



# **SUPERINTENDENT'S STRATEGIC PLAN FOR HIGH PRIORITY SCHOOLS**

[July 2008 to June 2013]

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**SUPERINTENDENT'S STRATEGIC PLAN  
FOR HIGH PRIORITY SCHOOLS  
[July 2008 to June 2013]**

**Executive Summary**

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has made significant progress over the last six years. The District already has 111 schools with an 800 or higher on the State's Academic Performance Index (API), with 19 of those schools with a 900 or higher API. Overall, District elementary schools are exceeding the State's API progress rate. Yet, LAUSD has 309 Program Improvement schools (not meeting U.S. Department of Education No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandated adequate yearly progress goals), with 95 schools in Program Improvement status for five or more years.

In fact, 98,000 students go to school in 34 of the most challenged and lowest performing secondary schools – 17 middle schools and 17 high schools. These 34 schools have failed to demonstrate adequate yearly progress on both the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements and the State's API. These schools are also classified as Program Improvement Year 5 schools, are in NCLB Restructuring Status, and have been unable to surpass 600 on the API. Anywhere from 42% to 75% of 59,900 students in these 17 high schools and 46% to 65% of 38,200 students in each of these 17 middle schools scored Far Below or Below Basic on the California Standards Test (CST) in the 2006-07 school-year.

There is a greater challenge looming on the horizon. Beyond these 34 schools, another 61 schools are in Program Improvement Year 5 but have APIs over 600, 43 schools are in Program Improvement Year 4, 32 are in Program Improvement Year 3, 75 are in Program Improvement Year 2, and 65 are in Program Improvement Year 1. In all, these 309 LAUSD schools serve 395,443 students.

On September 17, 2007, the District received a letter from the Office of the Superintendent of the State of California notifying it of being classified in Program Improvement Year 3 status. At the District level, the District met 43 of 46 AYP criteria, but did not reach the graduation rate requirements, or reach the annual measurable objectives for English language arts for both English learners and students with disabilities or the annual measurable objectives for mathematics for students with disabilities. Consequently, the district is now subject to Corrective Action by the State and the sanctions authorized under the No Child Left Behind laws.

It is in the best interests of the Board of Education, the District, the schools, students, parents, and community to be proactive in assisting the schools to meet the API and AYP standards. Not only is there a moral and professional responsibility to assist these schools and provide a roadmap for improvement, but also a legal obligation under NCLB to take some, specific actions in accordance with the law.

This Strategic Plan for High Priority Schools represents a roadmap for improvement. It provides seven strategies and hundreds of tactics to be used, first with the 34 middle and high schools serving 98,000 students, and then to an increasing number of secondary schools each year. This Strategic Plan is the framework that will be used to shape work in the District so that all schools significantly improve students' opportunities for learning and academic achievement. It is not a single plan that is mandated for all schools to implement in a lock step manner. Instead, it is an umbrella under which each school, in collaboration with its Local District, is expected to create and drive a differentiated approach to improvement. The approach taken by each school will be predicated on an assessment of its needs, its progress to date, what approaches and/or programs have worked and what have not been working well, how resources are being utilized, and the possibilities for improvement offered by the Strategic Plan. Each school will also continually examine and gauge its own plan for improvement over time to make modifications or changes as it goes forward.

The process to develop the Strategic Plan has been quite inclusive of many, key stakeholders, involving hundreds of people and hundreds of hours in meetings. Throughout this process there has been an incredible level of interest and many ideas about how to improve, not only the 34 schools, but also all of the schools in the entire district. Naturally, not all of the tactics could be incorporated into this Strategic Plan. What has been included are those tactics that shall either be required of the schools or those tactics that shall serve as thoughtful options for the schools as they proceed with school improvement planning efforts in the months leading up to the implementation of their plans for the start of the 2008-09 school year.

The Strategic Plan is predicated on seven (7) strategies for whole school and whole District improvement:

- Strategy 1: Use a research-based, coherent, and rigorous standards-based **curriculum** that meets the needs of diverse learners as a tool that ensures they will be college-prepared and career-ready
- Strategy 2: Build learning communities in which teachers, and those who support them, use data in a reflective cycle of continuous improvement to develop their skills in delivering high-quality, personalized **instruction** that ensures learning for all students in all classrooms
- Strategy 3: Build **school and District leadership** teams that share common beliefs, values, and high expectations for all adults and students and that support a cycle of continuous improvement to ensure high-quality instruction in their schools
- Strategy 4: Build at each school a community of **informed and empowered parents, teachers, staff, and community partners** who work collaboratively to support high-quality teaching and learning

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Strategy 5: Build personalized school environments where students and adults are **physically and emotionally safe and secure** and, as a result, where learning opportunities and personal achievement can be optimized for all

Strategy 6: Design and implement District and school **organizational and support structures** to improve school performance

Strategy 7: Design and implement systems of **reporting, accountability, and incentives** as ways to measure outcomes and promote continuous improvement

These seven strategies share and reflect the common needs of all schools and not just the high priority schools. These common elements, all fundamental to any school's success, serve as the structure for all schools in the District and, expressly for the High Priority Schools. The Strategic Plan has identified a number of tactics to support each of the strategies. These tactics are elements that advance each of the strategies and serve to both apply to all schools or, as appropriate and approved, apply to some of the schools. Some of the tactics are offered as a specific roadmap to be used by all of the schools in their journey toward success, while some of the tactics may be seen as optional pathways that are not determined to be appropriate or useful to the individual school. This Strategic Plan is a living document. Tactics will be added or changed over time.

This Strategic Plan will serve as the guiding document for all schools as they go forward to create their *Single Plan for Student Achievement*. Each school, with all of their stakeholders represented, is expected to use the needs assessment process as an opportunity to ensure that its single plan is the comprehensive site plan for improvement. Consequently, part of the work will be to integrate all of the other plans that might exist (e.g., SAIT, QEIA, Program Improvement plans, WASC, etc.) at the school, making appropriate adjustments and integrating any new tactics that result from their needs assessment, and revise it by March 2008. A support structure to help facilitate the needs assessment, developing and establishing student outcomes and benchmarks, improvement targets, and revisions to the school plan will be provided by the District to guide the school planning process. Each of the schools will present its revised plan to their Local District Superintendent for review and approval in March, 2008. Once the plans are approved, along with approval of any budgetary needs, by the Superintendent then the school will go forward with the readiness to implement the plans for school year 2008-09. The Local Districts will provide infrastructure support and oversight to the schools to ensure the implementation of the plan. It is planned that the Local Districts and the District will collaborate to ensure that coaches/facilitators are provided to the schools to assist with the implementation. Monthly progress reports will be submitted to the Superintendent regarding each school's steps and readiness for implementation.

The key to the endeavor of school improvement is recognizing that a "one size fits all solution" just does not work. This was clearly stated at the A+ Achievement Summit. The High Priority Schools Strategic Plan honors the differentiated needs of schools, all of which are on some point of the continuum towards improvement. However, there will be a number of elements held in common and required at all of these schools.

In summary, The Strategic Plan:

- serves as the transformative model for district reform for all secondary schools;
- serves as part of the response to LAUSD's corrective action status and the PI 5 schools' restructuring status;
- offers a blend of required strategies and tactics for all schools and the individualization/customization of tactics that are tailored to individual school's needs;
- balances site-based and centrally driven tactics; the more improvement that a school demonstrates, the greater the autonomy the school has with its plans – earned autonomy;
- places responsibility for planning, allocation of resources to school-based initiatives, and risk taking in the hands of schools and their stakeholders, but the Local District Superintendents and the General Superintendent maintain ultimate authority for approval of plans and allocation of resources;
- offers not only a guiding direction, but a roadmap with specific landmarks and mileage markers to chart progress and to report to the public that progress, school by school, in a transparent fashion for many years;
- Creates incentives and rewards for schools and stakeholders;
- focuses on recruitment of highly qualified and effective staff for the schools, mentoring of new staff, and the retention of staff so as to ensure staff stability and continuity;

The success of the Strategic Plan rests on a tightly coupled and collaborative relationship among school sites, Local Districts, Central Office leadership and support systems, the community, and the Board of Education. In January 2008, work will begin on the strategic plan to improve student achievement in the pre K – grade 5 schools. The seven strategies in the High Priority Schools Plan shall be used as the guiding framework for developing the tactics to be used in addressing the needs of the pre K – grade 5 schools throughout the district. It is expected that the plan shall be completed in May 2008 after a thorough needs assessment has been completed and with extensive input from all stakeholders.

School improvement is hard work. School improvement is a difficult process, and takes time. It is a student by student, classroom by classroom, grade by grade, school by school endeavor. A work plan, such as this Strategic Plan – and there have been many – is only as valid and meaningful as how the plan is implemented fully with painstaking attention to detail, and with full transparency and reporting of successes and misses. What distinguishes this plan from so many other well intentioned efforts must be its implementation and capacity building at the school sites and Local Districts so as to maintain the efforts relentlessly and to assure the resources are adequate and sustainable.

The schools, students, parents and community, Local District Superintendents, the Central Office support and leadership staff as well as the Board need to face the future together – mutually supporting, interdependent, and accountable. Without a tightly coupled and

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collaborative relationship, implementation and success will be spotty. Going forward in a unified manner to improve the conditions for teaching and learning in the schools as a whole is imperative.

At the end of the journey, the LAUSD is committed to seeing that all students have an educational experience that is rigorous, have access to outstanding staff, that the curriculum prepares all students well for a career choice, and that each school has improved measurably.

These outcomes are our legacy. Otherwise, we default to the status quo. Failure is not an option: This is non-negotiable.

## Vision

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Every LAUSD student  
will receive a state-of-the-art education  
in a safe, caring environment,  
and every graduate  
will be college-prepared and career-ready.

## Mission

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Los Angeles Unified School District  
will provide high quality instruction and a coherent and rigorous curriculum  
in every classroom to facilitate student learning and achievement.

## Guiding Principles

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### Guiding Principle #1

Improve our use of research and evaluation to hold us accountable to an improvement cycle

### Guiding Principle #2

Improve the knowledge, skills, ability, and ethical and professional performance of employees on a continual basis

### Guiding Principle #3

Improve the use of internally and externally derived innovations to drive a substantial and sustainable organizational change

### Guiding Principle #4

Improve our engagement of parents and community in the work of teaching and caring for our children

### Guiding Principle #5

Continually improve the physical and emotional safety of the learning environment  
For children and adults to enhance learning and achievement

### Introduction

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Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has made significant progress over the last six years. The District also is home to some of the best schools in the nation and the State of California. One of our high schools is ranked in the top 50 nationally. In addition, one of our elementary schools ranks 10th in the State; and we have the only school in the State to win the triple crown – the Title I Distinguished School, the California Distinguished School, and the U.S. Department of Education No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Blue Ribbon Award. LAUSD already has dual language and international schools that teach languages such as Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish. We also have schools that are already meeting the State's Academic Performance Index (API) goal for the year 2014.<sup>1</sup> The District already has 111 schools<sup>2</sup> with an 800 API or higher, with 19 of those schools with a 900 or higher<sup>3</sup> API. Overall, District elementary schools are exceeding the State's API progress rate. Urban school districts from around the country regularly visit LAUSD to learn from the work we are doing in our elementary schools.

Yet, LAUSD has 309 Program Improvement schools (not meeting NCLB mandated adequate yearly progress goals), with 95 schools in Program Improvement status for five or more years. We're not alone. All across the country, large urban districts are struggling with the same challenge: how to create schools and classrooms where learning occurs for all students – English learners, standard English learners, students with disabilities, underperforming students, students performing at grade level, and gifted students. Researchers have written for decades about the difficulty in improving academic achievement. Over and over again, they say what we know; the way to improve student achievement is by fundamentally improving the conditions in which teaching and learning take place. In fact, 98,000 of our students go to school in 34 of our most challenged and lowest performing secondary schools – 17 middle schools and 17 high schools. These 34 schools have failed to demonstrate adequate yearly progress on both the NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements and the State's API.<sup>4</sup> These schools are also classified as Program Improvement Year 5 schools,<sup>5</sup> are in NCLB Restructuring Status, and have been unable to surpass 600 on the API. Anywhere from 42% to 75% of our 59,900 students in these 17 high schools and 46% to 65% of our 38,200 students in each of these 17 middle schools scored Far Below or Below Basic on the California Standards Test (CST) in the 2006-07 school-year. We have a greater challenge looming on the horizon. Beyond these 34 schools, another 61 schools are in Program Improvement Year 5 but have APIs over 600, 43 schools are in Program Improvement Year 4, 32 are in Program Improvement Year 3, 75 are in Program Improvement Year 2, and 65 are in Program Improvement Year 1. In all, these 309 LAUSD schools serve 395,443 students. On September 17, 2007, we received a letter from the Office of the Superintendent of the State of California notifying us of our Program Improvement

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<sup>1</sup> The goal for the State is that all schools will have an API of 800 or higher by the year 2014.

<sup>2</sup> There are 120 schools with an API of 800 or higher when we include the independent charter schools in the District.

<sup>3</sup> There are 24 schools with an API of 900 or higher when we include the independent charter schools in the District.

<sup>4</sup> Attached, as Appendix A, is a list of the 17 middle and 17 high schools.

<sup>5</sup> Two of the middle schools are in Program Improvement 4 status but have APIs below 600 and are feeder middle schools for two Program Improvement 5 high schools.

Year 3 status. At the District level, we met 43 of 46 AYP criteria, but did not reach our graduation rate requirements, or reach our annual measurable objectives for English language arts for both English learners and students with disabilities or our annual measurable objectives for mathematics for our students with disabilities. Consequently, we are now subject to Corrective Action by the State.

This information, reflecting the state of our educational system – our collective desire but inability to meet the needs of many of our students – should challenge us to take some time for self-reflection. The data captures the efforts of many people at all levels of the system working very hard to meet the needs of our students. And it summarizes our successes and our failures as we attempt to educate our children. We can rightly celebrate many successes. There are many instances where we have taken the right steps towards transforming the system. There have been many attempts made at all levels of the system to enact the District's agenda to improve student learning and achievement. These attempts take the shape of central district activities, local district activities, school level activities, and classroom level activities. But it also captures many instances of our working hard but not always working smart. It reflects the results of decades of accepted norms playing themselves out daily in our schools and administrative offices within the Local Districts and Central offices. It demonstrates that much will still have to change if we believe that the answer to improved student learning and achievement lies with improving the quality of the pedagogy provided to students as they struggle to learn to read and write and become life long learners. It should cause us to demand that something be done to shake the system and chart a new course. Not only do we have a moral obligation to significantly improve the learning environments for our students, we have a legal responsibility to do so as well. Thus, this Strategic Plan is a call to action, a call for systemic change.

The challenge of significantly improving learning conditions at 309 schools is daunting. We will need to improve in all of the areas within our control: instruction, curriculum, leadership, parent and community engagement, safety, organization, accountability, and budget alignment. We must change the way we operate in our classrooms, in our schools, in our local districts, at the central offices, and in our communities; and we must do it on an enormous scale. Richard Elmore, a professor at Harvard University, writes, “The problem of scale in educational innovation can be briefly stated as follows: Innovations that require large changes in the core of educational practice<sup>6</sup> seldom penetrate more than a small fraction of U.S. schools and classrooms, and seldom lasts for very long when they do” (p. 1-2). He goes on to note that what U.S. schools and districts generally focus on as innovation at the secondary level is,

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<sup>6</sup> Elmore defines core educational practice as, “how teachers understand the nature of knowledge and the student's role in learning, and how these ideas about knowledge and learning are manifested in teaching and classwork.” It also “includes structural arrangements of schools, such as the physical layout of classrooms, student grouping practices, teacher's responsibilities for grouping of students, and relations among teachers in their work with their students, as well as processes for assessing student learning and communicating it to students, teachers, parents, administrators, and other interested parties” (p. 2).

. . . the way they arrange the schedule that students are expected to follow – lengthening or shortening class periods, distributing content in different ways across periods and days, increasing and decreasing class size for certain periods of the day, etc. These changes are often justified as a way to provide space in the day for teachers to do a kind of teaching they wouldn't otherwise be able to do, or to develop a different kind of relationship with students around knowledge (p. 3).

The limitation of these types of innovation is that they are not

. . . explicitly connected to fundamental changes in the way knowledge is constructed, nor to the division of responsibility between the teacher and the student, the way students and teachers interact with each other around knowledge, or any of the variety of other stable conditions in the core. *Hence, changes in scheduling seldom translate into changes in the fundamental conditions of teaching and learning for students and teachers.* Schools, then, might be “changing” all the time – adopting this or that new structure or schedule or textbook series or tracking system – and never change in any fundamental way what teachers and students actually do when they are together in classrooms (p. 3, emphasis added).

Thus, we must choose a course that will allow us to change the “fundamental conditions of teaching and learning for students and teachers” (Elmore, 1997, p. 3) *and* scale up change so that it takes hold and is sustainable over time. As a result, the question that I have been confronting is, “where do we start?” We are going to begin with the 34 middle and high schools serving 98,000 students. Not only do these schools face tremendous difficulties, they are also required to implement specific types of prescribed interventions for the 2008-09 school year as a result of their Program Improvement Year 5 status. We will begin our work with these schools but rapidly expand our efforts to support additional schools, i.e., feeder middle and elementary schools, while ensuring that we do not overextend ourselves beyond our capacity to be successful or our ability to dedicate adequate resources, fiscal and personnel, to this very difficult work.

