this panel. The hearing is held in a private and confidential setting. The parent or guardian will have ten (business) days to appeal the decision. Should the parent or guardian appeal the decision to expel, the Bright Star Board of Directors, minus the three members of the original panel, shall hear the appeal.

Written notice of the hearing is forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it is deemed served upon the pupil. The notice shall state or describe:

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
2. A statement of specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
3. A copy of VACHS's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
4. Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the school to any other school District or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
5. The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advocate
6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

### **Record of Hearing**

A record of the hearing is made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate record or minutes of the proceedings can be made.

### **Presentation of Evidence**

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. Findings of fact shall be based on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel is based solely on hearsay and sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the panel determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

The decision of the panel is in the form of written findings of fact based on substantial evidence based on evidence presented at the hearing and an expulsion order if applicable. The panel makes a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the panel is made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing. The panel's decision may be appealed within 10 days to the VACHS Governing Board which will meet to hear the appeal within 30 days of the parent requesting an appeal. In order to appeal the panel's decision to

expel, the parent must initiate the process by contacting the Principal or Dean of Students Services in writing or by telephone. Appeal hearings are conducted according the same procedures as the initial hearing.



If the panel decides not to expel, the pupil is immediately returned to his/her educational program on a probation agreement to be presented by the Principal or designee and

### **Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Bullying and/or Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses**

VACHS may, upon finding a good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations which is examined only by the panel members. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, is available to the pupil.

1. The complaining witness in any bullying and/or sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to:
  - a. Receive five days notice of his/her scheduled testimony;
  - b. Have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel; and
  - c. Elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
2. VACHS must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the Executive Director, Head of School, Administrative designee, or panel conducting the hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.
4. The panel conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.
5. The panel conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.
6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. The person presiding over the hearing may remove a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The person conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.
7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, VACHS must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to VACHS. The panel presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness



would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official from the panel shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.

8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.

9. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstances can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

### **Written Notice to Expel**

The Principal or designee, following the Bright Star Schools disciplinary panel's decision to expel, sends written notice of the decision to expel, including the Bright Star Schools Governing Board's adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian within three business days. This notice also includes the following:

1. Notice of the panel's findings and expulsion order.
2. Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new District in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with VACHS.
3. Notice of student's reinstatement eligibility review date, a copy of the student's rehabilitation plan, and notice of appeal rights and procedures.

The Principal or designee sends a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the student's District of residence. This notice includes the following:

1. The student's name.
2. The specific expellable offense(s) committed by the student.

### **Disciplinary Records**

VACHS maintains records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the Charter School. Such records are made available to the District upon request.

### **Expelled Pupils / Alternative Education**

The Charter School is responsible for facilitating post expulsion placements and enrollment by, providing parents with contact information for programs where the student may be placed, LA County programs, return to District of residence information, or another charter school that can serve the student and clearly explaining next steps to parents

## ***PART F: District required language regarding discipline of special education students***

### **Special Education Students**



In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”), or a student who has a 504 Plan, the Charter School will ensure that it follows the correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. As set forth in the MOU regarding special education between the District and the Charter School an IEP team, including a District representative, will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement utilizing the District’s Policies and Procedures Manual. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a 504 Plan, the Charter School’s administrator will convene a Link Determination meeting to ask the following two questions:

- A. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability?
- B. Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School’s failure to implement 504?

## ***PART G: Due process rights of students who are suspended or expelled, including the appeals process to be used by parents/guardians who dispute the school’s expulsion decisions***

### **District Required Language**

Charter School shall provide due process for all students, including adequate notice to parents/guardians and students regarding the grounds for suspension and expulsion and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights to appeal to the board committee.

Charter School shall ensure that its policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically reviewed, and modified as necessary, including, for example, any modification of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion.

Charter School shall be responsible for the appropriate interim placement of students during and pending the completion of the Charter School’s student expulsion process.

Charter School will implement operational and procedural guidelines ensuring federal and state laws and regulations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities are met. Charter Schools will also ensure staff is knowledgeable about and complies with the District’s Discipline Foundation Policy.

If the student receives or is eligible for special education, the Charter School shall identify and provide special education programs and services at the appropriate interim educational placement, pending the completion of the expulsion process, to be coordinated with the LAUSD Support Unit, Division of Special Education.

