

The School for the Visual Arts and Humanities

1. OVERVIEW OF THE PILOT SCHOOL

A. The School for the Visual Arts and Humanities

B. Conversion from the Belmont High School Visual Arts and Humanities Small Learning Community

C. 450 North Grand

Overview

We plan to relocate to The New Arts High School at 450 North Grand Avenue upon its completion in Fall 2009. The resources at this facility are essential to providing our students with the foundations for artistic and academic excellence. Our current site offers no art rooms, equipment such as kilns, storage space or art display spaces. Without these minimal facilities we cannot fully implement our curriculum. Our students and faculty have been promised this new art school for years and expect to move there. We have recruited students to our SLC over the last three years with the promise of a new school for the arts by their senior year. It is essential for the well being of our students and program that we relocate to that site. Location at the new state of the arts facility will allow our award-winning visual arts program to flourish. Without access to the high quality arts facilities, our arts-based program cannot compete or continue. We have struggled to survive for over twelve years under increasingly difficult circumstances, but it is unlikely that we will be able to overcome the obstacle of the lack of appropriate facilities.

D. Narrative

A Day in Julia's Life

My name is Julia Rodriguez, and today is my first day of 9th grade at The School for the Visual Arts and Humanities in downtown Los Angeles. I feel so unsure about everything: these unknown people, places, and expectations, but I feel a little better about my day when I walk through the shiny silver doors of my new school. The first thing I see is an open area with displays of large sculptures, each of which has a plaque written by the student artists.

As I venture down the hall toward my first class, English, I notice that the walls exhibit student paintings, photography, and a few small 3-D art works. The colors and shapes are exciting, but this place also makes me feel kind of calm because there doesn't seem to be any trash on the floor or on the walls or anywhere. As a student brushes past me I watch him head over to a recycling bin and drop his empty Gatorade bottle in it. Wow! I don't remember ever seeing that in middle school.

Throughout the halls I notice that the walls near the cafeteria doors display announcements about upcoming exhibitions and deadlines to sign up for something called "Senior Art Exhibition."

When I get to room 312, I see a few older students standing outside the door greeting the new kids. When I get up to the door, one of the older students greets me: “Hey, I’m Carlos one of the mentors for this class, what’s your name?”

Nervously I practically whisper my name, and Carlos looks at a clipboard and then calls out: “Esme, I’ve got Julia here for you.”

The girl walks up and tells me that she is an 11th grader and that she will be my mentor for the next two years. She says that she will guide me to my classes today and will always be around if I have any questions about school. When I can’t think of anything to say to her, she seems to sense my discomfort and starts introducing me to other students, some of whom she tells me will be in my English class. I recognize a few faces from middle school and a few more from the orientation-thing we all went to last week with our families.

I walk into the classroom and take a seat in the middle of the room and take a look around. There are computers at desks around the perimeter of half the room. The rest of the walls seem like a library of books, surrounded by sitting areas with little cards labeled “Book Recommendation” hanging from the shelves. The desk I sit at is in a group formation, and the teacher is standing near the cluster of desks behind me questioning and welcoming students there. I met her at the orientation, and she told us all what supplies to bring, so I know I’m ready for class when I take out paper and a pen.

Ms. Little smiles at me, saying, “Hello Julia!” as she walks past when the bell rings. Whoa, she knows my name already, I think to myself.

As class goes on, I realize that this isn’t going to be much like my middle school English classes, since we already started a project that Ms. Little says we will work on in art and geography classes. She puts us in pairs and we talk with our partners about each question she asks before we share out in the classroom on how to conduct an interview. By the end of class I’ve interviewed my partner and I feel ready to get my abuelita to talk to me in my interview at home tonight, since I have to write a family history for my identity book. One thing that I really liked was how that other teacher Mr. Garcia kept stopping by my desk and talking to me, which made me comfortable enough to ask questions even though I usually don’t bother.¹ I can’t believe that I have homework on the first day of school, but I’m kind of excited because it is like a treasure hunt, since I have to find objects and gather information for my identity book we’re going to be making in art. I’m excited to go to my next class, Geography, because Ms. Little told me that we would learn more about our identity book project.

When Geography class starts, Ms. Mejia asks all of us to think about a strange question she has posted on the board, and she gets us writing on it: “what is history the history of?” The odd question causes some kids to start whispering loudly about it, which is kind of weird on the first day of school, but the excitement is palpable. As class goes on, Ms. Mejia finds a way to get every student in the room to talk in the exciting discussion, even me. She calls on students and

¹ See the Curriculum section and Student Support section for further information on inclusion of special education students, co-teaching, and the use of teacher’s aides.

always asks, “Why?” My stomach flutters when she calls on me and asks for my opinion, but I get through it, even though there was a really long pause before I ever said anything. The conversation makes me think about families, geography, and history in a new way. I can tell this class is going to be cool, even though I now have homework for it too! Ms. Mejia tell us that she knows we are doing our interviews for Ms. Little, but we also need to research our ethnic heritage on the Internet. When I hear this I start to worry a little, since our family has a computer that never seems to work. Then Ms. Mejia announces that we should all visit the computer lab in the Learning Center after school if we need a computer to do the research or get help from the tutors. When I hear the bell, I hurry out to meet Esme for nutrition, and I think to myself that she can probably show me where the Learning Center is.

When I head downstairs for nutrition, the snack break, my eyes widen in curiosity at the sight of the cafeteria. The walls are covered in colorful murals and graffiti-type writing above which a large sign declares: Ephemeral Art Collective--Join the Dialogue. As I take in the shock of this strange sight, I notice areas of the room are sectioned off for things labeled “Tibetan Sand Painting” and “Zen Rock Garden.” One whole wall seems to be devoted to some kind of community rules for the art. Students are gathered in groups around the different displays in the room.