In addition to considering which schools should be the first to receive focused support as we implement our High Priority Schools strategy, I also spent a significant amount of time examining the organizational structure that would best support our work. Initially, I looked at the efforts underway in other districts around the country. I saw that San Francisco, New York, Chicago, and Miami-Dade had all chosen to establish new organizational and governance structures. In most cases, schools were pulled out of their traditional support structures and separated into new configurations. I brought this idea forward to my Cabinet. I proposed that we create a High Priority Schools District with a new Superintendent governing the schools. Together, we examined these other districts to determine whether this type of approach would be a good fit with our District. We spent several weeks considering the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies embedded in these other districts' approaches to system and school change. In addition,

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we heard from many different stakeholders in LAUSD, teachers, principals, administrators, parents, community members, Board members, and others about the strengths and weaknesses associated with creating a separate district to support our High Priority Schools. In the end, I decided that separating out any of our schools was not the right choice. I determined that it would be a mistake to pull high schools and middle schools away from their elementary schools or to impact the families of schools structure in place within the local districts. I also concluded that we needed to be able to apply our strategies and tactics in the other feeder middle schools and elementary schools within each Local District. Additionally, I considered the fact that we do not reclassify 50% of our English learners (approx 250,000 students) in grades K-5, or adequately equip our English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities with the skills and strategies they need to be academically successful before they leave elementary school. I also believe we must work together to build capacity within our current structure so that we can expand our efforts more rapidly into the other 275 schools in Program Improvement status. Moreover, we are a Corrective Action district because we have not ensured that our students graduate and that our English learner students and Students with Disabilities are able to reach proficiency in English language arts and mathematics. Additionally, when we analyzed the Annual Measurable Objectives<sup>7</sup> (AMO) trends through 2014, it became obvious that the vast majority of our schools were not on a progress trend to meet future year AYP. Therefore, we must extend our work to *all* of our schools over time. Given that every school in our District will be affected by our work with our High Priority Schools, it made no sense to remove any school from its current organizational and governance structure. In January 2008, work will begin on the strategic plan to improve student achievement in the pre K – grade 5 schools. The seven strategies in the High Priority Schools Plan shall be used as the guiding framework for developing the tactics to be used in addressing the needs of the pre K – grade 5 schools throughout the district. It is expected that the plan shall be completed in May 2008 after a thorough needs assessment has been completed and with extensive input from all stakeholders.

I believe that it is in the best interests of the Board of Education; the District; and our schools, students, parents, and community to be proactive in assisting our schools to meet the API and AYP standards. I do not believe that state officials know better than we do what must be done to meet the needs of our students and schools. Not only do we have a moral and professional responsibility to assist these schools and provide a roadmap for improvement, but we also have a legal obligation under NCLB to take specific actions in accordance with the law. This strategic plan represents our roadmap for improvement. It provides us with the seven strategies and hundreds of tactics that we will use to guide us over the next five years as we begin our efforts, first with 34 middle and high schools and their feeder schools, and then to an increasing number of schools each year, until every school in the District is working with the strategies and tactics provided herein.

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<sup>7</sup> Annual Measurable Objectives are used to determine whether schools and districts have made their AYP pursuant to NCLB. The California AMOs are calculated by the percent of students that is required to be proficient or advanced in every subgroup on the California Standards Test in English language arts and mathematics. For high schools, the AMO is calculated based on the 10th grade CAHSEE passage rate.

### Process for Developing the Strategic Plan

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In July of this year, I challenged my Cabinet to develop a comprehensive approach to address our Program Improvement schools. We began this work in two phases. First, a committee was formed to consider an approach to redesigning Program Improvement 5+++<sup>8</sup> high schools. This committee, the PI5+++ High School New Design Committee, was comprised of members of my Cabinet.<sup>9</sup> Two meetings were held in the month of July. During the first meeting, the committee worked with local district directors of school services and analyzed two high school case studies. They looked at the schools' current conditions, barriers to improvement, what might be working at the schools, similarities between the two schools, and issues of school culture. They also looked at the lessons we might learn from these two schools. At the second meeting, the committee heard from one principal who had helped his school to become a Program Improvement Year 5 "in hold status" school and a second principal who had helped his school exit Program Improvement Year 4. The principals shared the specific actions they had taken to meet their target goals and exit criteria. They discussed the structures and resources they had needed and used. They talked about the barriers they had faced and how they had overcome these barriers. The information gathered during these two committee meetings was then compiled into a set of recommendations that were to be presented to the entire Cabinet.

The second phase of this work was to initiate a series of Cabinet Advances<sup>10</sup> and create a process for engaging stakeholders in the discussion. Our goal was to design a strategic plan that represented the best thinking of *all* stakeholders – District, Local District, administrators, teachers, parents, and community members. We began this effort in August with our first Cabinet Advance. During our two days together, we engaged in a series of activities that set the stage for this Strategic Plan. We reviewed challenges facing Program Improvement schools.<sup>11</sup> We learned about the approaches being used by four other urban districts in the United States: New York City, Miami-Dade, Chicago, and San Francisco. Then we heard the recommendations from the PI 5+++ High School New Design Committee. Once we had developed a common framework for our discussions, we set about identifying the critical strategies we believed we would need to have in place in order to create fundamental improvement in our High Priority Schools. These five strategies were developed in alignment with our Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles. They focused on instruction, curriculum, leadership, parent and community engagement, and physical and emotional safety.

Next, on September 14th, I set forth an ambitious timeline for the completion of this planning process. I determined that we would engage as many stakeholders that we could – the Task Force, administrators, teachers, parents, the Board, and others – over the next

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<sup>8</sup> Program Improvement 5+++ schools are schools that have been in Program Improvement Year 5 for two years or more.

<sup>9</sup> Committee members included two local district superintendents, the Deputy Superintendent for Professional Learning, Development, and Leadership, the Executive Director of Strategic Planning and Accountability, the Director of the Research and Evaluation Branch, the General Counsel, and the Executive Director of the iDivision.

<sup>10</sup> I have moved from the language of retreat to the language of advance as our goal is to move forward aggressively in our effort to create system change.

<sup>11</sup> Time did not permit us to engage students in a meaningful way in this initial process. They will be involved in the implementation phase.

month and a half and provide the Board with a Strategic Plan for discussion by mid November 2007. I chose this ambitious timeline so that we can meet the NCLB requirement of implementing this plan for the 2008-09 school year. Therefore, I provided the Board with an overview of my plans at our Board retreat on September 18th.

I then established the High Priority Schools Task Force. The Task Force is comprised of the presidents of both UTLA and AALA and other union leaders, parent leaders, and many other external community stakeholders from education and business. I invited the Task Force to meet with me on September 19th. At our first meeting together I shared my overall vision to create major change in our High Priority Schools. I shared my perception that we might need to pull out our High Priority Schools and place them in a separate district so that they would receive focused attention and assistance – support and pressure – to change. I used this time with the Task Force members as a venue for engaging them with the opportunity to talk and for me to listen. I solicited their input as stakeholders in the lives and educations of our children. I asked them to help us think differently, audaciously, about the types of change we would need to make in order to improve learning conditions for our children at our High Priority Schools. I heard their concerns that we had tried reform many times before and little or nothing had changed in our schools. I acknowledged their cynicism, but I asked them to suspend disbelief and work with me to create something fundamentally different and to hold me accountable to carrying it through.

On September 20th and 21st we held our second Advance as a Cabinet. Here, each Local District Superintendent spent time presenting the efforts underway in each of their Local Districts to improve learning and achievement at their Program Improvement Schools. We reviewed the input we received from the first Task Force meeting and began the work of developing tactics for each of the five strategies. Our charge was to identify the most “audacious” tactics we could conjure. Nothing was to be left out of consideration. Through this process, we identified 185 “audacious” tactics and ideas within the framework of the overarching strategies. The tactics fell into the following broad categories:

- Governance structures
- Instructional strategies
- Leadership strategies
- Approaches to engaging parents and community
- Approaches to improving physical and emotional safety
- Approaches to improving facilities and increasing space

There were hundreds of tactics offered to be considered for inclusion in the strategic plan. These tactics were collected by our facilitators and turned into a survey. Each member of the Cabinet was then asked to answer the survey online, ranking the tactics in terms of their level of priority.

On October 3rd, I invited all of the directors and principals in the High Priority Schools to meet with me in separate meetings. At these meetings, I shared my overall vision to create major change in our High Priority Schools. As I had with the Task Force members, I shared my perception that we might need to pull out our High Priority Schools and place them in a separate district so that they would receive focused attention and assistance – support and pressure – to change. Similarly, I solicited feedback from the principals regarding the barriers they face in making profound change occur in their schools and what they need to be more successful. Their feedback was collected so that it could be integrated into the work the Cabinet was doing as it developed the Strategic Plan.

I met again with the High Priority Task Force on October 4th. During this meeting, I brought forward the work we had done to date and we discussed the strategies and tactics that would best serve to support our students and our schools. I listened to Task Force members, collected their feedback and brought it back to the work we were doing.

On October 5<sup>th</sup>, I held another Cabinet Advance to review all of the ideas, tactics offered to date in preparation for the October 9th Board overview and presentation.

On October 9th I made a presentation to the Board. I shared with the Board and the public our work up until that point in developing the Strategic Plan. I provided an overview of the work we were doing, the stakeholders involved, when the High Priority Task Force met again.

Each Local District Superintendent also held a meeting with teachers from the High Priority Schools in their Local Districts in order to solicit their feedback, ideas, suggestions, and perspectives with respect to the barriers and the approaches they would recommend for improving teaching and learning in their schools.

A series of additional meetings were held to further develop tactics, measure feedback, and to generally discuss perceived needs and barriers to reform. These meetings were held as follows:

October 17 – High Priority Schools Task Force Meeting

October 19 – Cabinet Advance

October 24 – District Advisory Council, District English Learners' Advisory Council, Parent Community Services Branch, Community Advisory Council, Special Education Multicultural Advisory Council Meeting

October 25 – Secondary Directors Meeting

October 26 – Teachers Meeting

October 26 – Cabinet Meeting  
October 29 – High Priority Schools Principals  
October 30 – High Priority Schools Task Force Meeting  
November 13 – Meeting with UTLA  
November 14-Meeting with AALA  
November 15 – Focus on Achievement  
November 15 – High Priority Schools Task Force Meeting  
November 30-Cabinet Meeting  
November 30 – Meeting with UTLA  
December 3 – High Priority Schools Task Force Meeting

As these meetings took place, we continuously integrated the feedback we received from each stakeholder group. The plan became more complex and more nuanced over time. We found a great deal of overlap in the feedback we received. We came to recognize that we needed to add two additional strategies to the plan. Thus, we expanded from five to seven strategies. The two new strategies focused us on Organizational and Support Structures and Performance Reporting, Accountability, and Incentives. One of the powerful parts of this process was that we were able to see how much consistency there was across role groups as to which tactics were most likely to improve the teaching and learning at these 34 schools and eventually all of our schools. Eventually, based on our deep analysis and feedback from stakeholders, the plan evolved to leaving the 34 high priority secondary schools in the Local District structure and to include the feeder middle and elementary schools. This strategy would also better facilitate the rapid expansion of the High Priority Schools strategies and tactics to all schools.

In closing, this process has been quite inclusive of many, key stakeholders. What emerged from this process is an incredible level of interest and many ideas about how to improve, not only the 34 schools and their family of schools, (pre-k through grade 12), but also all of our schools in the entire district. Naturally, not all of the tactics could be incorporated into this Strategic Plan. What has been included are those tactics that shall either be required of the schools or those tactics that shall serve as thoughtful options for our schools as they proceed with school improvement planning efforts in the months leading up to the implementation of their plans for the start of the 2008-09 school year.

### Application of the Strategic Plan

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This High Priority Schools Strategic Plan is the framework that we will use to shape our work in the District so that all schools significantly improve students' opportunities for learning and academic achievement. It is not a single plan that is mandated for all schools to implement in a lock step manner. Instead, it is an umbrella under which each school, in collaboration with its Local District and family of schools (pre-k through grade 12), is expected to create and drive a differentiated approach to improvement. The approach taken by each school will be predicated on an assessment of: its needs, its progress to date, what approaches and/or programs have worked and what have not been working well, and the possibilities for improvement offered by the Strategic Plan. Each school will also continually examine and gauge its own plan for improvement over time to make modifications or changes as it goes forward.

Clearly, the seven strategic goals (curriculum, instruction, leadership, engagement, security and safety, organizational support structures, incentives and accountability) share and reflect the common needs of all schools and not just the high priority schools. These common elements, all fundamental to any school's success and listed as required for successful schools in current research (Appendix C), serve as the structure for all schools in the District and, expressly for the High Priority Schools. The Strategic Plan has identified a number of tactics to support each of the strategies. These tactics are elements that advance each of the strategies and serve to both apply to all schools or, as appropriate and approved, apply to some of the schools. Some of the tactics are offered as a specific roadmap to be used by all of the schools in their journey toward success, while some of the tactics may be seen as optional pathways that are not determined to be appropriate or useful to the individual school. For example, it may be important as a District initiative affecting all High Priority Schools to offer incentives to attract and maintain the highest quality staff at the schools. On the other hand, specific tactics to reduce school size and classroom ratios may not be possible at each school site, despite best efforts to reduce size due to lack of space. This Strategic Plan is a living document. Tactics will be added or changed over time.

Once adopted by the Board of Education, this Strategic Plan will serve as the guiding document for all schools as they go forward to create their individual strategic plan for improvement. Each school, with all of their stakeholders represented,<sup>12</sup> is expected to use the needs assessment process as an opportunity to ensure that its single school plan is the strategic plan for improvement. Consequently, part of the work will be to integrate all of the other plans that might exist (e.g., SAIT, QEIA, Program Improvement plans, WASC, etc.) at the school, making appropriate adjustments and integrating any new tactics that result from their needs assessment, and revise it by March 2008. A support structure to help facilitate the needs assessment, developing and establishing student outcomes and benchmarks, improvement targets, and revisions to the school plan will be provided by the District to guide

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<sup>12</sup> Stakeholders should include: Teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community representatives. It may be, but should not be limited to, members of the School Site Council and other standing committees at the school.

the school planning process. Each of the schools will present its revised plan to their Local District Superintendent for review and approval in March, 2008. I will then review them for my approval. Once the plans are approved, along with approval of any budgetary needs, then the school will go forward with the readiness to implement the plans for school year 2008-09. The Local Districts will provide infrastructure support and oversight to the schools to ensure the implementation of the plan. It is planned that the Local Districts and the District will collaborate to ensure that coaches/mentors/facilitators<sup>13</sup> are provided to the schools to assist with the implementation. Monthly progress reports will be submitted to me regarding each school's steps and readiness for implementation.

It is required that all schools will implement their plans for the start of the new school year. Some of the schools may demonstrate significant changes in a variety of ways. Some of the schools whose current plans hold promise of progress and success may not show evidence of significant change, but will benefit from ongoing monitoring and performance reporting to ensure continuous success.

The key to the endeavor of school improvement is recognizing that a "one size fits all solution" just does not work. The High Priority Schools Strategic Plan honors the differentiated needs of schools, all of which are on some point of the continuum towards improvement. However, there will be a number of elements held in common and required at all of these schools. As required by NCLB, there will be a required common core curriculum for grades 6-12 in the subjects of English language arts, English as a second language, mathematics, science and social studies, anchored to the California Standards to be implemented by all of these schools. In addition, there will be professional development anchored in improving the instruction in the core subjects of the mandated core curriculum as well as improving instruction for English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities. Additional examples of mandated actions for all of the High Priority Schools would be the required implementation of the District Discipline Foundation Policy (March 2007) as well as the Coordinated Safe and Healthy School Plan (CSHS revised 07/07) by each school, but customized at each school site; the use of District periodic assessments and intervention programs; as well as the full implementation of Small Learning Communities and Personalized Learning Environments consistent with recent Board policy actions and currently underway in many schools.

The following is the timeline we intend to follow for the application of the Strategic Plan:

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<sup>13</sup> These coaches, mentors, and/or facilitators might be the same team who works with the school during the needs assessment process. It may also be that the Local District Superintendent identifies support from within the Local District or from the Central Offices. The teams or individuals will be specifically trained to support the school as it builds capacity to implement the school's strategic plan.

### Needs Assessment and Planning (January through March)

Each school will engage in a “needs assessment” conducted with a partner assigned by the Local District from a bench contract.<sup>14</sup> These partners will be comprised of Local District staff as well as outside providers who will work with the schools to conduct a needs assessment focusing on the seven strategic goals.

The purpose of the assessment and planning phase is to integrate all existing school plans into Single Plan for Student Achievement – a school strategic plan document. Included shall be the tactics to be implemented in the months prior to school year 2008-2009, the tactics to be implemented during school year 2008-2009, the budget implications and resources required to implement the school's plans and recommended tactics. The plans will also contain the qualitative and quantitative process indicators and achievement outcomes that will be used to determine improvement at the school with respect to the conditions of and for teaching and learning. Leadership is also important. Therefore, an assessment of the school's leadership team will also be conducted. These plans and budgets shall be presented to the Local District and Superintendent for review and approval prior to any implementation.

### Preparation for School Year 2008-2009 March through July

Once approval is granted, then each school will take the actions to implement its approved plan and tactics in preparation for the start of the new school year. It is intended that each school will be provided support to assist with this endeavor and to report monthly on the school's progress.