Charter School shall document the alternatives to suspension and expulsion the Charter School utilizes with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from compulsory school activities.

If a student is expelled from the Charter School, the Charter School shall forward student records upon request of the receiving school District in a timely fashion. Charter School shall also submit an expulsion packet to the Innovation and Charter Schools Division immediately or as soon as practically possible, containing:

- a. pupil's last known address,
- b. a copy of the cumulative record,
- c. transcript of grades or report card,
- d. health information,
- e. documentation of the expulsion proceeding, including specific facts supporting the expulsion and documentation that the Charter School's policies and procedures were followed,
- f. student's current educational placement,
- g. copy of parental notice expulsion,
- h. copy of documentation of expulsion provided to parent stating reason for expulsion, term of expulsion, rehabilitation plan, reinstatement notice with eligibility date and instructions for providing proof of student's compliance for reinstatement, appeal process and options for enrollment, \and
- i. if the Student is eligible for Special Education, the Charter School must provide documentation related to expulsion pursuant to IDEA including conducting a manifestation determination IEP prior to expulsion. If the student is eligible for Section 504 Accommodations, the Charter School must provide evidence that it convened a Link Determination meeting to address two questions: A) Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the students disability: B) Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter's failure to implement 504 Plan?

### **Right to Appeal**

The panel's decision may be appealed within 10 days to the Bright Star Schools Governing Board which will meet to hear the appeal within 30 days of the parent requesting an appeal. In order to appeal the panel's decision to expel, the parent must initiate the process by contacting the Principal or Dean of Students Services in writing or by telephone. Appeal hearings are conducted according the same procedures as the initial hearing. Should the parent or guardian appeal the decision to expel, the Bright Star Board of Directors, minus the three members of the original panel, shall hear the appeal.

If the panel decides not to expel, the pupil is immediately returned to his/her educational program on a probation agreement to be presented by the Principal or designee and approved by the panel.

### **Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education**

Pupils who are expelled are responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the county or their school District of residence.

## ***Part F: Procedures for rehabilitation and readmission***

### **District Required Language**



Charter School shall provide due process for all students, including adequate notice to parents/guardians and students regarding the grounds for suspension and expulsion and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights to appeal to the board committee.

### **Outcome Data**

Charter School shall maintain all data involving placement, tracking, and monitoring of student suspensions, expulsions, and reinstatements, and make such outcome data readily available to the District upon request.

### **Rehabilitation Plans**

Pupils who are expelled from the Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Charter School's governing board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. Terms of expulsion should be reasonable and fair with the weight of the expelling offense taken into consideration when determining the length of expulsion. Therefore, the rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to the Charter School for readmission.

### **Readmission**

The Charter School's governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for the filing and processing of requests for readmission and the process for the required review of all expelled pupils for readmission. Upon completion of the readmission process, the Charter School's governing board shall readmit the pupil, unless the Charter School's governing board makes a finding that the pupil has not met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan or continues to pose a danger to campus safety. A description of the procedure shall be made available to the pupil and the pupil's parent or guardian at the time the expulsion order is entered and the decision of the governing board, including any related findings, must be provided to the pupil and the pupil's parent/guardian within a reasonable time.

### **Reinstatement**

The Charter School's governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for processing reinstatements, including the review of documents regarding the rehabilitation plan. The Charter School is responsible for reinstating the student upon the conclusion of the expulsion period in a timely manner.

### **Gun Free Schools Act**

The Charter School shall comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act.

## ELEMENT 11: RETIREMENT PROGRAMS



“The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employees’ Retirement System, or the federal social security.” Ed. Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(K)



*When the Principal sneezes, the whole school catches a cold. **Todd Whitaker***

**Section 1: Identify, based on the staffing initially proposed in the petition, which staff members will be covered by which retirement system.**

## **Assurances**

VACHS makes any contribution that is legally required of the employer, including STRS, 403b, Social Security and unemployment insurance. Valor Academy sets salary scales and benefits, working conditions, calendars, holidays, vacations, work days and the work year. When appropriate, the Board may obtain feedback from the school community (i.e. administrators, teachers, parents) on these items.

Valor Academy's controller is responsible for working with any applicable vendors (i.e., payroll companies, etc.), to ensure that the following retirement program data, paperwork and payments are completed and submitted accordingly and that contributions are made on behalf of all eligible staff members.