When Esme shows up, she explains that you have to attend a workshop led by the 11th and 12th graders after school to participate in the Ephemeral art projects, and that everyone is really respectful of the work. Anyone who doesn’t uphold the ground rules of the collective forfeits their right to participate. She tells me that kids come to school early and stay late working on the projects, in addition to nutrition and lunch, but that anyone receiving “Ds” or “Fs” on the progress report must attend mandatory tutoring during those times. “But nobody really minds going to tutoring, since most kids already go anyway. I just like to go to do my homework before I get home,” Esme says.

After nutrition is the advisory period, and Ms. McDonald is my advisory teacher. She tells the class that the first project in the advisory is to start a book club. Students will pick their own books to read and hold meetings on that book. We practice browsing the books in the room, and she tells us about a few of the books she thinks we might like. Our 11th grade mentors are here with us, and a few of them talk to the class about books they like. Then we break off into pairs with our mentors and try to find a book. Everyone has to take a book home to browse, and each day this week we will get a chance to change our book before picking a book club.

Near the end of the period, Ms. McDonald tells us that we will be working on our portfolios for our work that we will accumulate over the course of our whole high school career, and we will always work on them in this advisory class. She points out a few sample 12th grade portfolios that she has on display at a table. Then, she gives us time to talk with our mentors about the portfolios and to look at their own portfolios, which sends us over to the computers, since there is a digital copy of each student’s entire portfolio. The 11th grade advisory teacher is in the room too, since all of his students are the mentors for my class. He goes around talking to the student pairs during this discussion time. When the bell rings, Esme tells me that she will meet me at the computer lab today after school because her only homework the entire first week of school is to

help me with my homework, though she said that she has to write in some kind of journal about whatever she does with me as a mentor.

She says that she will be in the advisory period with me all week, since we will be browsing for books, organizing our materials, and learning study strategies all week. Apparently, the 11th graders will come to our advisory class at least once or twice a month to do things called “skill builders.” We are going to do one of those things in advisory tomorrow.

I leave the room with a hardback copy of The Princess Diaries in my backpack. I feel nervous about this reading project because I totally hate reading. Esme and another girl told me that this book is cool enough to make it fun, but I only took it so that I wouldn’t look stupid since everyone else was talking about books and reading, especially the older kids. It seemed like they had all read every book in the room!

My next class is art, and the teacher immediately gets us started on the identity books. When I leave the class, I feel excited about the sketch I did for my book, but I worry a little about what I am going to do for all of the different pages Ms. Stazer told us will go in the book. Esme told me that she would show me hers tomorrow, which makes me feel a little better.

When I enter the math room the teacher Ms. Kim greets me at the door with a yellow foam cube, which she passes out to each student. In class we have to collaborate to figure out a series of math equations by arranging the cubes on a table. The class is like an exploration, and it makes me forget that I failed Algebra last year, so I didn’t get to take Geometry. I used to be good at math, but my teacher last year had it out for me. I didn’t learn anything. At the end of class we each use a lap-top to write out our homework. She makes it sound like we are writing our own books on Algebra, and that we will use the book-making skills we learn in art class to put it together. It’s so weird that all the teachers keep talking about the other classes I’m in. Is Ms. Stazer, the *art* teacher, going to help my math class make math books? That sounds pretty strange to me.

The last class of the day is Fitness. I think this must be PE, since I had to choose from Yoga, Dance, or Sports before school started. When I get there, we all get a mat to stand on, and I notice there are a few of my other teachers in the room with us! They are here for the exercise class.

After the yoga class is over, I pack up my backpack and head over to the Learning Center. That yoga stuff seemed to clear my head, which is good since I have a lot of homework. Even though school is over, there are still lots of teachers and students everywhere. There are other young people around the school, and I think they are the college students who I heard work as tutors during and after school every day.

As I walk to the bus stop, I can’t stop smiling because it’s so hard to believe how different this school is. I feel grown up. I realize that I’m looking forward to the next school day for the first time since elementary school.

2. SCHOOL VISION

School Vision

Art is a means of communication that can transcend language, borders, and time. Exploring the world through art offers students a unique vista on their own lives and their capacity for self-realization. Our young artists view themselves as citizens of the world who strive to understand themselves and embrace our pluralistic society. Our college preparatory interdisciplinary study of the humanities and visual arts empowers students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and awareness needed to advocate for innovation and change in their communities and around the world. When students leave the School for the Visual Arts and Humanities they will be well-prepared to succeed in a program of higher education and confront all challenges with the creative and sensitive spirit needed to make a lasting difference in their own lives and the globalized world.

Mission

The School for the Visual Arts and Humanities provides training in the visual arts anchored in a rigorous college preparatory education

3. KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Please note: The following table is a brief overview of the key characteristics of our school. Each aspect is explained in greater detail in subsequent sections of the proposal.

Area	Current Accommodations as Part of Larger Public High School (Belmont Senior High School)	Expected Accommodations as a Pilot School (School for the Visual Arts and Humanities)
Organization/ Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently serving 330 students, grades 9-12, within a school of 4,045 students and six other small learning communities on three different tracks. The school site also houses two pilot schools Focus is on meeting LAUSD graduation requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will serve approximately 400-450 students, grades 9-12 Focus is on meeting UC admissions and state graduation requirements through a rigorous college preparatory curriculum Provides an interdisciplinary, Humanitas-style education grounded in visual arts training Culminating graduation requirements include a Senior Portfolio Presentation or Senior Arts Exhibition.
School Calendar and Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 163 days per year Two 16-week semesters Students take 6 classes per 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 180 days per year Three 12-week trimesters Students take 4 classes per semester;