### Implementation (July 2008 through June 2009)

Each of the schools will implement its school specific strategic plan with the support and guidance from their Local District. It is intended that each school will be provided support to assist with this endeavor, to ensure capacity for the school's sustainable improvements, and to report on the school's progress. An evaluation of the progress of the implementation using data will shape the next steps for the 2009-10 school year and to improve the school reform model for next round of schools. In the fall of 2008, criteria will be determined for the next round of schools to participate.

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<sup>14</sup> We will conduct a Request for Proposal process wherein we will solicit proposals from universities, foundations, and other organizations that may be selected to work with our schools in collaboratively conducting a needs assessment. They will become partners in the work at the school and will not be traditional providers who come and “do” something to the school and then leave. In some instances, these partners will stay to assist the school in building its capacity to implement the efforts derived from the needs assessment process.

School improvement is hard work. It is also a classroom by classroom, school by school process. We are committed to assuring that not only each of the identified High Priority Schools improves and meets the API/AYP targets set for them but also that a foundation is built District-wide so that all schools improve.

The LAUSD Board of Education has taken a number of actions by way of resolutions to accelerate academic growth and success in its lowest performing schools. Most notably, a series of resolutions in 2006-07 were authored. The Board of Education's Policy Director, Dr. Randy Ross has provided a summary memo on Sept 27, 2007 of past Board resolutions in an effort to inform and assist with the development of a Framework for Strategic Planning for High Priority Schools.

I have used the Board's guidance and past actions to help with focusing the development of my thinking and this plan. In fact, the seven strategies and their accompanying tactics in the Strategic Plan are consistent with the thrust of each of the Board's past actions.

### Strategic Overview

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The Strategic Plan is directly aligned with the LAUSD Board Resolutions, as detailed in the Dr. Ross memorandum of September 27, 2007 and, the Strategic Plan addresses those resolutions passed prior to 2006; hence, the congruence between Board's direction and the Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan serves as part of the response to the District's Corrective Action status and the schools' restructuring status, per the NCLB designation and the letter from the California Department of Education received September 17, 2007.

The Strategic Plan serves as the prototype for whole district reform for all schools, but specifically in 2008-09 for the 34 High Priority high schools and middle schools.

The Strategic Plan's system of accountability – the reporting by each school, on a quarterly basis, of their progress toward achieving the school plan and meeting specific performance targets – serves to initiate the District's Accountability model at the most significant level – the school.

The Strategic Plan builds capacity within the Local District's Family of Schools level and builds the capability to sustain improvements over time.

The Strategic Plan is predicated on 7 strategies for whole school and whole District improvement:

- A core curriculum that is California Standards aligned
- Focused professional development to advance instruction
- Leadership development and training
- Parent and community engagement
- Safe and secure environments
- Organizational and support structures
- Performance reporting, accountability, and incentives

A centerpiece of the Strategic Plan focuses on recruitment of appropriate staff for the schools, mentoring of new staff, retention of staff so as to ensure staff quality and continuity.

The Strategic Plan is a blend of required strategies and tactics for all schools and the individualization/customization of tactics that are tailored to individual school's needs.

Some examples of the required strategies and tactics include:

- Core curriculum based on the California Standards in English Language Arts, English as a Second Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies
- Professional development anchored in improving delivery of the core curriculum for English learners, standard English learners, students with disabilities, and all others
- Administration and analysis of periodic assessments
- Professional development anchored in improving instructional leadership of administrators
- Small Learning Communities and Personalized Learning Environments
- District Foundation Discipline Policy and District Comprehensive Safe and Healthy Schools Plan
- Parent engagement
- School accountability and quarterly reporting
- Priority schools staffing: recruitment, mentoring, and retention programs
- On demand, on time, quick response for provision of support services at the District and Local District level
- Reducing school size and classroom size where possible
- Incentives and rewards

The Strategic Plan is a balance of the site-based and centrally driven tactics; the more improvement that a school demonstrates, the greater the autonomy the school has with its plans – earned autonomy.

The Strategic Plan places responsibility for planning, allocation of resources to school-based initiatives, and risk taking in the hands of schools and their stakeholders, but the Local District Superintendents and the General Superintendent maintain ultimate authority for approval of plans and allocation of resources.

The success of the Strategic Plan rests on a tightly coupled and collaborative relationship among school sites, Local Districts, Central Office leadership and support systems, the community, and the Board of Education.

The Strategic Plan offers not only a guiding direction, but a roadmap with specific landmarks and mileage markers to chart progress and to report to the public that progress, school by school, in a transparent fashion for many years.

Improvement Strategies

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Strategy 1: Use a research-based, coherent, and rigorous standards-based **curriculum** that meets the needs of diverse learners as a tool that ensures they will be college-prepared and career-ready

Strategy 2: Build learning communities in which teachers, and those who support them, use data in a reflective cycle of continuous improvement to develop their skills in delivering high-quality, personalized **instruction** that ensures learning for all students in all classrooms

Strategy 3: Build **school and District leadership** teams that share common beliefs, values, and high expectations for all adults and students and that support a cycle of continuous improvement to ensure high-quality instruction in their schools

Strategy 4: Build at each school a community of **informed and empowered parents, teachers, staff, and community partners** who work collaboratively to support high-quality teaching and learning

Strategy 5: Build personalized school environments where students and adults are **physically and emotionally safe and secure** and, as a result, where learning opportunities and personal achievement can be optimized for all

Strategy 6: Design and implement District and school **organizational and support structures** to improve school performance

Strategy 7: Design and implement systems of **reporting, accountability, and incentives** as ways to measure outcomes and promote continuous improvement

## Strategy One: Curriculum

### **Strategy 1: Use a research-based, coherent, and rigorous standards-based curriculum that meets the needs of diverse learners as a tool that ensures they will be college-prepared and career-ready (Required)**

**Rationale:** (No Child Left Behind Section 1116(c) (10) (C) and California Education Code Section 52055.57(c) (1). There is a legal requirement (cited above) which specifies "...the instituting and fully implementing of a new curriculum that is based on state academic content and achievement standards..." for districts that have advanced to Year 3 of Program Improvement (PI) status and are subject to corrective action. Strategy One and the required tactics for districts and schools (see below) address the legal mandate. The optional tactics offered below are some examples of opportunities for schools to consider when reviewing and revising their Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) and/or, for senior high schools, their Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) "Self Study."

#### **Tactics:**

- a. ***Adopt a California Standards-based, Research-supported Core Curriculum in English Language Arts, English as a Second Language, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies*** (grades 6-12) Instituting and fully implementing the District's curriculum that is based on state academic, content, and achievement standards, and A-G requirements. ***(Required)***

#### ***Responsibility: District Action Steps (Required)***

- Provide rigorous and relevant content for *all* students
- Embed standards tested on California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) in all courses 6-10
- Embed a tiered approach to instruction addressing the instructional needs of at-risk learners (Response to Intervention; Modified Consent Decree, Outcome 2)
- Align primary source materials to content (e.g., historical documents, original texts, letters, interview transcripts, photographs, art, political cartoons, advertisements) and theme/career
- Create concept lessons across all content areas (e.g., English Language Arts units and unit lessons, science immersion units and model lessons, mathematics concept lessons, social studies model lessons) that also address the instructional needs of English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities
- Adopt pre-teach, re-teach, and challenge materials for accessing core curriculum
- Address content, cognitive and academic language, and the instructional needs of English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities through the use of tactics such as using core content to teach language
- Adopt, curriculum-aligned periodic assessments

***b. Implement the California Standards-based, Research-supported Core Curriculum in English Language Arts, English as a Second Language, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies (grades 6-12) (Required)***

- ***Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and “WASC Self Study” (Required)*** This tactic is required at all schools and in all classrooms (unless qualitative and quantitative data demonstrating existing program(s) and teaching meet the curricular requirements and ensure performance for all sub-groups)
  - Use of Instructional Guides
  - Use of concept lessons (e.g., ELA units and unit lessons, science immersion units and model lessons, mathematics concept lessons, social studies model lessons)
  - Use of explicit rubrics defining expectations for quality work products and for grading student work
  - Use of quality formative and summative written and oral feedback
  - Use of curriculum-aligned periodic assessments and additional curriculum-based measures
  - Use of state adopted, standards-aligned textbook (e.g., Holt, Prentice Hall, McDougall-Littell)

***c. Ensure all supplementary materials in English Language Arts, English as a Second Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies are aligned to state standards (Required)***

***Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and “WASC Self Study” (Required)***

- Required at all schools and in all classrooms (unless qualitative and quantitative data demonstrating existing program(s) and teaching meet the curricular requirements and ensure performance for all sub-groups)
  - Remove non-California standards-aligned texts and supplementary materials from use during regular classroom instructional time and after school programs provided at the school site
  - Remove non-California standards-aligned worksheets and materials from regular classroom instructional time and after school programs provided at the school site

***d. Adopt and Implement Additional Curricular Supports to Meet the Needs of Diverse Learners (Required) as delineated in the Achievement A+ Summit***

### ***Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and “WASC Self Study” (Required)***

- Implement intervention programs and tactics aligned to the core that specifically target underperforming students not making adequate progress in core subjects, including English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities (**English learner**: A student for whom English is a second language and who is not proficient enough in the English language to succeed in the school's regular instructional programs and who qualifies for extra help. (Formerly referred to as Limited English Proficient/LEP.) (Ed Source/Ed-data) (**Standard English learner**: A student for whom English is a first language but whose dialect may impede success in the regular instructional program and who qualifies for extra help.)
  - Implement targeted, research-based literacy and mathematics intervention programs for students with disabilities (Modified Consent Decree, Outcome 2)
  - Implement annual student , parent, teacher conferences for grades 7-12 for academic counseling with emphasis on at risk students (Modified Consent Decree, Outcomes 3 & 4)
    - Justification: Consistent application of required actions contained in the MCD Outcomes need to be assured in all schools in order to meet requirements. This is to ensure that LAUSD is in compliance with all statutes and regulations.
- Embed Culturally Relevant and Responsive pedagogy into core content instruction and professional development
- Implement culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy that addresses the needs of English learners, Standard English learners, Students with Disabilities, and underperforming students.
- Implement the English as a Second Language Program as designed following the curriculum guidelines and the assessment and ELD Portfolio requirement
  - Implement English Language supports for EL students that build oral and written academic language
  - Implement the scheduling and placement policies regarding English Learners in middle and high school
  - Implement the supports for English Learners no longer in ESL
    - Justification: Detailed policies are spelled out in reference guides and memoranda. These policies assure that appropriate master schedules are developed for English Language Development student needs and their access to core content. These policies must be consistently implemented in and across schools.
- Implement CAHSEE preparation programs at middle and high school

Justification: All students must pass the CAHSEE in order to graduate. We currently offer intervention after students fail the test.

### ***e. Provide Expanded Curricular Opportunities for Students***

#### ***Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study (Required)***

- Increase educational alternative options for students at risk of school failure

- *Access to continuation schools and/or Adult Education Alternative Work Centers (AEWC)*

***Responsibility: Options for School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Optional)***

Justification: The following options are program opportunities/offerings that are found in most high performing schools. These options expand the learning experiences beyond the traditional walls of the secondary school, enrich students' education, and provide rigor to the schools' offerings.

- Exploratory and/or elective programs (e.g., Career and Technology Education, visual and performing arts)
- College preparation program alternatives:
  - Community College, University, and College courses offered on campus and/or via technology
  - Dual enrollment opportunities (e.g., high school and community college)
  - Advanced Placement and Honors preparation programs for middle school students
  - Expansion of Advanced Placement courses for high school students
  - International Baccalaureate programs for families of schools: one-strand feeder patterns of pre-kindergarten to elementary to middle to high school.

Justification: The International Baccalaureate World Schools offer three programs of international education for students aged 3 to 19. The Primary Years Program focuses on the development of the whole child in the classroom and in the world outside. The Middle Years Program provides a framework of academic challenge and life skills, achieved through embracing and transcending traditional school subjects. The Diploma Program is a demanding two-year curriculum leading to final examinations and a qualification that is recognized by leading universities around the world for college credit. Each program includes a curriculum and pedagogy, student assessment appropriate to the age range, professional development for teachers and a process of school authorization and evaluation. Currently, none of the LAUSD schools offers these highly regarded, rigorous programs.

- Summer residency opportunities at local universities and colleges
- University and college campus visits
- Field trips, field experiences, internships and work-based learning opportunities
- Peer mentoring and tutoring; financial literacy programs
- Single gender classes/academies

Justification: African-American and Latino males are the lowest performing subgroups in LAUSD. Two LAUSD schools have successfully implemented single sex classes for boys with a reduction in discipline problems, higher CAHSEE pass rates, higher retention, and higher academic performance. Research also suggests that girls in single sex classes are more likely to take and perform better in math, science, and technology classes. Where there is a significant disparity in the academic and social success between genders, schools should consider single gender classes or academies with the appropriate, staff professional development.

Strategy Two: Instruction

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**Strategy 2: Build learning communities in which teachers and those who support them use data in a reflective cycle of continuous improvement to develop their skills in delivering high-quality, personalized instruction that ensures learning for all students in all classrooms (Required)**

**Rationale:** (California Department of Education letter September 17, 2007). There is a legal requirement (cited above) that requires not only “the instituting and fully implementing of a new curriculum that is based on state academic content and achievement standards...”, but also “providing appropriate professional development based on scientifically based research for all relevant staff that offers substantial promise of improving educational achievement for high priority pupils.” for districts that have advanced to Year 3 of Program Improvement (PI) and subject to corrective action. Strategy Two and the required district and schools’ tactics (see below) address this legal mandate.

**Tactics:**

**a. Build Capacity for Effective Teaching (Required)**

Justification: Provide appropriate professional development based on scientifically based research for all relevant staff that offers substantial promise of improving educational achievement for high priority pupils (CDE letter September 17, 2007). In addition, there is a critical need to assure all teachers and administrators have the necessary and expanded training not only in their subject matter field, but also in pedagogy for all learners with diverse needs. Currently, there are many programs in effect; however, the thrust of the tactics identified below is to bring focus and coherence to the ongoing and new professional development efforts of these schools.

**Responsibility: District and School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)**

- Provide teachers with training and support in the use of process and tools for examining quantitative data (i.e., periodic and other assessment data) and qualitative data (i.e., student work and classroom practice) as a means to improve instructional practice to address the needs of diverse learners and improve learning opportunities for English learners, standard English learners, students with disabilities and all other students
  - Promote the formation of professional learning communities (PLCs) at schools, within Families of Schools (pre-k through grade 12), Local Districts, and Central District

*Justification: The term professional learning community describes a collegial group of administrators and school staff who are united in their commitment to student learning. They share a vision, work and learn collaboratively, visit and review other classrooms, and participate in decision making (Hord, 1997b). The benefits to the staff and students include a reduced isolation of teachers, better informed and committed teachers, and academic gains for students. Hord (1997b) notes, "As an organizational arrangement, the professional learning community is seen as a powerful staff-development approach and a potent strategy for school change and improvement."*

- Provide frequent opportunities (e.g., weekly or bimonthly) and support for staff to learn about how to become a Professional Learning Community and focus on student learning and results

## Superintendent's Strategic Plan for High Priority Schools

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- Create expanded PLCs across schools, families of schools (pre-k through grade 12), and Districts through the use of technology (small learning communities and personalized learning environments, magnets, and content area groups utilizing, e.g., video conferencing, pod casts, blogs, and other forms of distance learning and technology driven communication)
- Ensure all teachers are members of content-specific (e.g., mathematics) learning teams that meet regularly (e.g., weekly or bimonthly) to engage in collaborative inquiry toward improved instructional practice to monitor the implementation of the standards based instructional program
  - Learn, and consistently use, effective processes for analyzing qualitative and quantitative data in order to focus on student learning
  - Examine and learn from student work to improve student learning opportunities
  - Examine and learn from observing teaching practice to improve student learning opportunities
  - Examine own practice to determine how instructional choices support and/or impede student learning for all or some students
  - Address the instructional needs of English learners, standard English learners, students with disabilities and all other students
  - Work collaboratively to address students' instructional needs to improve student learning opportunities
- Ensure all teachers are members of small learning community or personalized learning environment teams that meet regularly to engage in collaborative inquiry toward improved instructional practice to
  - Examine own practice to determine how instructional choices support and/or impede student learning for all or some students
  - Address the instructional needs of English learners, standard English learners, students with disabilities and all other students
  - Carry over discussion related to pedagogy and student learning held during content-specific learning teams for application in the small learning community or personalized learning environment
  - Address the application of culturally responsive teaching as a key methodology for scaffolding diverse students' access to core content curricula
- Expand and deepen teacher and administrator understanding and use of research-based, content-appropriate instructional strategies for
  - Pre-teach
  - First teach

- Re-teach
  - Implement the Board adopted resolution, “English Learners: Hope on the Horizon”, (7/10/2007) which calls for a comprehensive plan to meet the needs of English learners, immigrant students, standard English learners, homeless students and all low performing subgroups. This required plan will provide specific action steps to improve instruction for special needs students.
  - Expand and deepen teacher and administrator understanding of and sensitivity to issues of race, class, gender, language and disability and the way they impact classroom instruction and learning opportunities for students
  - Expand and deepen teacher and administrator understanding of content area concepts and skills
  - Expand and deepen teacher and administrator understanding and use of instructional strategies for English learners, standard English Learners, students with disabilities
  - Expand and deepen teacher and administrator understanding and use of instructional strategies for underperforming students including English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities
  - Expand and deepen teacher and administrator understanding and use of best practices for at-risk students
  - Expand and deepen teacher and administrator understanding and use of instructional strategies for gifted students
  - Expand and deepen teacher and administrator understanding and use of project-based learning activities
  - Expand and deepen teacher and administrator understanding and use of portfolios
  - Develop teacher and administrator understanding of the District’s framework for implementing all policies practices and procedures:
    - Vision
    - Mission
    - Curriculum
    - Pedagogy
    - Culturally relevant and linguistically responsive instruction
    - Adult learning
    - High expectations for *all* students
    - Expectations for academic mastery for *all* students
    - Attitude and motivation strategies appropriate to adolescents