## **State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS)**

VACHS' certificated teachers and eligible administrators is a part of the State Teachers' Retirement System, (STRS). Employees accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of STRS. Any full-time certificated employees who are eligible may elect to participate in the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS). Participating employees contribute the required percentage (currently 8% of salary), and BBSCA contributes the employer's portion (currently 8.25%) required by STRS. Retirement data is reported and payments are made via the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) in accordance with procedures established by STRS.

## **Classified Personnel**

For non-certificated, full-time employees, the school contributes to Social Security and a 403(b) account. We reserve the right to change the retirement program for classified personnel if the school administration becomes aware of a more efficient retirement program for which they qualify.

## **Reporting**

Retirement reporting is contracted out to a qualified service provider, however, the Controller is responsible for ensuring that such retirement coverage is arranged. VACHS forwards any required payroll deductions and related data to the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) as required by Education Code 47611.3 and 41365.

## ELEMENT 12: ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES



*"The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school District who choose not to attend charter schools." Ed. Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(L)*



*One of the tests of leadership is the ability to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency. **Arnold H. Glasow***

**Section 1: Inform parents/guardians of each pupil enrolled in the charter school has no right to admission in a non-charter District school as a consequence of charter school enrollment except to the extent that such a right is extended by the District**

In case of a desire to transfer, enrollment at VACHS does not guarantee a student admission at any non-charter District school, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the District.

**Section 2: District required language regarding attendance alternatives**

Pupils who chose not to attend VACHS may choose to attend other public schools in their District of residence or pursue an interDistrict-transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the District.





## ELEMENT 13: EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

*“A description of the rights of any employee of the school District upon leaving the employment of the school District to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school District after employment at a charter school.” Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(M)*



*Failure is not fatal but failure to change might be. John Wooden*

**Section 1: Outline LAUSD employee rights consistent with current collective bargaining agreements relating to the terms and conditions under which District employees may be employed at charter schools.**

**Employee Rights**

Leave and return rights for union-represented employees who accept employment with the charter school will be administered in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements between the employee's union and the District and also in accordance with any applicable judicial rulings.



## ELEMENT 14: DISPUTE RESOLUTION

*“The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.” Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(N)*



*Frederick Douglass taught that literacy is the path from slavery to freedom. There are many kinds of slavery and many kinds of freedom. But reading is still the path. **Carl Sagan***

## **Section 1: District required language regarding dispute resolution to be provided to the petitioner by the District.**



### **Dispute Resolution**

The staff and governing board members of Bright Star Schools agree to resolve any claim, controversy or dispute arising out of or relating to the Charter agreement between the District and Bright Star Schools, except any revocation proceeding under Education Code section 47607(c), ("Dispute") pursuant to the terms of this Element 14.

Any Dispute between the District and Bright Star Schools shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

- 1) Any Dispute shall be made in writing ("Written Notification"). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the Dispute and any supporting facts. The Written Notification shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 PM or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail. All Written Notifications shall be addressed as follows:

To Charter School:

Valor Academy Charter High School  
c/o School Principal  
2636 S. Mansfield Ave.  
Los Angeles, CA 90016

To Director of Charter Schools:

Charter Schools Division  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 20th Floor  
Los Angeles, California 90017

- 2) A written response ("Written Response") shall be tendered to the other party within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification. The parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss the Dispute identified in the Written Notice ("Issue Conference"). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date the Written Response is received by the other party. The Written Response may be tendered by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.
- 3) If the Dispute cannot be resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, either party may then request that the Dispute be resolved by mediation. Each party shall bear its own attorney's fees, costs and expenses associated with the mediation. The mediator's fees and the administrative fees of the mediation shall be shared equally

among the parties. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 120 days from the date of either party's request for mediation following the Issue Conference. The parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator to resolve the Dispute. The mediator may be selected from the approved list of mediators prepared by the American Arbitration Association. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, mediation proceedings may be administered in accordance with the mediation rules or guidelines of the American Arbitration Association, or otherwise by agreement of the parties.

- 4) If the mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to resolve the Dispute by binding arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, arbitration proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the State Bar of California or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California. Each party shall bear its own attorney's fees, costs and expenses associated with the arbitration. The arbitrator's fees and the administrative fees of the arbitration shall be shared equally among the parties. However, any party who fails or refuses to submit to arbitration as set forth herein shall bear all attorney's fees, costs and expenses incurred by such other party in compelling arbitration of any controversy or claim.