	<p>semester; each class is approximately 56 minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course sequence maintains a 2 semester pace for all students (e.g., English 10A to English 10B, Algebra 1A to Algebra 1B); students who fail a semester class must retake an abbreviated version during intersession, or retake an entire semester. 	<p>each class is 70-95 minutes, allowing for more individualized instruction and in-depth coverage of content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course sequence can follow a 2- or 3-trimester pace, depending on the needs of the student (e.g., English 10A-10B or English 10A-10B-10C), allowing struggling students to take a year-long course in subject areas where they need more help. Students who are able to can complete a course within two trimesters. SEE SCHEDULE BELOW
Class Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade 9 and 11 English classes capped at 22 students; however, class size often exceeds this number Algebra 1 classes normed at 25, other math classes up to 45 Other courses (art, in particular) can have as many as 45 students in one class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class size limited to 20 students in English and math. Size cap at 25 students in all other classes
Student/ Faculty Grouping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are scheduled in classes based on grade level status and graduation requirements SLC faculty is housed in a specific area of the main school; all teachers are required to travel for at least one class period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students grouped by grade level in core classes Students grouped by Advisory for all four years to ensure that every student is known extremely well by at least one adult in the school who will serve as his or her advisor and advocate Special Ed and EL students mainstreamed into most classes with accommodations and in-class support Interdisciplinary team teachers are housed in close proximity Teachers grouped by interdisciplinary team and subject area for common planning
Methods for Supporting Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intersession classes and Saturday school test prep offered twice a year Tutoring offered after school based on teacher participation and availability of funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisory class all four years Structured study skills, test prep, college application process, and post-graduation readiness curriculum required for all students over the course of four years

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 English and 1 math teacher provide voluntary service to all 4,050 students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention classes in English and math offered to all students based on initial and ongoing assessment • Tutoring offered by all school faculty members • Will provide ongoing support for all students, including EL and Special Ed students (see Student Support section) • Students actively participate in school leadership to help ensure a safe and secure campus (see Safe and Secure Campus section)
Opening of school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current school enrollment opens with approximately 4,000 students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School will open as conversion with at least 80% full enrollment at each grade level (approximately 360-400 students) • We plan to increase our enrollment to reach full capacity by 2009

Trimester Schedule

The school will implement a twelve week trimester calendar for our students. Each trimester the students will take four classes for 65 to 90 minutes per day. Longer blocks will allow students to understand and practice each lesson and make interdisciplinary connections to their other subjects. Taking fewer classes at a time lets the students delve more deeply into each subject and make lasting connections as they focus on homework and assignments for four classes as opposed to six. Under the current semester schedule, we consistently have students who start out the sixteen weeks strong and end the last few weeks with poor attendance or study habits. These students often fail or receive poor grades when they are fully capable of doing better. Shorter trimesters and fewer classes enable the students to see results more quickly and will motivate students to keep trying until the end.

The trimester system allows for greater differentiation of pathways for our students. Course sequence can follow a two or three trimester pace, depending on the needs of the student, allowing struggling students to take a year-long course in subject areas where they need more help. For example, a student struggling with Algebra 1 can take a third quarter to really nail Algebra, while a more advanced mathematics student can move on to Geometry or take another class altogether. The trimester calendar will allow teachers to provide more individual student support as we teach fewer classes and fewer students in a given quarter.

The schedule also incorporates two hours of professional development time each week. Please refer to the evaluation process in the Leadership section as well as Professional Development section for an explanation of how we plan to make effective use of this time.

TRIMESTER	YEAR
12 weeks	36 weeks
4 classes	12 classes
21.3 credits	64 credits
21,900 instructional minutes	65,700 instructional minutes
24 hours of PD time	72 hours of PD time

School Schedule

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
PERIOD 1 8:00-9:25 (85min)	PERIOD 1 8:00-9:05 (65min)	PERIOD 1 8:00-9:25 (85min)	PERIOD 1 8:00-9:30 (90min)	PERIOD 1 8:00-9:30 (90min)
ADVISORY 9:30-10:10 (40min)	NUTRITION 9:05-9:25 (20min)	ADVISORY 9:30-10:10 (40min)	NUTRITION 9:30-9:50 (20min)	NUTRITION 9:30-9:50 (20min)
NUTRITION 10:10-10:30 (20min)	PERIOD 2 9:30-10:35 (65min)	NUTRITION 10:10-10:30 (20min)	PERIOD 2 9:55-11:25 (90min)	PERIOD 2 9:55-11:25 (90min)
PERIOD 2 10:35-12:00 (85min)	PERIOD 3 10:40-11:45 (65 min)	PERIOD 2 10:35-12:00 (85min)	PERIOD 3 11:30-1:00 (90 min)	PERIOD 3 11:30-1:00 (90 min)
PERIOD 3 12:05-1:30 (85 min)	LUNCH 11:45-12:15 (30min)	PERIOD 3 12:05-1:30 (85 min)	LUNCH 1:00-1:30 (30min)	LUNCH 1:00-1:30 (30min)
LUNCH 1:30-2:00 (30min)	PERIOD 4 12:20-1:25 (65min)	LUNCH 1:30-2:00 (30min)	PERIOD 4 1:35-3:05 (90min)	PERIOD 4 1:35-3:05 (90min)
PERIOD 4 2:05-3:30 (85min)	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1:30-3:30	PERIOD 4 2:05-3:30 (85min)		
380 min class total 20 min passing 400 TOTAL	260 min class total 15 min passing 275 TOTAL	380 min class total 20 min passing 400 TOTAL	360 min class total 15 min passing 375 TOTAL	360 min class total 15 min passing 375 TOTAL

1825 TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES PER WEEK
21,900 TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES PER TRIMESTER
65,700 TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES PER YEAR

4. PILOT SCHOOL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The School for the Visual Arts and Humanities will be led by a Governing Council with decision-making power that is shared among its constituents. The Governing Council will be comprised of the principal, staff, parents, students, and community representatives. The Governing Council will be responsible for maintaining the school mission; principal selection,

supervision and evaluation (with superintendent approval); budget and election-to-work agreement approval. In addition, the council will provide input on decisions concerning curriculum, student assessment and parent and community involvement. The Principal will be a team player, concerned about the needs and interests of all school stakeholders. Please refer to the Leadership and Staff Selection section for more details on the role of the principal.