***b. Build Capacity Across Roles to Support Effective Teaching (Required)***

***Responsibility: District and School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)***

- Identify and use a set of processes and materials to ensure that those who serve in a coaching and/or supervisory role develop knowledge of and ability to engage in
  - Assessing the quality of instruction provided to English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities
  - Assessing the quality of the learning environment provided English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities
  - Reducing the disproportionate number of African-American students identified as students with disabilities with the eligibility of Emotional Disturbance (Modified Consent Decree, Outcome 4)
  - Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
  - Establishing standards for high quality instruction for English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities and all other students
  - Developing professional learning communities
  - Facilitation
  - Culturally relevant and linguistically responsive instruction
  - Coaching approaches
  - Questioning and Inquiry process
  - Providing formative and summative feedback
  - Classroom observations
- Ensure that administrators, facilitators for learning teams and members of learning teams are trained and supported in developing skills to
  - Build trust
  - Negotiate complex issues which surface multiple points of view
  - Work through disagreements to develop conditions for collaborative culture
  - Develop collaborative adult learning environments

- Ensure that schools have multidisciplinary teams to focus on students at-risk of dropping out of school
  - Develop Coordination of Services Teams (COST) *Coordination of services is a systematic process that collects and reviews a variety of information, identifies problems, develops solutions, creates intervention plans, and utilizes tracking and monitoring procedures to ensure effective delivery of services to students. Coordination of services should be thought of as a process rather than an intervention.*
  - Implement Student Success Teams (SST) *The Student Success Team (SST) process is a strength-based inquiry and treatment pedagogy. It is a problem-solving and coordinating approach that helps students, families, teachers, counselors, and administrators to seek positive solutions for maximizing a student's potential.*
    - Assess existing services to identify service gaps

**c. Build Student Capacity to Self-monitor, Apply Learning Strategies and Sustain Learning (Required)**

**Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)**

- Student Accountability
  - Prepare students to be accountable for their own learning
    - Learn and consistently use effective processes for analyzing qualitative and quantitative data
    - Teach and use effective data processes with students
    - Use rubrics to understand learning expectations and guide own learning
  
- Develop student understanding and skills toward
  - A-G Requirements
  - Passing CAHSEE
  - Reclassification Requirements
  - Self-autonomy
  - Self-advocacy
  - Collaborative and team learning
  - Demonstrating proficiency
  - Student led conferences (*Optional*)

Strategy Three: Leadership

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**Strategy 3: Build school and District leadership teams that share common beliefs, values, and high expectations for all adults and students and that support a cycle of continuous improvement to ensure high-quality instruction in their schools (*Required*)**

**Rationale:** Effective school improvement depends upon individuals and teams having, learning, and exhibiting strong leadership skills honed through professional development; leaders modeling desired behaviors for their colleagues; leaders providing and experiencing mentoring and on-going, meaningful coaching; leaders creating systemic career paths for professionals and implementing comprehensive staffing plans.

**Tactics**

**a. Build Capacity of Administrative and Other School Leaders (*Required*)**

Justification: Transformational leaders need a strongly focused program to define, sharpen and apply critical skill sets in their everyday work with staff, students and stakeholders. Many of our current administrators and other school leaders have had limited experience and focused training to best meet the needs and challenges faced each day. It is essential that the District generate the time and specific training modules to assist these leaders with their development and application of expanded skill sets.

**Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (*Required*)**

- Ensure that administrators are provided with the time and expectation that they will engage in intensive leadership training to improve teaching and learning through the following components
  - Improving the quality of instruction
  - Collaborating with directors, other administrators, teachers, students, parents and community leaders
  - Modeling and coaching so leadership teams can come together to form and perform as a genuine team
  - Assisting in developing school and District meeting schedule and processes to enhance communications with and engagement of the entire school community
  - Sharing of best practices
  - Articulating with families of schools
  - Teambuilding
- Expand and deepen administrators’ understanding and ability to

- Build a shared culture and philosophy of
  - High expectations for all
  - Honesty
  - Trust
  - Ethical behavior
  - Self-discipline
  - Integrity
  - Openness
  - Quality
  - Collaboration
  - Achievement
  - Feedback
  - Internal accountability
  - Reciprocal accountability
- Model instructional leadership
  - Develop and sustain an expectation for improvement in instructional practice by all members of the school community including staff, teachers, students, and parents
- Distribute leadership responsibility and accountability across all members of the school community including staff, teachers, students, and parents
- Provide and require professional development for administrators on
  - Supervision of instruction
    - Assessing the quality of instruction provided to English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities
    - Assessing the quality of the learning environment provided to English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities
    - Quantitative and qualitative data analysis

- Establishing standards for high quality instruction for English learners, standard English learners, and students with disabilities and all other students
- Developing professional learning communities
- Facilitation
- Questioning
- Coaching approaches
- Inquiry process
- Providing formative and summative feedback
- Classroom observations
- Dropout Prevention, Intervention, and Recovery Strategies
  - Understanding how graduation rates are calculated and how they affect API.
  - How to identify and assess students who are exhibiting academic and behavioral indicators of potential school failure
  - Increase knowledge of academic and support systems available such as Diploma Project Advisers
  - Increase awareness of Educational Alternative options for students not finding success at the traditional school
  - The importance of recovering students that have left school without earning a diploma (students on potential dropout lists)
- Evaluation of staff using the District's Stull Evaluation Procedures
- Implementation of all necessary operational matters, differentiating between good management and effective leadership
- Provide coaches for leadership teams
- Promote professional work attire for all administrators, teachers, and staff to serve as role models for students

***b. Create a Career Path and Staffing Plan for Effective School Administrative Leadership (Required)***

***Responsibility: District and School Action Steps to be specified in "Single Plan for Student Achievement" and WASC "Self Study" (Required)***

## Superintendent's Strategic Plan for High Priority Schools

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- Assign Principals and Assistant Principals to high priority schools who possess a clearly defined skill set and experience and who focus on
  - Improving the quality of instruction
  - Creating adult learning communities
  - Engaging the community
  - Fostering school-wide improvement
- Establish career pathways that include multiple experiences with demonstrated candidate capacity to significantly improve student achievement
- Build explicit, formalized non-administrative paths to leadership opportunities for teachers who want to remain teachers
- Build explicit, formalized career and leadership pathways for teachers who do want to become administrators

Strategy Four: Parent and Community Engagement

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**Strategy 4: Build at each school a community of informed and empowered parents, teachers, staff, and community partners who work collaboratively to support high-quality teaching and learning (*Required*)**

**Rationale:** High priority schools with students at-risk benefit from a strong infrastructure of community resources and available services, supportive and informed extended family structures, as well as a melding of school, family, and students into a caring community of learners. Schools must provide environments that invite and nurture parents and other stakeholders to become active partners in their children's learning. The National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs include the areas of Communicating, Parenting, Student Learning, Volunteering, School Decision Making, and Collaborating with the Community.

**Tactics:**

**a. *Move Beyond Parent Involvement to Authentic Parent Engagement (Required)***

Justification: The benefit of engaged parents to student achievement is documented in numerous studies. Decades of research show that when parents are involved students have higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates, better school attendance, increased motivation, better self-esteem, lower rates of suspension, decreased use of drugs and alcohol and fewer instances of violent behavior. In lower performing schools there is a correlation with parents lacking authentic engagement.

**Responsibility: *School Action Steps to be specified in "Single Plan for Student Achievement" and WASC "Self Study" (Required)***

- Expand and deepen administrators' and staffs' knowledge and ability to
  - Create a customer service driven, warm and welcoming environment at the school
  - Interface between internal and external constituents
  - Build at each school a community of informed stakeholders, including parents, teachers, administrators, and the community
  - Create parent accountability to support student learning and academic success
- Implement a variety of modes for improved communication between schools and families
- Provide training and opportunities for parents to
  - Be effective participants in the leadership, governance and decision-making of the school
  - Provide effective support to their children in the learning process including but not limited to the following

- Parent/teacher/student compacts
- Provide ongoing workshops for parents to assist their children in how to navigate through the educational system and reach their goals. (A-G Requirements, College Entrance, Graduation Requirements and Tracking Completion, Career Pathways, Reading a Transcript)

***Responsibility: Options for School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Optional)***

- Create a parent-community liaison position to coordinate volunteers and optimize the sharing of parent and community assets across the entire school community
- Provide a Parent Center and support service personnel to meet the identified needs of the school community with options including but not limited to the following
  - Provide parent classes (adult education, university outreach, community organizations)
  - Expand school based health clinic programs and/or provide mobile medical/dental services
  - Provide CAHSEE information classes for parents
  - Provide courses to enable parents to support the instructional needs of their children such as graduation requirements

***Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)***

- Hold monthly CEAC, ELAC, and SSC meetings that include the understanding, collection, use, and analysis of data
- Ensure School Site Council and other standing school committees are in place, meet regularly, and have adequate parent representation

***Responsibility: Options for School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Optional)***

- Hold twice a year parent conference (guest speakers, workshops, professional development)
- Create a formal parent volunteer program
- Invite parents to school to participate in a classroom lesson at least once each semester to experience how and what students are learning
- Provide “office hours” with posted times for parents and students to meet with teachers, counselors, and administrators
- Provide resource guidebooks listing on and off campus resources
- Provide parents information on the various alternative educational options available to their children

***b. Provide Parent and Community Engagement Support to Teachers and Administrators (Required)***

- Encourage formation and support of 501 (c)(3) independent parent/teacher/student groups such as PTA, PTSA, PTO, Booster Clubs and other parent advisory groups that promote positive interaction between and among parents, faculty and the student body.

***Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)***

- Provide school staff with required training on effective parent engagement, planned and implemented in collaboration with the District Advisory Council, the District English Learner Advisory Committee, and the Parent Collaborative)
- Provide teachers and administrators with an opportunity to learn additional languages and cross cultural communication skills in order to better communicate with students and families
- Make available translation services, both oral and written, that are adequate to meet District-wide requirements
- Implement I-Parent as a component of Integrated Student Information System (ISIS)  
Justification: I-Parent is a portal into ISIS wherein parents can access pertinent student information, e.g. student attendance, student assignments, etc.

***c. Provide Structure for Community-based Support***

Justification: Students who attend low performing schools often benefit from strong infrastructure of resources and available services. There is a correlation between improving student achievement and assuring social service needs are met.

***Responsibility: Options for School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” WASC “Self Study” (Optional)***

- Develop and implement mentor relationships, especially for students who may be in foster homes and other “non-traditional” family settings, to support improved student achievement
- Build partnerships with institutions of higher education to create skill training, certification, advanced course credit opportunities
- Develop, either at the Local or Central district level, a map of community resources, including programs and services provided by all sectors (e.g. map all health care, DMH mental health contractor sites, information on accessing care, etc.)
- Create multi-agency wrap around health and human service and parent service one-stop support environment at each family of schools
- Create events that bring community organizations, service providers, and parents to schools to learn about services in the school and the community
- Create a parent blog on the individual school websites where issues can be addressed
- Partner with organizations that build parent capacity and provide appropriate training

***d. Create a Compact for a Meaningful Partnership with True Parent and Community Engagement***

- The District is committed to and supports and encourages each school to collaboratively create and align its School Parent & Community Involvement & Engagement Policy with Dr. Joyce Epstein's Six Types of Parent Involvement (Appendix D)

***e. Create a Parent Center in each of the High Priority Schools (Required)***

- ***Sample Activities***
  - i.* Assist parents in how to navigate the school system
  - ii.* Support individual and collective parent efforts to address issues and improve conditions on their campuses
  - iii.* Provide space for parent organizations to share ideas and strategies
  - iv.* Act as an information clearinghouse
  - v.* Refer parents to social service agencies

Strategy Five: Physical and Emotional Safety

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**Strategy 5: Build school environments where students and adults are physically and emotionally safe and secure and, as a result, where learning opportunities and personal achievement can be optimized for all (Required)**

**Rationale:** School environments must be safe and secure at all times so that staff and students have the appropriate setting for effective teaching, learning, and co-curricular activities. Students need to be in school on a regular basis and on time so as to maximize their learning, to develop personal discipline, and to be prepared for workforce demands.

**Tactics:**

*a. Engage People in Productive and Supportive School Cultures that demonstrate respect for all (Required)*

**Responsibility: District and School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)**

- Build relationships and sense of ownership for *all* students’ learning for the members of the Board of Education, the Local District Superintendents and Central Office administrators, remembering that the individual and collective environment of emotional and physical safety is modeled by all of our behaviors, including those at the top of the organization
- Support administrators, teachers, staff, students, and parents in identifying and solving safety issues and receiving training to address safety issues
- Develop and implement a school to home connection with foster and group homes that will provide a safety net for the students and provide immediate information to new sites if the students move around within the district

**Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)**

- Fully implement the LAUSD District Foundation Policy: School-wide Positive Behavior Support (adopted 03/07) at school site level
- Fully implement Dropout Prevention and Recovery Strategies (bulletin 3720.0)
- Fully implement behavioral support strategies and alternatives to suspension for at risk learners (Modified Consent Decree, Outcome 5)
- Fully implement the Consolidated Safe and Healthy School Plan (CSHS Rev. 07/07) at school site level
- Integrate students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers (Modified Consent Decree, Outcome 6 & 7)

## Superintendent's Strategic Plan for High Priority Schools

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- Improve student and staff attendance
- Design and implement protocols that ensure seamless, articulated transitions for students from elementary to middle and from middle to high school
- Address conflicts that underlie the interactions among students and between students and adults
- Include timely and clear information processes so that adults who have referred students out for services receive communication of where the student is in the process
- Provide structured advisory periods
- Move the role of counselors beyond “student program schedulers” by having them team with teachers to promote the mental health and social well-being of students
- Develop and implement
  - Human relations programs (be certain to address issues of stereotyping, bias, and diversity), and race relations programs
  - Effective relationships/expectations between school police and school staffs

***Responsibility: Options for School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Optional)***

- Redesign the process and delivery of student support services, including communications and coordination, roles and responsibilities
- Ensure adequate safety and security personnel, identified by uniform with defined roles
  - Security guards
  - Campus aides
- Require student uniforms

***b. Seek additional partners to expand services and supports to schools***

***Responsibility: District and School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)***

- Develop a student mentoring program with community partners that include private sector organizations

## Superintendent's Strategic Plan for High Priority Schools

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- Assign adults – including community/business volunteers/mentors – to students who will continue with them through their high school career
- Engage private sector organizations and businesses to formally align with LAUSD's small learning communities
- Work with the City and County to ensure safe student passage to and from school

Strategy Six: Organizational and Support Structures

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**Strategy 6: Design and implement District and school organizational and support structures to improve school performance  
(Required)**

**Rationale:** The district needs to provide adequate and timely support to the schools and to the students in order to ensure that the school site plans, new strategies and tactics are implemented fully, and that progress is measured and reported on a scheduled basis.