## **ELEMENT 15: EMPLOYER STATUS AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

*“A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act.”  
[Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code].  
Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(O).*



*To know what to leave out and what to put in; just where and just how, ah, THAT is to have been educated in the knowledge of simplicity. **Frank Lloyd Wright***

**Section 1: State clearly whether the school will be the exclusive employer for the purposes of collective bargaining.**



Valor Academy Charter High School is deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for the purposes of the Educational Employee Relations Act (EERA).

As such, Bright Star Schools complies with all provisions of the Educational Employment Relations Act and acts independently from LAUSD for bargaining purposes. In accordance with the EERA, employees may join and be represented by an organization of their choice for collective bargaining purposes. However, unless the employees elect to be represented by an organization for bargaining purposes, all employees are individually contracted.



## **ELEMENT 16: CLOSING PROCEDURES**

***“A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school. Including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records.” Ed. Code Section 47605(b)(5)(P)***



*We cannot teach people anything; we can only help them discover it within themselves.*  
**Galileo Galilei**



## **Section 1: District required language regarding revocation, renewal, and closure procedures to be provided to the petitioner by the District.**



### **Revocation**

The District may revoke the charter if VACHS commits a breach of any provision set forth in a policy related to Charter Schools adopted by the District Board of Education and/or any provisions set forth in the Charter School Act of 1992. The District may revoke the charter of the VACHS if the District finds, through a showing of substantial evidence, that the charter school did any of the following:

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

Prior to revocation, and in accordance with Cal. Educ. Code section 47607(d) and State regulations, the LAUSD Board of Education will notify the VACHS in writing of the specific violation, and give the VACHS a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation, unless the LAUSD Board of Education determines, in writing, that the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils. Revocation proceedings are not subject to the dispute resolution clause set forth in this charter.

### **Charter Renewal**

VACHS must submit its renewal petition to the District's Charter Schools Division no earlier than September of the year before the charter expires.

### **Closure Action**

The decision to close Valor Academy Charter High School either by the Valor Academy Charter High School governing Board or by the LAUSD Board of Education, will be documented in a Closure Action. The Closure Action shall be deemed to have been automatically made when any of the following occur: the charter is revoked or non-renewed by the LAUSD Board of Education; the Charter School board votes to close the Charter School; or the Charter lapses.

### **Closure Procedures**

The procedures for charter school closure are guided by California Education Code sections 47604.32, 47605, 47605.6, and 47607 as well as California Code of Regulations, Title 5 (5 CCR), sections 11962 and 11962.1. A closed charter school must designate a responsible entity to conduct closure activities and identify how these activities will be funded. The procedures outlined below are based on "Charter School Closure Requirements and Recommendations (Revised 08/2009)" as posted on the California Department of Education website. References to "Charter School" applies to the charter school's nonprofit corporation and/or governing board.

## Documentation of Closure Action

The revocation or non-renewal of a charter school must be documented by an official action of the authorizing entity. Notice of a charter school's closure for any reason must be provided by the authorizing entity to the California Department of Education (CDE). In addition, the charter school must send notice of its closure to:

1. Parents or guardians of students. Written notification to parents/guardians/caregivers of the enrolled students of the Valor Academy Charter High School will be issued by Valor Academy Charter High School within 72 hours after the determination of a Closure Action and the effective date of closure. A copy of the written notifications to parents is also to be sent to LAUSD within the same time frames.
2. The authorizing entity
3. The county office of education. Written notification to the Los Angeles County Office of Education of the Closure Action shall be made by the Valor Academy Charter High School by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.
4. The special education local plan area in which the school participates. Written notification to the Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA) in which the Charter School participates of the Closure Action shall be made by the Valor Academy Charter High School by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.
5. The retirement systems in which the school's employees participate. The Charter School will within fourteen (14) calendar days of closure action contact the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), and the Los Angeles County office of Education and follow their procedures for dissolving contracts and reporting. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.
6. The CDE. Written notification to the California Department of Education of the Closure Action shall be made by the Valor Academy Charter High School by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.