The Governing Council will have “written and approved bylaws that outline the council’s membership, election procedures, terms of office, duties, officers, number of meetings per year, decision-making procedures, and methods of communication with the larger school community.” (The Essential Guide to Pilot School: Leadership and Governance, Center for Collaborative Education, Boston, MA 2007). The council will assume the role and meet the requirements of the state mandated school site council.

All school stakeholders will have multiple opportunities to provide input to the Governing Council. Students, faculty, parents and community members will be surveyed yearly to evaluate school governance, procedures, curriculum, teaching, and student support systems. This survey data will inform the council’s decisions in the upcoming year. Stakeholders can also request that issues be considered for discussion at Governing Council meetings. See Terms and Procedures below for more details. In addition, there will be a blog on the school website to comment on the council’s minutes and decisions.

Governing Council Members

The Governing Council will have 16 voting members as follows:

- ◆ Principal
- ◆ Faculty Representatives (4)
- ◆ Parent Representatives (3)
- ◆ Students (4)
- ◆ Community Representatives (3)
- ◆ Alumni Representative (1)

Officers

The principal will serve as co-chair; the second co-chair will be elected by members of the council. There will be two secretaries, elected by the council, responsible for publishing the minutes and the rationale for decisions reached to parents, faculty and students. These minutes will be printed and distributed as well as published to the school’s website.

Decision-Making Authority

- ◆ Setting and maintaining the school vision and mission
- ◆ Amend and approve the budget
- ◆ Principal evaluation (with superintendent approval)
- ◆ Approve all major student policies
- ◆ Future planning
- ◆ Fundraising

Election and Selection Process

Nomination for all faculty, parent and student representatives will be by self-nomination.

Nomination for community representatives will be by invitation and/or self-nomination.

Elections will be conducted in June of each year.

- ◆ The school's UTLA representatives will be responsible for conducting elections for the faculty representatives
- ◆ The Parent Council will be responsible for conducting elections for the parent representatives
- ◆ The Student Council will be responsible for conducting elections for the student representatives
- ◆ The Governing Council will select the community and alumni representatives

Terms and Procedures

- ◆ In the first year, one-half of the representatives will be elected for one-year terms, and the other half will be elected for two-year terms
- ◆ Nine members will constitute a quorum for decisions to be made, provided that at least half of the faculty representatives are present
- ◆ A minimum of nine Governing Council meetings will be held each school year
- ◆ The minutes of each meeting, accompanied by a rationale for decisions reached, will be printed and distributed to parents, faculty and students and posted on the school website. Comments and feedback will be encouraged through a Governing Council blog on the school website.
- ◆ Agendas for each meeting will be established by the two co-chairs. Students, faculty, administration, parents and community members can bring up issues to any Governing Council member via a standardized agenda item request form which will be available on the school website and in the main office. The request is then communicated to the co-chairs and it is jointly decided if the agenda item is appropriate.

5. BUDGET

In line with our mission statement, we plan to be creative with the budget sum that we receive from the LAUSD to personalize instruction, support our art program and provide a rigorous college preparatory education for our students. The budget autonomy granted to us via pilot status will allow us to stretch our dollars and focus them on our school vision. We will support our students with low class sizes, support our art program with studio space, supplies, technology and exhibition space and support our parents by staffing the Parent Center. The following is a sketch of our desired positions and materials. We know that the funds we receive from LAUSD will not cover this budget in its entirety. We will also be fundraising throughout the year to support our budgetary needs and plan to use our community partnerships creatively.

Positions

20 Teachers:

- ◆ 2 Art
- ◆ 4 English
- ◆ 4 Mathematics (1 BCLAD certified)

- ◆ 1 ESL
- ◆ 3 Social Studies
- ◆ 1 World Language
- ◆ 2 Science
- ◆ 2 Special Education
- ◆ 1 Physical Education

Administrative and Support Staff:

- ◆ Principal
- ◆ Office Technician
- ◆ Counselor/College Advisor/Career Advisor
- ◆ Internship Coordinator/Grant Writer/Community Liason
- ◆ Title1/Bilingual/Perkins Coordinator (may be shared with another small school)
- ◆ Data/Testing Coordinator (may be shared with another small school)
- ◆ Instructional Assistants (student teachers; former students)
- ◆ Tutors for Learning Center
- ◆ Parent Liaison (stipended parent volunteer and district funded liaison)

Activities and Enrichment

- ◆ Field Trips: funding for busses and admission is needed
- ◆ Guest artists and speakers extend learning beyond our staff of teachers
- ◆ Ninth grade Summer Bridge prior to starting school
- ◆ Intersession for grades 10-12

Professional Development

- ◆ Trainings: Advisories through UCLA and Wildwood
- ◆ Facing History and Ourselves
- ◆ Seek out trainings that will benefit our students
- ◆ Equity and Access
- ◆ Humanitas

Materials and Art Spaces

- ◆ Art supplies
- ◆ Photography Studio and materials
- ◆ Printmaking Studio and materials (presses, ink, paper)
- ◆ Ceramic Studio fully equipped with kiln and materials
- ◆ Computers and related technology (LCD Projectors, Document Cameras, portable laptop carts for classrooms)
- ◆ Textbooks and supplementary texts
- ◆ Instructional materials
- ◆ Copy machines

We will look for outside funding sources to support our school. In the past we have won the Excellence Award through the Urban Educational Partnership and Annenberg Foundation in 2001 for Ninth Grade Teaching Team and in 2003 for the Visual Arts and Humanities in the

School Category. Each monetary award along with Fulfillment Fund Excellence in Education Awards went to support our program. We also have an annual fundraising art show which we plan to continue. We will look to other sources to help fund some of our enrichment programs.

6. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Upon graduation our students will be able to demonstrate proficiency in the following areas:

- ♦ Writing for a variety of purposes
- ♦ Artistic literacy
- ♦ Public speaking
- ♦ Research and access of resources
- ♦ Career skills - *spec. to the arts?*
- ♦ Problem solving and critical thinking skills
- ♦ Ethical analysis
- ♦ Project management
- ♦ Intellectual curiosity
- ♦ University-ready liberal arts knowledge

Instructional Philosophy

The skills and techniques of art alone do not make an artist: an artist must understand the world and cultivate an active compassion to inspire life-long learning. We invite students to appreciate the intellectual and social responsibility of the artist as a communicator in the world. This ideal drives our curriculum and instruction: our school seeks to provide training in the visual arts that is anchored in a rigorous academic education in English, history, science, mathematics, foreign language, philosophy, the humanities, and civic responsibility. Our students participate regularly in discussions, debates, and critical analysis, empowering them with the confidence needed to make their voices heard.

Our students discover their capacity to effect positive change in their world through our rigorous art-based curriculum. Teachers will strive to give our young artists an authentic purpose for their work, putting the power in student hands to make academic work relevant to their lives. Through our interdisciplinary teaching pedagogy, students learn to make connections between classes and to the outside world. The walls between school and the world beyond dissolve as students participate in service learning projects, internships, community service and field trips.

Pedagogy

Our program is the energetic synthesis of three academic approaches: the Humanitas model of interdisciplinary art-based pedagogy, the tools and conceptual framework of Facing History and Ourselves, and the best practices of the Equity and Access program. We believe that training in any artistic medium is enriched through rigorous study of art history and the liberal arts as a whole. Drawing from these tools, our students engage in project-based learning that culminates in a senior portfolio presentation or art exhibition. Please see the Assessment and Graduation Requirements section.

Humanitas

This interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of all academic content areas makes it possible for students of a wide range of abilities and learning styles to succeed in a rigorous academic setting. Our curriculum requires teachers to discuss and plan interdisciplinary essays, thematic unit plans, daily lessons, and opportunities for curriculum enrichment. The results of this reflection and analysis will guide collaborative planning. Emphasis will be placed on interdisciplinary connections and to the world beyond school.

Facing History and Ourselves

“We are dedicated to...lead[ing] students in a critical examination of history...[This] work is based on the premise that we need to—and can—teach civic responsibility, tolerance, and social action to young people, as a way of fostering moral adulthood. If we do not educate students for dignity and equity, then we have failed both them and ourselves... We believe that students are moral philosophers—able and willing to think about tough moral and ethical dilemmas in surprisingly sophisticated ways...our approach help[s] students with a wide range of abilities and learning styles understand that their choices and actions matter, and that young people can, and should, be agents of change.” (“History and Mission”: Facing History and Ourselves).

The way Facing History and Ourselves has been implemented in the ninth grade illustrates the way that the conceptual framework ties seamlessly into our art-based program. Over the course of one semester in the ninth grade, our students are challenged to explore the Holocaust as a case study of the dismantling of democracy and the consequences of inaction. Then they are empowered to “choose to participate” at the end of the semester by creating an art installation that raises awareness about an issue they care about. Students act as curators for this exhibit, guiding family, peers, and community members through the exhibit for special viewings of the work.

Equity and Access

Equity and Access (formerly known as Complex Instruction) is an instructional approach based on cooperative learning pioneered by the Stanford School of Education, into their classroom. We hope to mainstream the approach to provide our students with a standardized set of expectations and norms for group work. This pedagogical approach allows teachers to use cooperative group work to teach at a very high level in academically and linguistically diverse classrooms. Evolving from over 20 years of research by Elizabeth Cohen, Rachel Lotan, and their colleagues at the Stanford School of Education, it is composed of three major attributes:

1. Multiple ability curricula designed to foster the development of higher-order thinking skills through group work activities organized around a central concept or big idea;
2. The implementation of special instructional strategies where students are trained in cooperative norms and specific roles to manage their groups; and

3. The ability to recognize and treat status problems, using status treatments to broaden students' perceptions of what it means to be smart, and to convince students that they each have important intellectual contributions to make to the multiple-ability task.

The goal of this instruction is to provide academic access for *all* students in heterogeneous classrooms.

Projects and Portfolios

At all grade levels students will engage in large, project-based assignments that demand high performance on the part of the students and offer an opportunity for the students to teach themselves and others. These projects will culminate in a senior proficiency project incorporated into each student's four-year portfolio. In this way, our teachers utilize proficiency-based assessments as benchmarks throughout the program. See the Assessment and Graduation requirements for more detailed information on this.

Closing and Eliminating the Achievement Gap

We believe that the challenge teachers face is to personalize learning to the needs of each student we encounter. We strive to develop the school culture and personalized support that will lead to the highest possible student achievement. The following measures will make this possible:

- ◆ Lower class size to 20-25 in all classes.
- ◆ The trimester schedule allows for greater differentiation of pathways for our students. Course sequence can follow a 2- or 3- trimester pace, depending on the needs of the student. See schedule in Key Characteristics section.
- ◆ A Summer Bridge program for our incoming ninth graders will allow us to be proactive in addressing needs in literacy and numeracy, exposing our students to much needed technology, and counteracting the pattern of social promotion that the incoming ninth grade students are accustomed to.
- ◆ The ninth-grade curriculum focuses on essential literacy and writing skills in all classes with the goal of bringing all students to grade-level before they go on in their studies. To support our struggling readers, an intensive reading class is designed to supplement the core curriculum in ninth-grade. This course provides students with frequent measurable feedback on their progress and gives them tools to take charge of their literacy development.
- ◆ Our school-wide tutoring program is an essential key to closing the achievement gap. Please see the Student Support section for the details on this important part of our program.
- ◆ The description of the Equity and Access pedagogy above outlines our school-wide instructional commitment to providing access to a rigorous curriculum for all students.
- ◆ Teachers will employ SDAIE strategies consistently to best serve the needs of our EL, PRP, and SEL students. All teachers must have their CLAD credential, and must maintain their proficiency in strategies to serve the needs of English learners and other special needs students. Please see Student Support.