**Tactics:**

**a. Implement Organizational Structures that Support Teaching and Learning**

**Responsibility: District Action Steps (Required)**

**Overarching District Governing Structure (Required)**

- The schools remain in the Local District “family of schools” to assure articulation, coordination, and ongoing support as provided by the Local Districts. Pre-K through grade 12 articulation and transition programs will be strengthened and/or implemented.
- A supervisory ratio of 1:2 or 1:3 (director to principals) shall be established and dedicated to these schools
  - Build the capacity of principals to provide leadership that leads to improved teaching and student learning
  - Work in a close, collaborative and supervisory relationship with each school to assure that the SPSA plans are customized for each school based on the differential needs of each school and all plans are implemented
  - Ensure the specific needs of the school are met by working directly with identified point people in each major department (e.g., procurement, human resources, maintenance, professional development) in Central Office and Local District for specific on-demand, and on-time services to be delivered
- Appoint a Senior Deputy Superintendent to
  - Build the capacity of Local District Superintendents to provide leadership to principals that leads to improved teaching and student learning
  - Lead, coordinate, and supervise the Local District Superintendents through implementation and accountability of the District and school reforms on a daily basis
  - Establish growth models and standards in each of the High Priority schools with individualized metrics used to measure progress

- Use objectives that are measurable to monitor each school
- Report progress of the schools in the District to the community and General Superintendent on a quarterly basis

### **School Level Structure (*Required*)**

#### ***Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)***

- Fully implement Small Learning Communities and Personal Learning Environments at the school sites
- Implement a high priority schools staffing program at all identified schools
- Ensure consistency of selection of highly qualified teachers, administrators and staff
  - Stakeholders, faculty, staff, parents, and students participate in interviews of prospective school administrators
- Ensure stability of high performing teachers, administrators, and staff
- Ensure all positions are filled with highly qualified and effective personnel on a timely basis, avoiding vacancies

#### ***Responsibility: Options for School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Optional)***

- Create a classified position that functions as a Business Manager, where appropriate, to handle operational support at school sites  
Justification: Some principals in complex schools spend an inordinate amount of time on operational issues other than instruction. A business manager could provide some relief in this area.
- Provide for the differentiated staffing and support of High Priority schools along a continuum of school needs

### ***b. Use Time to Support Teaching and Learning***

#### ***Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)***

- Structure meeting time for teachers who share students to ensure that they can work collaboratively to address the emotional, behavioral, and instructional needs of students
  
- Ensure building administrators, staff, and teachers are on site during school day and off campus infrequently

**Responsibility: Options for School Action Steps to be specified in Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Optional)**

- Provide for flexibility in the school calendar, bell schedule, and collaboration time for teachers, appropriate to the school site needs
  - Early or staggered starting times
  - Block scheduling
  - Mandatory coaching days
  - 4X4 scheduling
  - Multiple lunch periods
- Provide extended day opportunities for but not limited to the following
  - Professional development
  - Teacher collaboration
  - Parent engagement
- Ensure that students are provided with maximum learning time by
  - Ending the year-round schedule, where possible (Include utilizing available space at neighboring schools)
  - Implementing multi-flex schedules (school days that begin and end at different times for different sets of students)
  - Extending the school day so as to reduce class sizes in core areas
  - Extending the school year to reduce learning loss
  - Scheduling organized athletics after school in order to avoid taking students out of class during the day
  - Providing multiple opportunities for intervention by scheduling it before, during, and after school
  - Implementing 9th grade houses, where feasible, for students to have the personalized attention they need for attention to their learning needs
  - Providing a formal transition program for all entering 6th and 9th grade students at all middle and high schools

**c. Implement Organizational Structures to Support Teaching and Learning**

**Responsibility: School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)**

- Implement the Dropout Recovery Program for middle and high school students (Modified Consent Decree, Outcomes 3 & 4)

***Responsibility: Options for School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Optional)***

- Provide department chairs with a period off in order for them to provide academic support
- Provide full-time school support personnel such as nurses, school psychologists, PSA Counselors, and Diploma Project Advisors to support students at-risk
- Improve counselor ratios to students with special attention to the needs of English learners, standard English learner, students with disabilities, and at-risk students
- Provide new teachers with mentors to assist them in achieving excellence as quickly as possible
- Provide coordinators at each school to assist in the collection and use of data to improve instruction and student learning and achievement
- Design and implement protocols that ensure seamless, articulated transitions for students from elementary school to middle school and middle school to high school

***d. Provide Facilities that Support Teaching and Learning***

***Responsibility: District and School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)***

- Provide on-time, on demand maintenance and operations response and completion times
- Improve condition of facilities
- Ensure custodial staff maintain the cleanliness of the school campus

***Responsibility: Options for School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Optional)***

- Create local schools of choice (satellite small learning communities, super magnets, small schools) to reduce overcrowding in schools by attracting students to locations where feasible
- Increase availability of athletic facilities to support after school sports events and practices

**e. Ensure the Strategic Use of Financial Resources are anchored in the Strategic Plan for High Priority Schools**

***Responsibility: District and School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)***

- Make the budget/spending reports transparent to stakeholders
- Align all sources of revenue with priorities in the Strategic Plan for High Priority Schools

**f. Use Technology to Support Learning and Promote Organizational Effectiveness**

***Responsibility: District and School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)***

- Use available data systems to collect data to identify and serve at-risk students
- Develop a student tracking mechanism to accurately measure the number of students graduating
  - Fully implement ISIS to track students pre-K through Adult School
  - Provide professional development to ensure accurate input of student data

***Responsibility: Options for School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Optional)***

- Provide a telecommunications system that enables school administrators and teachers to provide specific information to parents in a timely manner
- Use I-Parent component of ISIS to communicate with parents
- Use technology more to support instruction, including the possibility of distance learning opportunities

## Strategy Seven: Performance Reporting, Accountability, and Incentives

### **Strategy 7: Design and implement systems of reporting, accountability, and incentives as ways to measure outcomes and promote continuous improvement (*Required*)**

**Rationale:** There is a critical need to attract and maintain strong, effective staff and to provide the necessary incentives to assist with the recruitment, retention and professional growth of staff at these priority schools. Progress needs to be measured against specified targets so as to assure that the schools are meeting expectations and standards set at the federal, state, and district levels. Frequent reporting of the schools' progress toward meeting their set targets makes the process of accountability transparent to the stakeholders. The quarterly reporting system allows for mid course corrections and long term growth.

#### **Tactics:**

##### **a. Build on and Ensure the Use of Systems of Reporting and Accountability (*Required*)**

*Justification: The cornerstone of this plan is the development of school specific indicators of progress with measurable targets and regular, quarterly public reporting of the school's status. Currently, no such specific, quarterly, transparent reporting system is in effect. Analysis of data, the ongoing modification of action steps based on the data, and monitoring student and school progress while providing feedback to stakeholders ensures a focus on results and the processes leading to those results.*

##### **Responsibility: District Action Steps (*Required*)**

- Report publicly, on a quarterly basis, the progress of each school on specific indicators of achievement pertinent to the school single plan (supported by the Division of Accountability and System-wide Performance)
- Develop accountability measures/indicators for each school that will use qualitative and quantitative data to measure change in teaching and learning (supported by the Performance Measurement and Accountability System)
  - Internal, reciprocal, and external forms of accountability will be applied
  - Data to be examined may include but will not be limited to
    - Instruction
    - Professional learning opportunities for adults
    - School environment
    - Parent opportunities for engagement
    - Community engagement

- Graduation data disaggregated by all subgroups
  - CAHSEE disaggregated by all subgroups
  - California Standards Test disaggregated by all subgroups
  - Course availability for A-G
  - Lunch participation rates and student satisfaction
- Develop accountability measures/indicators of impact for the partnering agencies whom LAUSD engages for support (supported by the Performance Measurement and Accountability System)
  - Define the standards for determining successful mastery of content/skills and to learn multiple ways to demonstrate mastery (provided by the Research and Evaluation Branch and the Division of Accountability and System-wide Performance)
  - Create an accountability system to measure the effectiveness of parent engagement (provided by the Division of Accountability and System-wide Performance)
  - Develop a system to track the causes and consequences of teacher attrition to survey and report on the conditions of teaching in LAUSD High Priority schools leading to attrition at school sites
  - Develop and implement recommendations on how to improve the conditions for effective teaching and retention on teachers at the High Priority Schools (provided by the Research and Evaluation Branch and the Division of Accountability and System-wide Performance)

***Responsibility: District and School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)***

- Utilize ongoing multiple assessments and data analysis to inform decisions and practices to address the learning needs of all students. The multiple data sources include formal and informal assessments, formative and summative assessments, reflection, observation, and dialogue
- Expect, support, and monitor a continuous cycle of improvement, and include evaluation as part of the teaching/learning process (supported by the Performance Measurement and Accountability System)

***b. Attract and Retain Personnel – Administrators***

*Justification: The current average length of tenure for secondary principals in the high priority schools is less than 4 years. The average amount of experience as an administrator prior to the principal position is less than 5 years. There is a need for highly experienced principals who have demonstrated success in improving lower performing schools. There is a need for sustained commitment and on-going record of the success in the school*

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*so as to bring continuity to the school site. The role of principal of a high priority school is exceptionally challenging. To attract and retain the type of individuals to lead these schools, there is a need for an aggressive campaign of recruitment, incentives, and rewards.*

### ***Responsibility: District Action Steps (Required)***

- Recruit administrators
  - Provide incentives that attract highly-qualified and experienced principals who have demonstrated significant improvements in secondary schools
    - Recommended:* \$5,000 “signing” bonus for newly appointed principals
  - Place all Principals and Assistant Principals at High Priority Schools on A-basis to allow ample time for planning, preparation, and curriculum development
- Retain administrators
  - Provide incentives to ensure that the principal maintains a long-term commitment to the school
    - Recommended:* \$5,000 bonus at the end of three years of continual service and a \$3,000 bonus at the end of five years as a principal at a High Priority School
    - Assuming satisfactory progress on District-identified performance indicators
- Additional incentives for administrators
  - Tuition Reimbursement
    - Tuition Reimbursement for administrators at a High Priority School who enroll in and earn a doctorate in an education-related degree at an accredited university and program
      - Recommended:* a flat rate, up to \$6,000, payable in three steps:
        - \$2,000 at the start of the degree program, with verification of enrollment
        - \$2,000 at advancement to candidacy, with verification from the university
        - \$2,000 at graduation, with diploma verification

### *Conditions:*

- The University program must be approved in advance
- A satisfactory grade level must be maintained

- Continuous matriculation must be demonstrated
- Remain in the High Priority School for a minimum of three years; if the administrator leaves the High Priority School before the completion of three years (unless reassigned by LAUSD), for another LAUSD school, 50% must be repaid; if the administrator leaves the District, 100% must be repaid to LAUSD

### **c. Attract and Retain Personnel – Teachers**

*Justification: There is a need to assure that each school has highly qualified, highly effective teachers in all subject areas with a passion to serve in lower-performing and challenging school. Further it is essential that there is stability in the staffing with limited turnover and absenteeism in order to sustain school improvement, to build relationships between and among staff, students, and the community. This type of environment builds a culture of trust, respect and collaboration that is cultivated over time and with continuous interactions. Currently the high priority schools are characterized by frequent turnover of staff, individuals who may not be highly qualified to teach a core subject or may not be well trained or well-matched to teach in a high priority school's culture. To attract and retain the type of individuals to teach in these schools, there is a need for an aggressive campaign of recruitment, incentives, mentoring, and rewards. In addition, the requirements of the Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) include teacher experience targets. (Appendix E)*

### **Responsibility: District Action Steps (Required)**

- Expand the Priority Staffing Program to all High Priority Schools
- Ensure consistency of selection of highly qualified teachers, administrators and staff
- Ensure stability of high performing teachers, administrators, and staff
- Ensure all positions are filled with highly qualified and effective personnel on a timely basis, avoiding vacancies
- Provide incentives that attract highly-qualified teachers in critical areas of need in all schools in High Priority Schools
  - \$5,000 “signing” bonus for teachers with specialties in mathematics, science, and special education in all schools in low-performing status
- Provide incentives that retain highly-qualified teachers in critical areas of need
  - *Recommended:* \$5,000 bonus at the end of three years of continual service and who have demonstrated success as a teacher at a High Priority School
  - Additional Incentives for Teachers
    - Tuition Reimbursement
    - Tuition Reimbursement for teachers at a HPS who enroll in and earn a doctorate in an education-related degree at an accredited university and program

*Recommended:* a flat rate, up to \$6,000, payable in three steps:

- \$2,000 at the start of the degree program, with verification of enrollment
- \$2,000 at advancement to candidacy, with verification from the university
- \$2,000 at graduation, with diploma verification

*Conditions:*

- The University program must be approved in advance
- A satisfactory grade level must be maintained
- Continuous matriculation must be demonstrated
- Remain in the HPS for a minimum of three years; if the teacher leaves the HPS before the completion of three years (unless reassigned by LAUSD), for another LAUSD school, 50% must be repaid; if the teacher leaves the District, 100% must be repaid to LAUSD

***d. Implement school-wide incentives and recognition programs for all personnel, i.e., administrators, teachers, administrative staff, aides, cafeteria workers, custodians, students, parents, etc.***

*Justification: Stakeholders who through their actions exemplify a commitment to excellence and a steadfast and measurable advancement of the strategies and tactics in the High Priority Schools Strategic Plan will be publicly recognized for their dedication and hard work.*

***Responsibility: District and School Action Steps to be specified in “Single Plan for Student Achievement” and WASC “Self Study” (Required)***

- Create models of recognition programs
  - Acknowledge, celebrate and reward schools and stakeholders who meet and/or exceed the school's annual indicators of progress
  - Acknowledge, celebrate and reward schools and stakeholders who make substantial progress towards meeting goals in their Single Plans for Student Achievement

## Conclusion

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As stated in the Introduction, school improvement is a difficult process, requires hard work, and takes time. It is a student by student, classroom by classroom, grade by grade, school by school endeavor. A work plan, such as this Strategic Plan – and I am aware that there have been many – is only as valid and meaningful as how the plan is implemented, fully with painstaking attention to detail, and with full transparency and reporting of successes and misses. What distinguishes this plan from so many other well intentioned efforts must be its implementation and capacity building at the school sites and Local Districts so as to maintain the efforts relentlessly and to assure the resources are adequate and sustainable.

One of the options available to high priority schools who are in PI 5 status is a restructuring of their school governance. LAUSD's Innovation Division (iDivision) was established in June 2007 as alternative governance and operating structure, based on school site decision making and high accountability, for a limited number of schools who choose to move from the local district structure to the iDivision. On December 12, 2007 six of the identified high priority schools, staff and stakeholders, voted affirmatively to become part of the iDivision. These schools will be directed by Network partners and not be subject to the provisions of the Strategic Plan. The attached Appendix G articulates the essential elements of the iDivision and demonstrates the similarities and differences of iDivision Schools, High Priority Schools, Charters and Pilot Schools.

In January 2008, work will begin on the strategic plan to improve student achievement in the pre K – grade 5 schools. The seven strategies in the High Priority Schools Plan shall be used as the guiding framework for developing the tactics to be used in addressing the needs of the pre K – grade 5 schools throughout the district. It is expected that the plan shall be completed in May 2008 after a thorough needs assessment has been completed and with extensive input from all stakeholders.

The schools, Local District Superintendents, the Central Office support and leadership staff as well as the Board need to face the future together – mutually supporting, interdependent, and accountable. Without a tightly coupled and collaborative relationship, implementation and success will be spotty. Going forward in a unified manner to improve the conditions for teaching and learning in our schools as a whole is imperative. The outcomes are our legacy. Together we go forward to the future. Otherwise, we default to the status quo. This is non-negotiable.

**Appendix A**  
**High Priority Schools**

<b>High Schools</b>	<b>API 2007</b>	<b>PI Status</b>
Bell Senior High	580	5*H
Belmont Senior High	524	5***
Crenshaw Senior High	524	5***
Dorsey (Susan Miller) Senior High	514	5***
Fremont (John C.) Senior High	492	5*****
Garfield (James A.) Senior High	553	5***
Huntington Park Senior High	543	5***
Jefferson (Thomas) Senior High	457	5*****
Jordan (David Starr) Senior High	526	5***
Lincoln (Abraham) Senior High	593	5**
Los Angeles Senior High	549	5***
Manual Arts Senior High	513	5***
Roosevelt (Theodore) Senior High	557	5*****
South Gate Senior High	565	5
Sylmar Senior High	587	5***
Washington (George) Preparatory High		5***
Wilson (Woodrow) Senior High	582	5*****

<b>Middle Schools</b>	<b>API 2007</b>	<b>PI</b>
Audubon Middle	568	5***
Bethune (Mary McLeod) Middle	570	5***
Carver (George Washington) Middle	549	5***
Clay (Henry) Middle	535	4
Cochran Middle	580	5*****
Drew (Charles) Middle	522	5***
Edison (Thomas A.) Middle	542	5
Gage (Henry T.) Middle	561	5***
Gompers (Samuel) Middle	541	5*****
Harte (Bret) Preparatory Intermediate	557	5***
Hollenbeck Middle	589	5***
Los Angeles Academy Middle	578	5***
Mann (Horace) Junior High	521	5*****
Markham (Edwin) Middle	519	5***
Muir (John) Middle	552	5***
Stevenson (Robert Louis) Middle	593	4
Virgil Middle	585	5***

## Appendix B Facilities

### Summary

The New School Construction Program is a multi-year capital improvement program that is the major component of Los Angeles Unified School District's mission to create neighborhood schools and relieve overcrowding by ending involuntary busing and returning students to a traditional two-semester calendar. The program will deliver over 132 new schools and 66 additions by 2012. To date, the New School Construction Program has completed 68 new schools and 57 additions. State and local bond measures as well as other funding sources finance this program.

Twenty-three of the schools that are to receive long-term relief from their multi-track calendars are also "High Priority Schools" due to their PI5 status. All twenty-three reside in five of the eight local Districts. Over the past two weeks, Planning and Development held meetings to identify any short-term opportunities that would allow any of the multi-track High Priority Schools to convert to a traditional two-semester calendar by the 2008/2009 academic year until the long-term relief was constructed. The meetings were attended by the local District superintendent, the local District directors of education, School Management Services, Master Planning and Demographics, Existing Facilities and New Construction. In all, only five such opportunities exist. The results summarized below.

### Local District 3

Previous discussions with Local District 3 administrators have taken place to help L.A. High School achieve a single track calendar.

- L.A. HS (-732)

- The Innovation Fund will set aside \$300,000 to help fund the creation of an SLC for L.A. HS on the campus of Wilshire Crest ES. The initial estimate for this project is \$1.1 million dollars.
- This SLC will house up to 150 students, solving for part of L.A. High School's seat shortage.
- An additional (-580) are needed to take L.A. High School to single track.
- Through boundary changes with surrounding high schools, such as Fairfax HS or Crenshaw HS, L.A. High School could potentially go single track.

### NEXT STEPS

- Existing Facilities is working with Local District 3 to bring this project to the board and execute this plan. The Innovation Fund is a participant on this project.
- Existing Facilities will consult with School Management Services Master Planning and Demographics to assess whether the boundary changes can be achieved.