Notice must be received by the CDE within ten calendar days of any official action taken by the chartering authority. Notification of all the parties above must include at least the following:

1. The effective date of the closure
2. The name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
3. The students' school Districts of residence
4. How parents or guardians may obtain copies of student records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements

In addition to the four required items above, notification to the CDE must also include:

1. A description of the circumstances of the closure
2. The location of student and personnel records

In addition to the four required items above, notification to parents, guardians, and students should also include:

- 
1. Information on how to transfer the student to an appropriate school
  2. A certified packet of student information that includes closure notice, a copy of their child's cumulative record which will include grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed coursework, credits that meet graduation requirements, a transcript, and State testing results.
  3. Information on student completion of college entrance requirements for all high school students affected by the closure

The Charter School shall announce the closure to any school Districts that may be responsible for providing education services to the former students of the charter school within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. This notice will include a list of returning students and their home schools. Charter school closures should occur at the end of an academic year if it is feasible to maintain a legally compliant program until then. If a conversion charter school is reverting to non-charter status, notification of this change should be made to all parties listed in this section.

### **School and Student Records Retention and Transfer**

VACHS shall observe the following in the transfer and maintenance of school and student records:

1. The Charter School will provide the District with original cumulative files and behavior records pursuant to District policy and applicable handbook(s) regarding cumulative records for secondary and elementary schools for all students both active and inactive at the Charter School. Transfer of the complete and organized original student records to the District will occur within seven calendar days of the effective date of closure.
2. The process for transferring student records to the receiving schools shall be in accordance with LAUSD procedures for students moving from one school to another.
3. The Charter School will prepare an electronic master list of all students to the Charter Schools Division. This list will include the student's identification number, Statewide Student Identifier (SSID), birth date, grade, full name, address, home school, enrollment date, exit code, exit date, parent/guardian name(s), and phone number(s). If the Charter School closure occurs before the end of the school year, the list should also indicate the name of the school that each student is transferring to, if known. This electronic master list will be delivered in the form of a CD.
4. The original cumulative files should be organized for delivery to the District in two categories: active students and inactive students. The CSD will coordinate with the Charter School for the delivery and/or pickup of the student records.
5. The Charter School must update all student records in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) prior to closing.
6. The Charter School will provide to the CSD a copy of student attendance records, teacher gradebooks, school payroll records, and Title I records (if applicable). Submission of personnel records must include any employee records the charter school has. These include, but are not limited to, records related to performance and grievance.
7. All records are to be boxed and labeled by classification of documents and the required duration of storage.

## Financial Close-Out

After receiving notification of closure, the CDE will notify the charter school and the authorizing entity if it is aware of any liabilities the charter school owes the state. These may include overpayment of apportionments, unpaid revolving fund loans or grants, or other liabilities. The CDE may ask the county office of education to conduct an audit of the charter school if it has reason to believe that the school received state funding for which it was not eligible.

VACHS shall ensure completion of an independent final audit within six months after the closure of the school that includes:

1. An accounting of all financial assets. These may include cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value.
2. An accounting of all liabilities. These may include accounts payable or reduction in apportionments due to loans, unpaid staff compensation, audit findings, or other investigations.
3. An assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the charter school.

This audit may serve as the school's annual audit.

The financial closeout audit of the Charter School will be paid for by the Valor Academy Charter High School. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt incurred by Valor Academy Charter High School will be the responsibility of the Valor Academy Charter High School and not LAUSD. Valor Academy Charter High School understands and acknowledges that Valor Academy Charter High School will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Valor Academy Charter High School. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. Valor Academy Charter High School understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused AB 602 funds will be returned to the District SELPA or the SELPA in which the Valor Academy Charter High School participates, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.

Valor Academy Charter High School shall ensure the completion and filing of any annual reports required. This includes:

1. Preliminary budgets
2. Interim financial reports
3. Second interim financial reports
4. Final unaudited reports

These reports must be submitted to the CDE and the authorizing entity in the form required. If the Charter School chooses to submit this information before the forms and software are available for the fiscal year, alternative forms can be used if they are approved in advance by the CDE. These reports should be submitted as soon as possible after the closure action, but no later than the required deadline for reporting for the fiscal year. For apportionment of categorical programs, the CDE will count the prior year average daily attendance (ADA) or enrollment data of the closed charter school with the data of the authorizing entity. This practice will occur in the first year after the closure and will continue until CDE data collection processes reflect ADA or enrollment adjustments for all affected LEAs due to the charter closure.