Core Academic Classes and Electives

Our curriculum exceeds state requirements and meets the UC and Cal State requirements through the core curriculum described below. The following is a sample schedule of the courses a student in our program might take over four years. These illustrate the way that a student might meet the graduation requirements detailed in the Assessments and Graduation section.

9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Math (Algebra 1 /Geometry) • Geography/Religion • Intro Art/Art Hist • Language 1 • Media/Computer Lit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Math (Geometry/Algebra 2) • World History • Drawing • Language 2 • Biology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Math (Algebra/Math Analysis) • US History/ Government / AP US History • Painting/ Elective • Language 3 • Chemistry/ Physics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Math Elective • Global Studies/Social studies Elective • Art Elective: AP Studio • Art Elective: Internship • Chemistry/Physics/ Science Elective

Physical Education

Physical Education credits will be covered by a Fitness course taking place weekly during our common planning time. Students will have the option of completing these credits at a local community college where they may take yoga, swimming, or any other PE class.

Electives

To widen our elective offerings, our teachers will offer short elective courses. (See Appendix I for sample course descriptions)

Literacy and Numeracy

- ◆ Ninth-grade curriculum focused on bringing students to grade level
- ◆ Intervention courses in reading and math
- ◆ Personalized instruction, group work, and tutoring program
- ◆ Interdisciplinary essays, which require students to develop writing skills in all classes
- ◆ Portfolio of writing collected over all four years with reflections
- ◆ CAHSEE preparation incorporated into ninth and tenth grade advisory

Connecting Curriculum and Community Resources

- ◆ Curricular field trips connect learning to the world beyond the school. Field trips build a sense of community and make the curriculum come alive. The following field trips are an integral part of our ninth through twelfth grade curricula:
 - Gamble House
 - Gene Autry Western Heritage Museum

- Getty Center
- Getty Villa
- Huntington Library and Gardens
- Japanese American National Museum
- Museum of Tolerance
- Norton Simon Museum
- LACMA
- MOCA
- ◆ Guest artists and speakers extend learning beyond our classrooms
- ◆ Please see Community Partnerships for a detailed description of the way we interface with our community partners
- ◆ See our Graduation Requirements for a description of the role that community service and internships play in our curricular requirements

Special Needs Students, English Learners, Standard-English Learners, and Gifted Students

- ◆ Resource students mainstreamed into general education classes with support of the resource teacher using the co-teaching model
- ◆ The portfolio/advisory class personalizes the student experience by giving all students an individualized plan for growth
- ◆ Honors credit available for enrichment
- ◆ The interactive lessons of Equity and Access and Carnegie Learning engage all learning modalities in the classroom
- ◆ See Student Support for more details

Involving Families in their Child's Educational Plan

- ◆ Upon entering the ninth grade, students will attend a 3-day orientation program, and their families will be involved in this orientation.
- ◆ Parents will be encouraged to volunteer for field trips and student activities
- ◆ We educate parents, increase student-parent communication, and empower our students in their education by putting students in charge of parent/student orientations and information sessions. Our students are able to understand and articulate what they are doing in school and why, and they learn to do this in a way that is meaningful to their families. Parent Orientation early each fall educates our parents about the school's curriculum, helping their children with homework, reading report cards, credits needed for each grade level and graduation, calculating a GPA, the college application process, and other concerns parents may have.
- ◆ Parents will form the Parent Council and three parents will serve on our Governing Council.
- ◆ We will offer parent workshops through the help of our community partners, such as Families in Schools. Please see Community Partnerships.
- ◆ Please see the Family and Community Engagement section for further details.

7. STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

All School for the Visual Arts and Humanities students participate in a relevant, coherent, interdisciplinary curriculum that is rigorous and project-based. Our teachers use a variety of

strategies and resources, including technology and experiences beyond the classroom that actively engage students and help them succeed at high levels. Our curriculum is designed to develop artistic and academic literacy, enabling students to make connections across the disciplines and to the world beyond school. In order to guide our students in their quest to achieve college-level literacy, it is imperative that teachers employ both formative and summative assessments throughout the year, all of which are listed below:

- ◆ Interdisciplinary essays
- ◆ Class mid-terms and finals
- ◆ Direct observation of student work
- ◆ Conferencing with teachers and parents about students' progress and reflection on student work
- ◆ Interdisciplinary project benchmark assignments
- ◆ Presentations
- ◆ Service Learning
- ◆ Student evaluations of classes
- ◆ State testing
- ◆ Digital Portfolios*

*The final, summative assessment would require students to create a digital portfolio that compiles benchmark assignments and requires students to reflect on their progress over the four years of high school (please see Graduation Requirements for more information on the digital portfolio).

Graduation Requirements

The graduation requirements listed below coupled with ample teacher support will foster creative, well-rounded students who are successful in college. Modifications to the graduation requirements may occur in the case of some IEPs.