### Local District 4

Meeting took place October 18, 2007

- Reviewed Belmont HS; Franklin HS; Virgil MS
  - Belmont HS (-797)
  - Franklin HS (-200)
  - Virgil MS (-475)
  
- If Vista Hermosa opens with 2,500 seats then Belmont HS, reconfigured for 6<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup> grades can potentially go single track.
- Staff will need to evaluate the number of kids in the area that opt out with permits (PWT) to ensure that there are enough seats set aside in case those students return to the Belmont HS and/or Vista Hermosa HS attendance areas.
- Additionally, Virgil MS can potentially go single track if the 6<sup>th</sup> and maybe 7<sup>th</sup> graders attend Belmont Secondary School.
- Franklin HS may get relief through boundary changes with Lincoln HS, when Lincoln HS gets relief from Central LA HS #9 (450 North Grand site).
- Although unpopular, Franklin HS can also go single track if the magnet program is relocated to another site.

### NEXT STEPS

- Local District 4 staff and LDFD will walk the Belmont HS campus to assess what improvement need to take place to accommodate middle school students.
- Local District 4 staff will follow up with School Management and Master Planning and Demographics to assess whether boundary changes can be achieved for Franklin HS.

**Local District 5**

Meeting took place October 15, 2007

- Reviewed Garfield HS; Jefferson HS; Lincoln HS; Roosevelt HS; Santee HS; Carver MS; Hollenbeck MS; L.A. Academy MS; and Stevenson MS
  - Garfield HS (-1755)
  - Jefferson HS (+115)
  - Lincoln HS (-206)
  - Roosevelt HS (-1440)
  - Santee HS (-1469)
  - Carver MS (-574)
  - Hollenbeck MS (-149)
  - L.A. Academy MS (-540)
  - Stevenson MS (-359)
  
- There are no facilities solutions or opportunities to bring any of these schools to a single-track calendar by 2008-2009.
- Staff discussed an instructional calendar option of providing a morning and afternoon programs however; it is not a favorable solution for Local District 5.

**NEXT STEPS:**

None

### Local District 6

Meeting took place October 16, 2007

- Reviewed Bell HS; Huntington Park HS; and Gage MS
  - Bell HS (-1755)
  - Huntington Park HS (-1635)
  - Gage MS (-758)
- There are no facilities solutions or opportunities to bring any of these schools to a single-track calendar by 2008-2009.
- The Local District staff discussed the pros and cons for Bell HS and Huntington Park HS to have two administrations, one for Track A and another for Tracks B & C, and operate two schools on the campus at different times of the year, with a slight over-lap during part of the school year.
- Gage MS will get relief in 2010 and then again in 2012
- Local District 6 staff inquired whether secondary school charters could potentially provide for additional seats in the short term to allow for the LAUSD schools to go single track next year.

#### NEXT STEPS:

None

**Local District 7**

Meeting took place October 18, 2007

- Reviewed Fremont HS, Manual Arts HS, Bethune MS, Drew MS, Edison MS, and Muir MS
  - Fremont HS (-1816)
  - Manual Arts HS (-1209)
  - Bethune MS (-607)
  - Drew MS (-673)
  - Edison MS (-402)
  - Muir MS (-540)
  
- There are no facilities solutions or opportunities to bring Fremont HS; Manual Arts HS; Bethune MS; Drew MS; and Edison MS to a single-track calendar by 2008-2009.
  
- OPTION 1: Muir MS can expand its campus to the adjacent Budlong ES as long as the charter school currently housed at the Budlong ES campus is noticed a year in advance and relocated elsewhere.
  - The Parks/Huerta PC can potentially house all of the Kinder and 1<sup>st</sup> graders from Budlong; Budlong ES can serve 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, and then Muir MS can extend onto that campus to serve 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>.

**NEXT STEPS:**

- Local District 7 staff and LDFD will visit the Muir MS, Budlong ES, and Parks/Huerta PC sites to address the scope and budget of OPTION 2.

## Six Types of Parent Involvement

Adapted from Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D., et. al., John Hopkins University

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### 1) PARENTING

**GOAL:** *Help all families establish home environments to support children as students.*

- a) Provide workshops and trainings on parenting and child-rearing at each age and grade level
  - b) Provide parent education and other courses or training for parents (e.g. GED, college credit, family literacy, CAHSEE coaching, ESL, citizenship, )
  - c) Coordinate family support programs to assist families with health, nutrition, and other services
  - d) Coordinate home visits for at-risk students at transition points from elementary to middle to high school
  - e) Conduct neighborhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families
  - f) Provide information to all families who want it or who need it, not just to the few who can attend workshops or meetings at the school building
  - g) Enable families to share information with schools about culture, background, children's talents and needs
  - h) Conduct classes on "21<sup>st</sup> Century Parenting Skills" such as how to develop boundaries, parent-child communication, identifying risk factors such as drugs and gang involvement.
- 

### 2) COMMUNICATING

**GOAL:** *Communications about school programs and student progress to mean two-way, three-way and many-way channels of communication that connect schools, families, students and the community.*

- a) Ensure that all information for and from families is clear, usable and aligned to children's success in school
  - b) Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.
  - c) Establish clear two-way channels for communications from home to school and from school to home
    - i) Review the quality of major communications (newsletters, report cards, conference schedules and so on)
    - ii) Review the readability, clarity, form and frequency of all memos, notices and other print and non-print communications
    - iii) Consider the needs of parents who do not speak English well, do not read well or are physically impaired
    - iv) Always consider and respect cultural diversity and sensitivity
    - v) Employ all means available in communication, including but not limited to meetings, mail, telephone, e-mail, the Internet, The Parent Press, a parent blog, podcasts; traditional news, broadcast and print media and KLCS - employing translation to outreach to all parents.
- 

### 3) VOLUNTEERING

**GOAL:** *Recruit and organize parent help and support. "Volunteer" to mean anyone who supports school goals and children's learning or development in any way, at any place and at any time—not just during the school day and at the school building.*

- a) Recruit volunteers widely so that all families know that their time and talents are welcome and valued.

## Superintendent's Strategic Plan for High Priority Schools

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- b) Create flexible schedules for volunteers, assemblies and events to enable parents who work to participate
- c) Organize volunteer work; providing training; matching time and talent with school,
- d) Define teacher and student needs; and recognizing efforts so that participants are productive.

**i) Sample Practices:**

- (1) Parent Center with staff liaison and an operating budget for volunteer work, meetings, trainings and resources for families (required)
- (2) Encourage formation and support of 501(c)(3) independent parent groups such as PTA, PTO and Booster Clubs
- (3) School and classroom volunteer program to help teachers, administrators, students and other parents
- (4) Annual survey at the school, aligning to a district wide survey to identify all available talents, times and locations of volunteers - as well as needs and suggestions
- (5) Class parent, telephone tree or other structures to provide all families with needed information
- (6) Parent patrols or other activities to aid safety and operation of school programs

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### 4) LEARNING AT HOME

**GOAL: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.**

- a) *"Homework" to mean not only work done alone, but also interactive activities shared with others at home or in the community, linking schoolwork to real life*
- b) *"Help" at home to mean encouraging, listening, reacting, praising, guiding, monitoring and discussing-not "teaching" school subjects*
  - i) Design and organize with parents and teachers a regular schedule of interactive homework (e.g. weekly or bimonthly) that gives students responsibility for discussing important things they are learning and helps families stay aware of the content of their children's class work
  - ii) Coordinate family linked homework activities if students have several teachers
  - iii) Involve families and their children in all-important curriculum-related decisions
    - (1) Sample Practices
      - (a) Information for families on skills required for students in all subjects at each grade
      - (b) Information on homework policies and how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home
      - (c) Information on how to assist students to improve skills on various class and school
      - (d) assessments
      - (e) Regular schedule of homework that requires students to discuss and interact with
      - (f) families on what they are learning in class
      - (g) Calendars with activities for parents and students at home
      - (h) Family math, science and reading activities at school
      - (i) Summer learning packets or activities
      - (j) Family participation in setting student goals each year and in planning for college or work

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### 5) DECISION MAKING

**GOAL: Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.**

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- a) *“Decision-making” to mean a process of partnership, of shared views and actions toward shared goals, not just a power struggle between conflicting ideas*
- b) *Parent “leader” to mean a real representative with opportunities and support to hear from and communicate with other families, and to make decisions based on school data.*
  - i) Include parent leaders from all racial, ethnic, socioeconomic and other groups in the school.
  - ii) Offer training to enable leaders to serve as representatives of other families, with input from and return of information to all parents.
  - iii) Include students (along with parents) in decision-making groups.
  - iv) Develop parent leaders and representatives
    - (1) Sample Practices
      - (a) Elect, train, operate and empower School Site Councils as decision making bodies required in the Ed Code.
      - (b) Schedule meetings of School Site Councils, School Based Management and Shared Decision Making Councils at time convenient to parent representatives - making such meeting consecutive if possible - and combining the bodies into a single campus council where this makes sense.
      - (c) Encourage and support active PTA/PTSA/PTO or other parent advisory organizations, advisory councils or committees (e.g. curriculum, safety, personnel) for parent leadership and participation
      - (d) Encourage and support Independent advocacy groups to lobby and work for school reform and improvements
      - (e) Encourage and support District level councils and committees for family and community involvement such as the Parent Collaborative, District Advisory Councils on Title One, English Language Learners and Special Education.
      - (f) Invite and involvement parents in Local District and District advisory and study and policy development committees.
      - (g) Share Information on school or local elections with school parent representatives
      - (h) Create and support Networks to link all families with parent representatives
      - (i) Involve Parent Representatives in the Superintendent's Cabinet.

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### 6) COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY

**GOAL: *Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.***

- a) *The Self Evident Truth is that Schools Are Centers off their Communities, Each Reflects the Culture and Values of the Other. When we build Schools, we build communities - and vice versa.*
  - i) *“Community” means not only the neighborhoods where students’ homes and schools are located but also any neighborhoods that influence their learning and development*
  - ii) *“Communities” are rated not only by low or high social or economic qualities, but by strengths and talents to support students, families and schools*
  - iii) *“Community” means all who are interested in and affected by the quality of education, not just those with children in the schools*
    - (1) Collaboratively solve turf problems of responsibilities, funds, staff and locations for collaborative activities
    - (2) Inform families of community programs for students such as mentoring, tutoring and business partnerships
    - (3) Assure equity of opportunities for students and families to participate in community programs or to obtain services

- (4) Match, complement and leverage community contributions with school goals - integrating child and family services with education
- (a) Sample Practices**
- (i) Shared information for students and families on community health, cultural, recreational, social support and other programs or services
  - (ii) Shared Information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students
  - (iii) Service integration through partnerships involving school, civic, counseling, cultural, health, recreation and other agencies and organizations and businesses
  - (iv) Service to the community by students, families and schools (e.g. recycling, art, music, drama and other activities for seniors or others)
  - (v) Participation of alumni in school programs for students

**This adaptation was compiled with input from the LAUSD Parent Collaborative – representing parents from across the District. It is meant to be the beginning of meaningful collaboration that will result in a true partnership between and among district personnel, students, parents and the community which will ultimately lead to improved student achievement in the high priority schools and all schools in the District.**

## Appendix D

### Common Characteristics of High Performing Schools: What the Research Tells Us

1. Clear and Shared Focus
2. High Standards and Expectations
3. Effective School Leadership
4. High Levels of Collaboration and Communication
5. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards
6. Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning
7. Focused Professional Development
8. Supportive Learning Environment
9. High Levels of Community and Parent Involvement

Becoming a high-performing school takes many years of hard work. There is no silver bullet - no single thing a school can do to ensure high student performance. Research has found that high-performing schools have a number of common characteristics. A school may be doing well in some areas but need help in others.

Nine characteristics are discussed in the following resource list following the brief descriptions of the common characteristics of high performing schools. This resource list provides the names of key websites, books, reports, and articles that can be used to help schools improve in each of the characteristics of high-performing schools.

The resources in this list address the key characteristics of high-performing schools. They provide an effective starting point for busy educators, parents and partners who have limited time for reading. These resources are also useful for school study groups.

### **A Clear and Shared Focus**

Everybody knows where they are going and why. The focus is on achieving a shared vision, and all understand their role in achieving the vision. The focus and vision are developed from common beliefs and values, creating a consistent direction for all involved.

#### **SAMPLE INDICATORS:**

- All participants can articulate the common purpose.
- The use of time, materials, and professional development activities are aligned with common focus.
- Learning goals are developed and prioritized according to district guidelines.
- There is a commitment to long-range, continuous improvement.
- The common focus is directly related to assignment of staff time and resource allocation.
- All staff can articulate how the school is improving student learning.
- Staff study test results and establish a plan to attack areas of weakness.
- Professional development reflects the National Staff Development Council Standards.
- There is a sustained emphasis on learning.

### High Standards and Expectations

Teachers and staff believe that all students can learn and meet high standards. While recognizing that some students must overcome significant barriers, these obstacles are not seen as insurmountable. Students are offered an ambitious and rigorous course of study.

#### **SAMPLE INDICATORS:**

- Instruction is focused on high expectations that implements powerful teaching and learning strategies including action inquiry, in-depth learning, and performance assessments.
- Instruction is focused on high expectations that implements powerful teaching and learning strategies including action inquiry, in-depth learning, and performance assessments.
- Staff is consistent and purposeful in cross-grade-level conversations that result in an alignment of the curriculum within and among the content areas.
- Staff focuses on commonalities that cut across grades and subjects.
- All students participate in and can master academically rigorous courses.
- There is a clear link between student assessment and instructional activities.
- Teachers focus on competence, not coverage.
- Students are aware of expectations, produce quality work, and present to real audiences.
- Expectations connect to the real world, and students are role models and peer educators.
- Staff and students articulate their belief in their capacity for success.
- Instruction is personalized and encompasses a broad, concerted, and systematic emphasis on motivation as well as knowledge and skills.
- All participants can articulate the common purpose.

- The use of time, materials, and professional development activities are aligned with common focus.
- Learning goals are developed and prioritized according to district guidelines.
- There is a commitment to long-range, continuous improvement.
- The common focus is directly related to assignment of staff time and resource allocation.
- All staff can articulate how the school is improving student learning.
- Staff study test results and establish a plan to attack areas of weakness.
- Professional development reflects the National Staff Development Council Standards.
- There is a sustained emphasis on learning.

### **Effective School Leadership**

Effective instructional and administrative leadership is required to implement change processes. Effective leaders are proactive and seek help that is needed. They also nurture an instructional program and school culture conducive to learning and professional growth. Effective leaders can have different styles and roles-teachers and other staff, including those in the district office, often have a leadership role.

#### **SAMPLE INDICATORS:**

##### **Administrative Leaders**

Facilitate the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

- Advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
- Ensure management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective

learning environment.

- Collaborate with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
- Act with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
- Understand, respond to, and influence the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.
- Facilitate development and implementation of the school improvement plan with aligned professional development that supports vision and operational philosophy.

### **Teacher Leaders**

- Use research-based instructional program models researched-based practices.
- Model team learning approach with a focus on planning lessons, assessing students, and group problem solving. Mentor other teachers.
- Support a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
- Collaborate with parents, families, and other community members involved in the student learning environment.

### **Student Leaders**

- Students work to remove barriers to learning.
- Students are role models and peer tutors.

## **High Levels of Collaboration and Communication**

There is strong teamwork among teachers across all grades and with other staff. Everybody is involved and connected to each other, including parents and members of the community, to identify problems and work on solutions.

### **SAMPLE INDICATORS:**

- Structure and time for collaboration are determined and allocated.
- Staff is highly involved in the school improvement effort.
- Models for decision making, problem solving, and conflict resolution are commonly known, used, and evident in the school.
- Schools and community members work together.
- School teams reflect the diversity of the school community.
- School teams collaborate with parents and community to support student learning.

### **Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards**

The planned and actual curriculum is aligned with the essential academic learning requirements. Research-based teaching strategies and materials are used. Staff understands the role of classroom and state assessments, what the assessments measure, and how student work is evaluated.

#### **SAMPLE INDICATORS:**

- Curriculum is aligned with state and local requirements.
- Adopted curriculum materials and models are research based.
- Instruction is focused on high expectations.
- Instruction is personalized and encompasses broad, concerted curriculum materials and models are research based.
- Instruction is focused on high expectations.
- Instruction is personalized and encompasses broad, concerted systematic emphasis on motivation as well as knowledge and skills.
- Instruction is modified based on student achievement data.
- There is a clear link between student assessment and instructional activities.
- Students are directly involved in the assessment of their learning.

## Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning

A steady cycle of different assessments identify students who need help. More support and instruction time is provided, either during the school day or outside normal school hours, to students who need more help. Teaching is adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs. Assessment results are used to focus and improve instructional programs.

### **SAMPLE INDICATORS:**

#### **Monitoring of Teaching:**

- Teachers modify classroom practice based on student achievement data.
- Classroom assessment is aligned with the curriculum.
- The adopted curriculum is taught and assessments are used to identify needs. Instruction is aligned to needs.
- Teachers are assigned to areas in which they are endorsed.
- Experienced teachers are paired to mentor less-experienced teachers.
- Teachers demonstrate high skill proficiency as outlined in the National Board Standards.
- Principal is in the classroom often to evaluate implementation of best practice (Anderson, et al.).
- Teaching and learning are the major focus areas of the staff supervision and evaluation process.
- There is adequate time for reflection and review.
- Teachers/schools implement a record-keeping system for student achievement data to assist with short- and long-range planning.
- Teachers allocate all instructional minutes to instruction.

### **Monitoring of Student Learning:**

- Goals for achievable education outcomes are clear and explicit.
- Teachers have been trained and use periodic assessment to make instructional decisions.
- Student progress and areas for improvement are shared regularly with parents.
- Specific test results are closely analyzed to guide improvement efforts. Students who are in need of extra help are identified.
- Multiple assessments are used to measure student progress.
- Every student has a strong personal relationship with at least one adult in the school.
- Students are engaged in active participation, exploration, and research.