## **Disposition of Liabilities and Assets**

The closeout audit must determine the disposition of all liabilities of the charter school. Charter school closure procedures must also ensure disposal of any net assets remaining after all liabilities of the charter school have been paid or otherwise addressed. Such disposal includes, but is not limited to:

1. The return of any donated materials and property according to any conditions set when the donations were accepted.
2. The return of any grant and restricted categorical funds to their source according to the terms of the grant or state and federal law.
3. The submission of final expenditure reports for any entitlement grants and the filing of Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as appropriate.

Net assets of the charter school may be transferred to the authorizing entity. If the Charter School is operated by a nonprofit corporation, and if the corporation does not have any other functions than operation of the Charter School, the corporation will be dissolved according to its bylaws.

- a. The corporation's bylaws will address how assets are to be distributed at the closure of the corporation.
- b. A copy of the corporations bylaws containing the information on how assets are to be distributed at the closure of the corporation, are to be provided to LAUSD prior to approval of this Charter.

For six (6) calendar months from the Closure Action or until budget allows, whichever comes first, sufficient staff as deemed appropriate by the Valor Academy Charter High School Board, will maintain employment to take care of all necessary tasks and procedures required for a smooth closing of the school and student transfers.

The Valor Academy Charter High School Board shall adopt a plan for wind-up of the school and, if necessary, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code. The Charter School shall provide LAUSD within fourteen (14) calendar days of closure action prior written notice of any outstanding payments to staff and the method by which the school will make the payments.

Prior to final closure, the Charter School shall do all of the following on behalf of the school's employees, and anything else required by applicable law:

- a. File all final federal, state, and local employer payroll tax returns and issue final W-2s and Form 1099s by the statutory deadlines.
- b. File the Federal Notice of Discontinuance with the Department of Treasury (Treasury Form 63).
- c. Make final federal tax payments (employee taxes, etc.)
- d. File the final withholding tax return (Treasury Form 165).
- e. File the final return with the IRS (Form 990 and Schedule).

This Element 16 shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, cancellation of this charter or any other act or event that would end VACHS'S right to operate as a Charter School or cause Valor Academy Charter High School to cease operation. Valor Academy Charter High School and District agree that, due to the nature of the property and activities that are the subject of this

petition, the District and public shall suffer irreparable harm should Charter School breach any obligation under this Element 16. The District, therefore, shall have the right to seek equitable relief to enforce any right arising under this Element 16 or any provision of this Element 16 or to prevent or cure any breach of any obligation undertaken, without in any way prejudicing any other legal remedy available to the District. Such legal relief shall include, without limitation, the seeking of a temporary or permanent injunction, restraining order, or order for specific performance, and may be sought in any appropriate court.

### **Facility**

District-Owned Facilities: If Charter School is using LAUSD facilities as of the date of the submittal of this charter petition or takes occupancy of LAUSD facilities prior to the approval of this charter petition, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by LAUSD for the use of the LAUSD facilities as a condition of the approval of the charter petition. If at any time after the approval of this charter petition Charter School will occupy and use any LAUSD facilities, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by LAUSD for the use of LAUSD facilities prior to occupancy and commencing use.

Charter School agrees that occupancy and use of LAUSD facilities shall be in compliance with applicable laws and LAUSD policies for the operation and maintenance of LAUSD facilities and furnishings and equipment. All LAUSD facilities (i.e., schools) will remain subject to those laws applicable to public schools which LAUSD observes.

In the event of an emergency, all LAUSD facilities (i.e., schools) are available for use by the American Red Cross and public agencies as emergency locations which may disrupt or prevent Charter School from conducting its educational programs. If Charter School will share the use of LAUSD facilities with other LAUSD user groups, Charter School agrees it will participate in and observe all LAUSD safety policies (e.g., emergency chain of information, participate in safety drills).