To graduate from the School for the Visual Arts and Humanities students must:

- ◆ Meet A-G requirements as delineated by the University of California. Students may, with the permission of parents and teachers, use college course credit to fulfill the elective requirement suggested in A-G
- ◆ Complete two years of physical education
- ◆ Create a digital portfolio that traces students' high stakes written and project-based work for all four years
- 7. ◆ Complete 60 hours of community service and/or participate in an internship
- ◆ Pass and/or take all state and national assessments required for graduation or preparation/admittance to college (e.g., CAHSEE, PSAT, SAT, SAT II)
- ◆ Complete a high school exit project. Although all students must create a digital portfolio, they are only required to plan and host *either* a digital portfolio presentation *or* an art exhibition. Please see both options below for more details.

2. edition

Option #1 Senior Art Show	Option #2 Digital Portfolio Presentation
<p>Who: A graduating senior with at least eight pieces</p> <p>What: Senior Art Exhibition that includes at least 8 pieces of art work. The pieces chosen must reflect change and growth on behalf of the artist.</p> <p>Where: Visual Arts and Humanities gallery or a community gallery</p> <p>When: The month of June</p> <p>How: Each gallery will feature four artists, each with eight pieces. Young artists will work closely with an advisor their final year in high school to plan, organize and direct their end of year art exhibition. In addition, students will also have to submit a written biography, description of work and a written reflection tracing and assessing his or her growth over four years of an art-based education.</p> <p>Why: The end of year art exhibition is designed to encourage students to reflect on their growth as a scholar and artist. Since the art exhibitions will attract the community it also provides students with an audience to</p>	<p>Who: A graduating senior who decides not to showcase their art work</p> <p>What: Digital Portfolio Presentation that includes a slideshow of the digital portfolio. Each digital portfolio includes the following items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Biography 3. Freshman work page* with reflection 4. Sophomore work page with reflection 5. Junior work page with reflection 6. Senior work page with reflection 7. Future goals (college attending, travel etc.) <p>*(Each work page includes links to written and project-based work completed in a particular grade level. At least one essay and one project-based learning project must be included in each grade level work page).</p> <p>Where: Visual Arts and Humanities Auditorium or local community space</p> <p>When: The month of June</p> <p>How: With the guidance of an advisor students will begin to compile benchmark assignments (essays, projects, etc.) beginning in the ninth grade. Throughout the course of their high school career students will work closely with an advisor to learn the skills needed to create a digital portfolio and critically reflect on all work submitted. Student will be required to promote, organize and present their digital portfolio to classmates, teachers, parents and community members.</p> <p>Why: The end of the year digital art exhibition provides an opportunity for students to verbalize their growth as scholars of the School for Visual Arts and Humanities. It also provides parents and community members to</p>

showcase their unique vista on their learning and the world.	celebrate students' successes and growth.
--------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------

8. LEADERSHIP AND STAFF SELECTION

The School for the Visual Arts and Humanities will follow a democratic, distributive leadership model in which the principal will serve as a facilitator who removes obstacles to instructional improvement by bringing staff together to focus on student learning. As a flexible, creative problem solver fully committed to our school's vision who partners with the faculty to implement it, our leader will model team work, openness to new ideas, integrity and reciprocal accountability. The principal will work closely with our teachers who will actively participate in the leadership of the school. Due to the small school size, teachers will need to take on a variety of leadership roles.

The role of the principal is to develop our school's vision by helping to utilize autonomy over our resources to strengthen teaching and learning. Because the improvement of instructional practice and performance is the main role of our school, our principal must be an instructional leader and collaborator by visiting each teacher's classroom regularly, modeling and sharing best instructional practices and effective teaching strategies, evaluating teachers, and holding them accountable for high quality instruction.

Our principal will regularly interact with teachers, students, parents and community partners to forge bonds between people of diverse interests for the benefit of the school. Since it is in large part the teachers who enable improved student performance, they will act as curricular leaders working in collaboration with the principal to attain our goal of improved student achievement. Please see the Governance section for more information. We desire a highly visible leader, an excellent listener who can resolve conflict in a healthy manner.

Student and parent involvement in this leadership structure is especially important. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a Student Government class which will organize student activities for the school. Student Government will select three representatives to serve on the Governing Council. Students will be given a voice in the decision making process through a role on the Governing Council along with parents and community members. Parents will have a voice through the Parent Council and a representative from that council will provide input to the Governing Council.

Evaluation Process

Because instructional improvement requires continuous learning, our school expects each individual and teaching team to pursue and model life-long learning for their own betterment and for the collective good. Collaboration, not isolation, in curriculum planning and practice is expected. Our principal along with each faculty member must help create a safe environment in which “individuals expect to have their ideas and practices subject to the scrutiny of their colleagues, and in which groups expect to have their shared conceptions of practice subjected to the scrutiny of individuals.” (“Building A New Structure For School Leadership”). This will help provide accountability as well as create an environment of sharing and support of success and positive attitudes.

As a daily part of teaching practice, the evaluation process will support reflection in the pursuit of accomplished teaching and will follow the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. Over the coming year, we will work as a team to develop a collaborative teacher evaluation process that will include regular visits by our principal along with visits by colleagues, video taping instruction, reflective conferences, discussions and evaluations of curriculum, assessments and student work. Student, teacher, and parent surveys will be conducted annually to evaluate teacher performance.

In similar fashion, teachers, students, parents and community partners will have the opportunity to evaluate our principal on an annual basis. The result of their evaluation will be provided to the Governing Council to carry out the final evaluation of the principal with approval of the superintendent.

Staffing Plan

The Belmont Pilot Schools’ budget and our student enrollment is not yet known. Therefore, our projected teaching staff is also uncertain for the 2008-2009 school year. Our priority is to lower class size. We do not want to exceed a 25:1 ratio in most classes and in time would like to lower class size to 18:1 as educational research recommends. We are projecting 20 teaching positions for a maximum of 450 students. Please see the Budget for the list of teaching positions.