### **Focused Professional Development**

A strong emphasis is placed on training staff in areas of most need. Feedback from learning and teaching focuses extensive and ongoing professional development. The support is also aligned with the school or district vision and objectives.

### **SAMPLE INDICATORS:**

- Professional development is based on a needs assessment and sustained over time.
- Deliberate decisions are made to ensure resources are allocated to maintain and sustain professional development.
- Leaders have focused much of their time in planning, implementing and monitoring professional development activities.
- Professional development engages all stakeholders.

- Professional development reflects the National Staff Development Council standards.
- Professional development models best practice instruction.
- A variety of professional development offerings are customized and based on individual and organizational needs.

### **Supportive Learning Environment**

The school has a safe, civil, healthy and intellectually stimulating learning environment. Students feel respected and connected with the staff and are engaged in learning. Instruction is personalized and small learning environments increase student contact with teachers.

#### **SAMPLE INDICATORS:**

- Increases in student's bonding to school (opportunities, recognition, skills).
- There is a warm and friendly atmosphere.
- There is a reduction in discipline referrals (number, severity).
- Test scores are improving (norm and criterion-referenced).
- There is low staff turnover.
- Students and teachers are listening to others; respectful and courteous.

- Students take personal responsibility for their learning and behavior.
- Each student is supported by an adult advocate.
- Each student is part of a learning community where s/he is well known by the adults and other students in the community.

### **High Level of Parent and Community Involvement**

There is a sense that all have a responsibility to educate students, not just the teachers and staff in schools. Parents, businesses, social service agencies, and community colleges/universities all play a vital role in this effort.

#### **SAMPLE INDICATORS:**

- Parents and community members have an active voice and involvement in the school improvement process.
- Staff understands the importance of parent and community involvement in the school and creates opportunities for their involvement.
- Staff creates and uses business partnerships to expand the curricula.
- Parents are assisted with understanding child and adolescent development and child-rearing skills.
- Parents and community members are recruited, trained, and provided a variety of activities.
- There is frequent and ongoing communication using a variety of means (e.g., newsletters, meetings, conferences, electronic).
- Diverse opportunities exist for parent involvement (e.g., committees, volunteering, monitoring homework).
- A high degree of parent participation and involvement are noted at open houses, PTA events, and other school activities.

Parents and community members have an active voice and involvement in the planning and implementation of the parent training program.

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### Web Sites

- [A report from McREL's diversity roundtable. Including at-risk students in standards-based reform.](#)
- [Add It Up: Using Research to Improve Education for Low-Income and Minority Students.](#)
- [Adding It Up: Helping Children Learn Mathematics \(2001\)](#)
- [Addressing the Challenges: What We Are Learning](#)
- [American Association of School Administrators](#)
- [American Educational Research Association](#)
- [American Federation of Teachers](#)
- [Another look at high school restructuring](#)
- [Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development](#)
- [Authentic Pedagogy: Standards that Boost Student Performance](#)
- [Brief for Practitioners: Turning Around Low Performing Schools -- Implications at the School, District, and State Levels.](#)
- [Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships](#)
- [Class Size and Students At Risk; Instructional Practice and Student Behavior](#)
- [Committing to Class-Size Reduction and Finding the Resources to Implement It: A Case Study of Resource Reallocation](#)
- [Council for Exceptional Children](#)
- [Designing a Sustainable Standards-Based Assessment System](#)
- [effectiveschools.com](#)

- [Every Child Learning: Safe and Supportive Schools](#)
- [Family Involvement Guide \(Washington State PTA\)](#)
- [Finding Time For Professional Development; Evaluating Professional Growth And Development](#)
- [Harvard Review, past issues. September/October 1997. Six types of involvement.](#)
- [International Reading Association](#)
- [Leadership and Change Process, "Asking the Right Questions."](#)
- [Leadership and organizational vitality](#)
- [Leading Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do](#)
- [National Association of Education of Young Children](#)
- [National Association of Elementary School Principals](#)
- [National Association of Secondary School Principals](#)
- [National Council of Social Studies](#)
- [National Council of Teachers of English](#)
- [National Council of Teachers of Mathematics](#)
- [National Education Association](#)
- [National High School Association](#)
- [National Middle School Association](#)
- [National Parent Teacher Organization](#)
- [National Resource Center for Safe Schools; National Mentoring Center](#)
- [National Science Teachers Association National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs](#)
- [NCCSR Publications. Bookmark. November 2001. Improving School Climate](#)
- [Newsletters. Policy Brief 4 Assessment and accommodation for English language learners](#)

- [Phi Delta Kappa International](#)
- [Policy Brief 23, Class Size Reduction: Lessons Learned from Experience](#)
- [Professional Development. Learning from the Best](#)
- [Professional Learning Communities: What Are They and Why Are They Important?](#)
- [Reinventing the Middle School, Middle School Journal, Sept. 2001](#)
- [Research - U.S. Department of Education Cross-Site Indexing Project](#)
- [Research you can use](#)
- [Results-oriented professional development by Thomas Guskey](#)
- [School based reform. Role of parents and community in school reform](#)
- [School Improvement Pathways Family and Community. Supporting Ways Parents and Families Can Become Involved in Schools.](#)
- [School Mental Health Project, Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor](#)
- [Social Development Research Group, U of W., David Hawkins and Richard Catalano](#)
- [Staff development. Adult Learning and Change by Jocelyn Butler](#)
- [Standards For Staff Development \(revised\)](#)
- [Students at the Center. School, Family, and Community Partnerships](#)
- [Studies in Education Reform: Parent and Community Involvement in Education](#)
- [Teachers of English to speakers of Other Languages](#)
- [Teachers.net](#)
- [WestEd.org](#)

## Appendix E

### District Teacher Experience Targets

The teacher experience targets have been calculated for each applicable school for districts with schools participating in the Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA).

#### Teacher Experience Index Target Introduction

By 2010-11, QEIA schools must ensure that their average level of teaching experience meets or exceeds the average level of teaching experience among all teachers at the same type of school (e.g., elementary) in their school district. Schools must make progress toward this requirement annually beginning in 2008-09. The average level of teaching experience that QEIA schools must meet is based on teacher experience levels reported by their district in 2005-06, and therefore will remain constant through the duration of the QEIA program. District average experience levels, designated “Teacher Experience Targets” have been calculated for each applicable school type (elementary, middle, and high school) for districts with schools participating in QEIA and are posted below. These figures represent the average years of experience in 2005-06, rounded to the nearest tenth. Targets are posted only for the school type(s) for which the district has QEIA participating schools.

School district personnel are advised to review the [Teacher Experience Index Calculation Instructions](#) and calculate current teacher experience averages at their QEIA participating schools for comparison with the applicable Teacher Experience Target for their district to determine each school’s current status on this program requirement. Please direct questions regarding Teacher Experience Index calculations to Jim Alford at 916-319-0226 or [jalford@cde.ca.gov](mailto:jalford@cde.ca.gov).

#### Teacher Experience Targets

County/School District	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
<b>Los Angeles Unified</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>6.8</b>

## Appendix F

### California's School Accountability System Under the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) ED SOURCE, August 2007

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Since 1999, with the passage of the Public School Accountability Act (PSAA), California has been holding schools accountable for the achievement of their students.

In August 2003, the state modified its accountability system to meet the funding conditions of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The purpose of NCLB, which was signed into law by President George W. Bush in January 2002, is to use federal funding as leverage to make sure that all the nation's children are able to read, to write, and to understand math well by the time they graduate from high school. Under NCLB, states develop their own ways of measuring whether schools, school districts, and the state as a whole have made "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) toward this goal, but their approach has to be approved by the federal government.

To show that their schools are making AYP, states have to:

- Create "annual measurable objectives" (AMOs) for the percent of students that must show proficiency on tests aligned with state content standards (such as the California Standards Tests and the California High School Exit Exam);
- Select an additional way to measure student progress;
- Attain specified high school graduation rates or improvement in the graduation rate; and
- Test 95% of their students. If a school or district that receives funds from Title I of NCLB does not make AYP on the same indicator for two years in a row, it goes into "Program Improvement."

In an attempt to keep the AYP system consistent with the Academic Performance Index (API) approach, which California has used since 1999, the state is relying on the API for its additional measurement of student progress. But the NCLB approach to accountability has driven significant changes in California's system.

#### **Schools and districts must test 95% of their students to make adequate yearly progress**

Under NCLB, the first hurdle all schools and districts must clear in their efforts to make AYP is testing 95% of their students, including 95% of each significant student subgroup. Under the API system, California held schools accountable for significant subgroups based on ethnicity and poverty. NCLB adds students with disabilities and English learners.

This 95% testing requirement is a way for the federal government to make sure that all children are succeeding and that enough children are tested so that the statistics for the school as a whole are valid.

If a school does not test 95% of students in the school as a whole and each significant subgroup, then the school automatically does not meet its AYP goal. To be considered "significant," a subgroup must include either 100 students or 50 students if they represent at least 15% of the overall school population. For example, if a school has 360 students and 54 of those students are English learners, then 51 of that school's English learners and 342 of all its students must be tested for that school to be able to meet its AYP goal. ( $54/360 = 15\%$ ;  $95\%$  of 54 = 51;  $95\%$  of 360 = 342.)

### **Tests on content standards are used to determine annual measurable objectives for elementary and middle schools**

California developed one set of annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for schools serving grades 2–8 and another set for high schools. For grades 2–8, AMOs are statewide targets that are based on California Standards Tests (CSTs) in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Because California's goal is for all students to score proficient or advanced on CSTs, a school's AMO is based on the percentage of its population that meets its goal in ELA and math.

The state decided to start slowly, using a "stair step" approach. For the first two years, beginning in 2002–03, an elementary or middle school met its AMO if 13.6% of its students scored proficient or above in ELA and 16.0% scored proficient or above in math. In 2007–08, these schools will meet the AMOs if 35.2% of students score proficient in ELA and 37% score proficient in math. The targets rise steadily in subsequent years until they reach 100% in 2013-14.

Students scoring proficient on the California Alternative Performance Assessment (CAPA), a test for students with severe cognitive disabilities, may make up only 1% of a district's total number of students counted as proficient. This helps ensure that the CAPA is administered only to the appropriate students. Beginning in Spring 2008, the state will use a modified CST for an additional 2% of students with milder disabilities. The test will be administered only to students in grades 3-5 in the first year, with grades added in subsequent years.

### **Annual measurable objectives for secondary schools are based on exit exam results for 10th graders**

Because California tests high school students in math based on the level of the course they are enrolled in, it is difficult to use standards test results to determine AMOs. Because of that difficulty, the state decided to use the scores of 10th graders on the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). For this purpose, the state set a "proficient score" that is higher than the score required to pass. To be labeled "proficient," a student must answer about 77% of the ELA and 69% of the math questions correctly. (To pass, a student need correctly answer only about 60% of the ELA and 55% of

the math questions.)

Beginning in 2002–03, 11.2% of a high school's students had to score proficient or above in English and 9.6% in math. In 2007-08, the percentages are, respectively, 33.4% and 32.2%. The targets grow steadily toward 100% in 2013-14.

**Schools need to show adequate yearly progress on additional factors**

If schools test 95% of all students and all significant subgroups of students and reach their ELA AMOs and their math AMOs for the whole school and all significant subgroups, the next hurdle is their API score. Beginning in 2002-03, all schools (elementary, middle, and high) and all districts had to grow by at least one point or have achieved a minimum of 560 for the school as a whole only (not significant subgroups). In 2007-08, the minimum acceptable API score is 620 or one point of growth. As with AMOs, the minimum API score increases over time, until it reaches 800 in 2013–14. If elementary and middle schools pass this last hurdle, they successfully achieve AYP. But high schools and districts with high schools have to show progress on one more factor, which is graduation rates.

Graduation rates must reach a certain level (at least 83.0% for 2007-08), rise by 0.1 percentage points each year, or increase by 0.2 percentage points in the average two-year rate to make AYP. The graduation rate is defined as the number of students who graduate divided by the graduates from that year plus all dropouts over the previous four years.

**Title I schools can end up in Program Improvement if adequate yearly progress is not made for two consecutive years**

In August 2003, when California implemented its plan, more than 1,100 schools either entered or were in Program Improvement. As of July 2007, 2,240 schools were in PI. ("Title I schools" or schools that receive NCLB Title I funds for low-income students have been expected to make adequate yearly progress since the 1995–96 school year when the state used local assessments to determine progress. Beginning in 1999–2000, the yardstick for measuring progress was solely the API. More than half of California's approximately 9,000 schools receive these funds.)

Simply stated, Title I schools go into Program Improvement if they miss their goals two consecutive years on the same AYP factor (English, math, API, or graduation rate).

After a school enters Program Improvement, it must meet all its AYP targets for the school as a whole and all significant subgroups for two consecutive years to exit the program.

**NCLB offers a "safe harbor"**

Under California's plan, schools can avoid being placed into Program Improvement if they can improve their proficiency

rates by at least 10% of the difference between their rate and 100% (the final goal). This is called offering a "safe harbor."

For example, suppose white students are a significant subgroup of an elementary school and only 20% of that subgroup scored proficient or advanced in English language arts in 2006–07, leaving an 80 percentage point gap. If, in the next year, an additional 8% (10% of 80%) of white students scored proficient or above, the subgroup would be deemed to have made AYP even though only 28% of students met the proficiency target when 35.2% is the actual annual measurable objective in 2007-08. Then, the school would not go into Program Improvement under the safe harbor provision.

### **Districts are held accountable under NCLB**

Districts are also measured and held accountable for student achievement in similar ways to their individual schools. Under NCLB, districts must also test 95% of their students, including 95% of significant subgroups. All elementary school districts (which can include grades K–8) and high school districts that serve grades 9–12 have AMOs that mirror those of the schools they serve.

For unified districts (K–12) and the few high school districts that cover grades 7–12, 34.0% of their students must score proficient or above in ELA and 34.6% must do so in math in 2007–08. Each year thereafter, targets increase toward 100% proficient or above by 2013–14.

Districts must also meet the API measure of achievement. Districts serving high schools will also be judged on the improvement in their graduation rate. Like schools, districts that receive Title I Basic Grants will go into Program Improvement if they miss their goals for two consecutive years on the same factor. As with Title I schools, the rules for entering Program Improvement are complex. To learn more, see pages 47-50 of the *2007 Adequate Yearly Progress Report*, produced by the CDE.

### **NCLB requires testing in science too**

States also need to have standards-based tests in science—one test each in elementary, middle, and high school. California administers cumulative standards tests for grades 5 and 8 and a life science exam for grade 10.

### **Program Improvement requires offering students a chance to transfer to another school and can eventually lead to the restructuring of a school**

Only Title I schools can be identified as Program Improvement schools and must face consequences if they fail to make AYP for two consecutive years. In Year 1, a Program Improvement school must:

- Revise its school plan;
- Receive technical support from its district;
- Develop strategies to promote parent involvement;
- Use 10% of its Title I, Part A funds for staff professional development; and
- Use at least 5% of Part A funds to offer transportation to students to attend another public school in the district that is not in Program Improvement or persistently dangerous. (Part A funds are earmarked for improving basic programs.)

One of the strongest elements of the new law is the requirement that a district provide free transportation to students who want to transfer from a Program Improvement school to a non-Program Improvement school in their own district. If available, the district must offer more than one school—including public charter schools—as an alternative and take parental preference into account when deciding where to transfer a student. The district must also notify parents in writing (if possible in a language they can understand) before the beginning of the school year that they have the option to transfer their child. This notification requirement presents a real challenge because schools don't learn their AYP results until late August and many begin the academic year around that time.

If, after two years, the original school improves and is released from Program Improvement, students who have transferred may stay at the new school until they complete the highest grade at that school. But the district's obligation to provide free transportation ceases at the end of the school year in which the original school is released from Program Improvement.

Federal regulations prohibit districts from using lack of space as a reason to deny students the transfer option, but that requirement may collide with reality. In any case, priority for transfer must be given to the students who are from low-income families and who are the lowest achieving. (To determine which families are low-income, districts must apply the same criteria that they used to secure Title I funding. One criterion used by many districts to define low-income is eligibility for free or reduced-priced meals under the National School Lunch Program.) If all the schools in a district are in Program Improvement, the district must, where possible, arrange a transfer agreement with one or more districts in the area. If that is not practical, the district may offer tutoring and/or other support, such as summer school, to students. Under Program Improvement, schools are not obligated to provide students with either free tuition or free transportation to private schools.

Each successive year a school does not improve, the consequences become more serious. In Year 2 of Program Improvement, the district must—in addition to everything it was doing in Year 1—provide supplemental educational services, such as tutoring, to all low-income students. The district must establish an agreement with the services provider on each student's learning goals and a timeline for meeting them. Students with limited English proficiency are entitled to language assistance. The school must also notify the parents of low-income students that such services are available. It must spend an amount equal to 20% of its Title I, Part A funds to provide both transportation and supplemental services. The state must create a list of approved tutors and programs from which parents can choose and must also monitor their quality and effectiveness. These supplemental educational services providers can be within the district if the district is not in Program Improvement or from outside the district. The district is under no obligation to provide free transportation to the tutors or programs.