The use agreements provided by LAUSD for LAUSD facilities shall contain terms and conditions addressing issues such as, but not limited to, the following:

- **Use.** Charter School will be restricted to using the LAUSD facilities for the operation of a public school providing educational instruction to public school students consistent with the terms of the charter petition and incidental related uses. LAUSD shall have the right to inspect LAUSD facilities upon reasonable notice to Charter School.
- **Furnishings and Equipment.** LAUSD shall retain ownership of any furnishings and equipment, including technology, ("F&E") that it provides to Charter School for use. Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, shall provide maintenance and other services for the good and safe operation of the F&E.
- **Leasing; Licensing.** Use of the LAUSD facilities by any person or entity other than Charter School shall be administered by LAUSD. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement in the use agreement.
- **Minimum Payments or Charges to be Paid to LAUSD Arising From the Facilities.**

(i)Pro Rata Share. LAUSD shall collect and Charter School shall pay a Pro Rata Share for facilities costs as provided in the Charter School Act of 1992 and its regulations. The



parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding facilities costs in the use agreement; and



(ii) Taxes; Assessments. Generally, Charter School shall pay any assessment or fee imposed upon or levied on the LAUSD facilities that it is occupying or Charter School's legal or equitable interest created by the use agreement.

- **Maintenance & Operations Services.** In the event LAUSD agrees to allow Charter School to perform any of the operation and maintenance services, LAUSD shall have the right to inspect the LAUSD facilities and the costs incurred in such inspection shall be paid by Charter School.

(i) **Co-Location.** If Charter School is co-locating or sharing the LAUSD facilities with another user, LAUSD shall provide the operations and maintenance services for the LAUSD facilities and Charter School shall pay the Pro Rata Share. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such in the use agreement.

(ii) **Sole Occupant.** If Charter School is a sole occupant of LAUSD facilities, LAUSD shall allow the Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, to provide some operations and maintenance services for the LAUSD facilities in accordance with applicable laws and LAUSD's policies on operations and maintenance services for facilities and F&E. NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING, LAUSD shall provide all services for regulatory inspections, which as the owner of the real property is required to submit, and deferred maintenance and Charter School shall pay LAUSD for the cost and expense of providing those services. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such services in the use agreement.

- **Real Property Insurance.** Prior to occupancy, Charter School shall satisfy those requirements to participate in LAUSD's property insurance or, if Charter School is the sole occupant of LAUSD facilities, obtain and maintain separate property insurance for the LAUSD facilities. Charter School shall **not** have the option of obtaining and maintaining separate property insurance for the LAUSD facility IF Charter School is co-locating or sharing the LAUSD facility with another user.

#### **Facility status:**

The charter petitioner must demonstrate control of a facility such as a commitment from the landlord, to ensure that the property is actually available to the charter developer, and that the facility is usable with or without conditions (such as a conditional code permit.) The charter school facility shall comply with all applicable building codes, standards and regulations adopted by the city and/or county agencies responsible for building and safety standards for the city in which the charter school is to be located, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Applicable codes and ADA requirements shall also apply to the construction, reconstruction, alteration of or addition to the proposed charter school facility. The Charter School shall implement any corrective actions, orders to comply, or notices issued by the authorized building and safety agency. The Charter School cannot exempt itself from applicable building and zoning

codes, ordinances, and ADA requirements. Charter schools are required to adhere to the program accessibility requirements of Federal law (Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504).



### **Occupancy of the Site:**

The charter petitioner or developer shall provide the District with a final Certificate of Occupancy issued by the applicable permitting agency, allowing the petitioner to use and occupy the site. The Charter School may not open without providing a copy of the Certificate of Occupancy for the designated use of the facility. If the Charter School moves or expands to another facility during the term of this charter, the Charter School shall provide a Certificate of Occupancy for each facility before the school is scheduled to open or operate in the facility or facilities. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in this charter, the interpretation, application, and enforcement of this provision are not subject to the Dispute Resolution Process outlined in Element 14.

### **Health & Safety:**

The school will comply with the Healthy Schools Act, California Education Code Section 17608, which details pest management requirements for schools. Developers may find additional information at: [www.laschools.org/employee/mo/ipm](http://www.laschools.org/employee/mo/ipm)

### **Asbestos Management:**

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



## Conclusion



The California Charter Schools Act of 1992 was created to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school District structure, as a method to accomplish all of the following:

- Improve pupil learning.
- Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.
- Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.
- Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.
- Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.
- Provide vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools.

By authorizing this charter, the Los Angeles Unified School District will be fulfilling the intent of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 and following the directive of law that encourages the creation of charter schools.

The founding team of Bright Star Schools is honored by the opportunity to apply for charter renewal that will continue to serve families in Los Angeles and is eager to work with the District to provide the best possible educational opportunities for all students.