If, after Years 1 and 2 of Program Improvement, the school has still not met its AYP goals, corrective action begins. In Year 3, the district must address the causes of failure to make AYP, including doing at least one of the following:

- Replace school staff;
- Implement new curriculum and train relevant staff on the new curriculum as necessary;
- Decrease management authority at the school level;
- Appoint an outside expert;
- Extend the school day or year;
- Restructure the school.

The district must also inform the parents and public of the corrective action and allow them to comment on it.

If the corrective action does not work by Year 4, the district and the local school must develop a plan for alternative school governance, notify parents and teachers of the plan, and allow them to comment on it.

In Year 5, the district must implement the plan that was developed in Year 4, which must include one of the following:

- Reopen the school as a charter;
- Replace all or most of the school staff, which may include the principal, who are relevant to the school's poor performance;

- Contract with an outside entity to manage the school;
- Arrange for the state to take over the school; or
- Any other major restructuring that addresses the school's problems.

After a school enters Program Improvement because it did not make AYP on one factor, it must make AYP on all factors for two consecutive years to exit the program. If, at any point in the process, a school makes its AYP goals, it stays in that part of the program (Year 1, 2, 3, or 4) until it makes AYP the next year. Then, it is released from Program Improvement. If a school does not make AYP the following year, it moves into the next phase (Year 2, 3, 4, or 5).

## Appendix G IDivision

### Los Angeles Unified School District Innovation Division for Educational Achievement

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has outlined five guiding principles aimed at improving student achievement, in support of the Los Angeles Board of Education's reform vision and the school district's mission statement. Principle 3 establishes **innovation** as a core element of LAUSD's transformation plan by calling on district officials to:

*Improve the use of internally and externally derived innovations in order to drive a substantial and sustainable organizational change*

In order to realize this goal, the Superintendent has created the Innovation Division for Educational Achievement of the Los Angeles Unified School District as a separate office, reporting directly to the Superintendent of Schools. The Division will enter into memoranda of understandings (MOUs) with four to six different "network providers" who will oversee clusters or families of schools.

Innovation schools will tightly couple an increased accountability for high achievement with the authority and resources required to successfully reach such objectives.

Participation in IDivision will grant each network provider at least five important autonomies including: 1) increased choice in determining a standards-based curriculum that includes a tight alignment of professional development, formative and summative assessments, and teaching strategies; 2) increased flexibility in hiring school personnel; 3) increased decision-making over school budgets; 4) ability to determine school day, schedule, calendar, and enrichment programming; 5) ability to independently contract with some external service providers. Networks may want to create internal, independent metrics of evaluation but also must comply with a standard set of metrics established by IDIVISION. Moreover, all networks must submit evidence to IDivision of a plan to align teaching, professional development, and assessments around a common, standards-based curriculum. All employees of the IDIVISION schools will be employees of the Los Angeles Unified School District. All IDIVISION schools must adhere to the regulations contained in the California State Education Code.

## Theories of Action

IDIVISION is based on several theories of action contained in the literature on school reform, child development, and management theory. Such theories include:

### *Civic Capacity*

At its core, IDIVISION believes that schools can improve when they engage the civic capacity of a given community. The theory that school reform works best when it marshals the political, economic, human, and physical capital of civic institutions has been articulated most prominently by Clarence Stone, Jeff Henig, and Bryan Jones in their 2001 study of eleven urban school districts. The authors argue that:

It is essential for all important actors in an urban community to join together in a shared vision of what is wrong in the schools and how to fix it, and to pursue that vision strongly and systematically over a long time. That can only happen, however, if those same actors develop the ability and willingness to set aside narrow aims and opportunistic behavior in favor of pursuing the collective good.<sup>1</sup>

Because external partners bring civic capacity and engagement to the process of schooling, all IDIVISION projects must contain a partnership with an external network provider who will commit to a sustained, engaged role in running and evaluating schools. These external network providers must be anchored in the community, have the capacity to build and hold the community's trust, and serve as a conduit for the necessary dialogue, facilitation, research and learning processes required for change. The networks will bring together parents, students, teachers, local organizations, local elected representatives, and all other interested and invested members of the community in order to create strategic school reform.

We expect networks to make the process as inclusive as possible, inviting not only teachers and parents of students currently attending the schools, but parents of alumni, alumni, interested community members, students, etc. The school transformation plan will, under the guidance of the network partner, incorporate all of the voices and interests of the diverse group of community members.

Eligible networks may include educational, government, community, academic, non-profit, or cultural institutions. Networks will apply for five-year performance contracts with IDIVISION. Contracts will be closely monitored and will contain provisions for termination at any time during those five years.

### *Families of Schools*

IDIVISION strongly believes that the educational experiences of pre-kindergarten through adult education need to be more explicitly linked. Compelling research suggests that pre-kindergarten educational programs have powerful effects on long-term educational, economic, and health outcomes in adulthood.<sup>ii</sup> Moreover, many achievement gaps begin before students formally enter school.<sup>iii</sup>

In traditional school systems, preschool, elementary, secondary, and adult/alternative educators have few opportunities to interact and collaborate, leading to bifurcation and isolation of each age group. As a result, difficult transition periods (between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade, for example) are too often overlooked.

In order to increase the level of communication among educators of children of all ages, IDIVISION will focus on “families” of schools. We define a family of schools as a set of institutions that includes partners from preschool programs, elementary schools, secondary schools, career/vocational institutions, and adult education programs. All IDIVISION networks must incorporate a plan to involve preschool through adult educational programs within the first five years of operation. Involvement in a family of schools may be an informal link between traditional LAUSD schools, charter schools, or other educational entities such as universities, or may be a formal link that specifically includes the school in the partnership agreement.

### *Empowered Leadership*

A key theory of action underlying IDIVISION is that important decisions on teaching and learning should be made by those who are as close as possible to the students. IDIVISION schools will focus on an empowered building leadership making important policy decisions, with tight alignment between authority, autonomy, and accountability. IDIVISION principals and network leaders will have increased autonomy over decisions related to budgets, hiring/staff, scheduling, and school programming.

### *Equity*

Successful school reform must be able to demonstrate significant results with the same populations of students that attend traditional district schools. IDIVISION networks will educate **all** children in compliance with existing state and federal laws. IDIVISION will carefully monitor the networks' compliance with equity provisions and requirements.

### *Replication for System-wide Change*

The overall mission of IDIVISION is to experiment with a streamlined method of governing, managing, and teaching children within a large urban school network. Our success will not only be measured by how well students in IDIVISION schools achieve, but also how networks disseminate their innovative practices in a way that can be replicated in the larger school district. IDIVISION will benchmark and replicate those practices that prove particularly successful in improving student outcomes.

### *IDIVISION Leadership*

IDIVISION will take a new approach in assembling its management team. Successful educators will serve as the core of the management team. Professionals from other relevant fields such as business, non-profit management, government, etc. will join the core group of educators in order to create a healthy synthesis of skill sets and perspectives.

Individuals within other LAUSD central divisions and Local District offices will be identified as supporting team members, with ongoing involvement in IDIVISION policies, procedures, and implementation. The collaboration between IDIVISION and District-wide staff will draw upon the deep expertise of existing LAUSD personnel and, at the same time, facilitate the introduction of successful practices into the LAUSD infrastructure through a highly-matrixed organizational structure.

An IDIVISION Advisory Board, comprised of no more than five individuals recognized for their outstanding work in educational, policy, community, business, and organizational innovation, will serve on a rotating basis to advise IDIVISION and the Superintendent. An additional adjunct advisory committee, comprised of a much broader spectrum of local, national, business, community and educational interests, will meet no more than twice a year to support IDIVISION in outreach, communication, successful practices, and individual expertise.

### *Increased Accountability*

All of the innovations described above are hollow promises without an unrelenting focus on student outcomes. All IDIVISION networks and schools will be granted five-year performance contracts that will include multiple measures of career and college success. The IDIVISION will conduct frequent, formative assessments in every Innovation Division school in order to aid networks in their management. Student data will be based upon and integrated with LAUSD student data systems, but will be enhanced by specific progress metrics identified by each IDIVISION school and their supporting

network.

Networks that do not meet their goals will initially receive specific interventions and support to address shortfalls, but will lose their performance contract and their schools will be returned to district management if interventions are not successful in recovering performance objectives.

## **Timeframe**

### **Planning Year I: 2007-2008**

In the first year, no more than 4 to 6 networks will be invited to participate in IDIVISION. After a formal invitation has been granted, networks must submit evidence of the following:

- A committed network provider who will commit to sign an MOU for a 5 year partnership;
- An intent to include a Family of Schools articulation in the development of the schools strategic plan;
- Approval of 50% + 1 of the full teaching staff at each school in the Family;
- Approval of 50% of all parents voting at each school in the Family;
- Commitment of support by a significant number of community members, as evidenced by active Neighborhood Council Support (where applicable) and/or support from a minimum of 5 community-based entities such (as but not limited to non-profit organizations, businesses, community organizations, etc.);
- Commitment of support by non-teaching personnel at each school in the Family;
- Student voice will be included in the planning process;
- A commitment to work towards a strategic plan for each school during the planning year. The strategic plan will identify school goals, progress indicators and accountability measures, how curriculum, teaching and assessments are aligned, resource allocations, professional development, and governance mechanisms.

### **Years II-IV: 2008-2010**

Each year, between two to eight networks will be chosen from a competitive application process based on the criteria established above.

### **Year V: 2010-2011**

External evaluation of IDIVISION

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What is the process for becoming an IDIVISION school?***

1. The Superintendent will invite a limited number of potential network partners (representing a family of schools) to submit a letter of interest to participate in the division.
2. Each school determines through a 50% +1 vote of the entire faculty, plus a 50% vote of parents voting, if they wish to accept the Superintendent's invitation.
3. The Superintendent will signify the acceptance of school into IDIVISION with a letter of intent that commits the school to the Division for a minimum term of five years, and a formal contract agreement with the network partner specifically outlining accountability measures, roles and responsibilities.
4. Upon receipt of a confirmed letter of intent, an Instructional Network developer will be assigned to a network from IDIVISION as the delegated authority from the Superintendent. From that point on, IDIVISION is directly accountable for the relationship.
5. In collaboration with the families of schools, the network partner, parents, community, and other identified stakeholders, IDIVISION would immediately begin a facilitated planning process. The goal of the planning period will be to create a strategic plan for each school and the entire network. In addition, IDIVISION will help networks identify those resources and critical benchmarks that will be needed for the planning year. School plans will vary from school to school.
6. School plans must include the process for identifying leadership and faculty for implementation in the following school year.

### ***Who will be invited to participate?***

1. In the summer of 2007, invitations will be sent to a limited number of school clusters that represent a diverse group of constituents, that have evidence of an existing external partnership (or have indicated interest in working with an external partnerships), and that are willing to work as a family of schools.
2. Beginning in the 2008-2009 school year, the process for entry into IDIVISION will be opened to larger group of applicants.

### ***What does it mean to be an IDIVISION school?***

1. IDIVISION schools report to IDIVISION, under the direct accountability of the Superintendent. Networks may opt to procure services from the existing local district structure as may be appropriate to their school plans, but they are otherwise

not included in the LAUSD Local District structure.

2. IDIVISION schools will be granted increased autonomy over budgets, hiring, school governance, school programming, selection of personnel, and working conditions (such as calendar, length of day, etc.) through an election-to-work agreement developed at the school site.
3. Each IDIVISION school and network will determine a set of progress indicators for one planning year and four mobilization years. Internal and external quality review teams will conduct an in-depth assessment of each school/network's progress at Year III. If a school is demonstrating difficulty in meeting progress indicators, IDIVISION will target resources to help schools meet targets.
4. All personnel in IDIVISION schools will remain LAUSD union employees, with protected rights for salary, benefits, and seniority upon return to any traditional LAUSD school structure. Job descriptions, commitments, accountabilities, additional financial opportunities, etc. will be developed by each network during the planning year.
5. Existing teachers, administrators and classified personnel will apply to participate in IDIVISION schools. If an individual determines that the election-to-work agreements or the school plan, as developed by the school during the planning year, does not represent the professional working environment that s/he chooses, they will be provided a transfer opportunity within LAUSD.
6. As needed, IDIVISION will provide resources for each network to engage in planning and implementation work. Resources may include additional direct budget resources for items such as time during the day for teams to plan or research, and may include non-direct resources such as access to high quality consultants to support specific school needs. In the planning year, IDIVISION will devise the process by which it allocates resources to each network.

***How will IDIVISION relate to the Local District structure?***

The intent of IDIVISION is to identify, model, and replicate successful practices in representative LAUSD schools for the purpose of leading change in classroom instruction and operational support.

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## Superintendent's Strategic Plan for High Priority Schools

### COMPARISON OF IDIVISION, HIGH PRIORITY SCHOOLS, CHARTER LAUSD SCHOOLS

	Independent Charter	iDivision School	High Priority School	Affiliated Charter	Pilot School
UTLA	If Charter does not have a UTLA agreement, then all teachers must be rehired outside of UTLA to participate.	UTLA/LAUSD employees retain jobs, benefits and pensions, per the UTLA contract.	UTLA/LAUSD employees retain jobs, benefits and pensions, per the UTLA contract.	UTLA/LAUSD employees retain jobs, benefits and pensions, per the UTLA contract.	UTLA/LAUSD employees retain jobs, benefits and pensions, under negotiated thin contract.
Curriculum	Must meet state standards. Autonomous curriculum.	Must meet state standards. Autonomous instruction. Meets or exceeds A-G.	Must meet state standards. Autonomous instruction. Meets or exceeds A-G.	Must meet state standards. Autonomous curriculum.	Must meet state standards. Autonomous instruction. Meets or exceeds A-G.
Testing	May test with the district or independently.	Test with the district for state & federal tests; school plan determines interim assessments.	Test with the district for state & federal tests; District Periodical Assessments.	Test with the district.	Test with the district.
Professional Development	Determined & delivered by charter.	Determined & delivered by Network Partner & school governing council.	Determined & delivered by District with augmentation by SPSA	Determined & delivered by LAUSD unless otherwise specifically waived.	Determined & delivered by Network Partner & school governing council.
Data and Reporting	School's student performance, operating and financial data is sporadic and based on annual oversight visits.	Full integration with LAUSD with school friendly interface provided to school community.	Full integration with LAUSD and enhanced with Quarterly Reports with specific school targets and progress on SPSA	Full integration with LAUSD.	Full integration with LAUSD with school friendly interface provided to school community.
Fundraising	Fundraises independently of district w/ no direct financial benefit to LAUSD.	Large-scale joint fundraising from private philanthropic and state sources with proceeds benefiting the partnership.	Typically, local, school-site fundraising. Possible partnerships in the future to assist with fundraising.	Typically, local, school-site fundraising only.	Pilot network fundraising from private sources and other sources with proceeds benefiting schools.
Best Practices	Typically shared through site visits and directors meetings sponsored by Charter Schools Division.	Direct collaboration on all educational and operational policies and procedures.	Direct collaboration on all educational and operational policies and procedures. On time/on demand dedicated resources.	Typically shared through site visits and directors meetings sponsored by Charter Schools Division.	Direct collaboration on all educational and operational policies and procedures.
Facilities	Private facilities secured and financed by charter operator.	District facilities, serviced by LAUSD and the partner.	District facilities, serviced by LAUSD. On time/on demand dedicated resources and people.	District facilities, serviced by LAUSD	District facilities, serviced by LAUSD
Local District	No reporting to Local District.	No reporting to Local District. Choice of local district services provided to school determined by school.	Reporting to Local District	Reporting to Local District Structure.	Reporting to Local District Structure
Governance	Independent board of directors with oversight by LAUSD limited to charter law.	LAUSD School Board responsibility. School shares governance & autonomy with Network Partner & iDivision but distinct from local district structure.	LAUSD School Board responsibility.	LAUSD School Board responsibility. Shared governance with LAUSD representation on a governance and operating committee or part of local district structure.	LAUSD School Board responsibility. Shared governance & autonomy with Network Partner & iDivision but distinct from local district structure.
Funding	Direct funded with LAUSD receiving a negotiated oversight fee.	Indirectly funded on a per student basis, with targeted optional fee for services delivered through district structures.	Funded on a per student basis. SPSA determined based on priorities.	Typically indirectly funded with school site receiving funding based on LAUSD norms.	Indirectly funded on a per student basis, with targeted optional fee for services delivered through district structures.
Employees	All employees are those of the charter operator.	All employees are LAUSD with negotiated autonomies; all benefits protected.	All employees are LAUSD; all benefits protected. Principal selection: LD Sup't, Superintendent & BOE	All employees are LAUSD employees and subject to all district policies and collective bargaining agreements.	All employees are those of the District with negotiated thin contract.
Calendar	Must meet state minimums.	Must meet state minimums; may or may not follow district calendar & bell schedules per Board.	Must meet state minimums; may or may not follow district calendar & bell schedules per Board.	Must meet state minimums and follow district calendar & bell schedules unless waived.	Must meet state minimums and follow district calendar & bell schedules unless specifically waived.

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<sup>i</sup> Clarence N. Stone, Jeffrey R. Henig, Bryan D. Jones, and Carol Pierannunzi, *Building Civic Capacity: The Politics of Engaging Public Schools*, Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001.

<sup>ii</sup> Arthur Reynolds *et al*, "Effects of School-Based, Early Childhood Intervention on Adult Health and Well-Being," *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, Volume 161, No. 8, August, 2007.

<sup>iii</sup> Lyn Karoly and James Bigelow, "The Economics of Investing in Universal Preschool Education in California," Rand Corporation, 2005.