Our support staff will consist of one School Administrative Assistant, an office technician, a Counselor/College Advisor/Career Advisor, an Internship Coordinator/Grant Writer/Community Liaison, a Title I/Bilingual/Perkins Coordinator (may be shared with another small school), a Data/Testing Coordinator (may be shared with another small school), Instructional Assistants, Tutors, and a Parent Liaison. We want to hire people who are flexible and work collaboratively to ensure that the needs of our students are met.

Recruitment and Selection

There will be a Staffing Committee that includes our principal to oversee recruitment and selection of teachers and support staff. We will utilize the LAUSD Job Fairs, Teach LA UCLA training program, and the Claremont Graduate School to recruit teachers. If the Staffing Committee does not include the grade level team of teachers where the opening exists, those teachers will be invited to sit in on the interview for that position. Because improvement of instructional practice leads to improved student performance, our goal is to hire teachers who

interact well with students and care about their wellbeing, who are willing to be flexible, work collaboratively and expect to have their practice subjected to the scrutiny of colleagues in order to ensure that they are giving their best to the Visual Arts and Humanities students. Therefore as part of the interview process, we require the teaching of at least one lesson. Additionally, we want to see curriculum outlines, lesson plan samples, assessment rubrics and student work to assist us in making the best possible decision in our hiring. Lastly, we ask the teachers we wish to hire to make a three to five year commitment to our school.

Staffing for Special Education and ESL Instruction

Our staffing needs will be determined by the demographics of our school population. We will evaluate our needs each year to ensure that we have the qualified staff necessary to ensure the progress of our Special Education and ESL students. Our desire is to integrate each student into our school and fully mainstream Special Education students, as much as possible, into general academic classes.

We will hire a highly qualified ESL teacher to meet the needs of our English Learners. Our school will be structured to provide services for English Learners (EL) that include English language development (ELD) and access to core curriculum as required by state policies.

It is one thing to recruit teachers, but quite another to retain them. Our staffing pattern policy will address this aspect. Since special education's inception it has been a national challenge to retain quality special education teachers. We will address this chronic issue head on. We realize the importance of ongoing professional development in the best practices. The professional field of special education is in a state of upheaval. There has never been more controversy within its professional membership. We will raise ourselves above these contentious issues and search for answers and practices that best meet the needs of all our students. We will reach out to our local university special education credential programs to form alliances with their professors. We will work closely with the District's own Intern Program to ensure that we are staffed with the best possible teachers.

9. ELECT-TO-WORK AGREEMENT

LOGO

The School for the Visual Arts and Humanities

ELECTION TO WORK AGREEMENT

2007-2008

Vision Statement...

Preamble

The School for the Visual Arts and Humanities is a Pilot School with the Los Angeles Unified School District that by union contract has been granted increased autonomy and flexibility to be a laboratory of educational innovation. This includes the right to set the "school day" and

“school year” for both faculty and students and to make other alterations in the traditional teaching and learning conditions. As a Pilot School, the School for Visual Arts and Humanities’ primary decision-making body will be its Governing Council, replacing the role of the School Site Council. The Governing Council will comprise non-paid members that include administrators, teachers, parents, students and community members who will approve the annual work election agreement (EWA), budget, policies and vision of the school. In order to realize our vision, teachers at the School for the Visual Arts and Humanities are expected to undertake a number of specific responsibilities.

As part of the School for the Visual Arts and Humanities High School’s professional community, all teachers, in addition to their teaching responsibilities, will:

- 2 roll
addition
- Plan and participate in his/her assigned grade-level *Advisory* program;
 - Plan, schedule and participate in all community building activities (e.g. Freshman orientation, family nights, conferences, annual picnic, etc);
 - Plan, schedule and participate in the annual Student Art Exhibitions and Graduation;
 - Plan and participate in the peer observation process (teach, plan, reflect) as part of the collaborative, professional culture;
 - Provide at least one hour of unpaid after school tutoring weekly and be available to students outside of class time;
 - Work on a variety of teams to support the mission of the school during Tuesday’s planning sessions (interdisciplinary curriculum, professional development, etc);
 - Submit verification of at least 8 hours of professional growth hours annually;
 - As need arises, teachers may be asked to take on leadership roles beyond daily teaching duties in order to support students and to build our community (be an active part of the Governing Council, direct the art exhibitions, athletic events, conferences, lead in-house professional development, etc).

First Year Teachers•

In lieu of taking on additional leadership roles new teachers will participate in an in-house teacher support program.

Salary, benefits, seniority, and membership in bargaining unit

The School for the Visual Arts and Humanities teachers will continue to accrue seniority within the district as they would if working elsewhere in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Anyone hired as a teacher will receive the wages and benefits established in the LAUSD Teacher’s Contract. Teachers will also be bound by the terms outlined in The School for Visual Arts and Humanities Work Election Agreement. Teachers will continue to be members of the United Teachers of Los Angeles bargaining unit.

Compensation for additional hours

Every effort will be made to compensate teacher above and beyond all required hours. Compensation will depend on availability of funds.

Excessing at end of the year

You may unilaterally excess yourself from the School for the Visual Arts and Humanities at the end of the school year. When voluntarily terminating your service, you are required to inform the principal verbally by the end of March and in writing by April 15.

Dismissal

You will be subject to dismissal from the School for the Visual Arts and Humanities in accordance with existing laws and regulations. The Governing Council reserves the right to change rules and regulations regarding dismissal on an annual basis.

The school day

(Please copy/paste schedule)

The school year

The school year for students will consist of 180 days of instruction. Permanent Status teachers will work 189 days according to the following schedule:

- The first day of school for students will begin on the first Monday after Labor Day;
- Teachers will work six unpaid Professional Development Days during the school year (to be determined by the Governing Council);
- Teachers will meet with teaching team members during vacations until curriculum for the year is satisfactorily planned, reviewed and revised.

Substitute Coverage

In the spirit of a collaborative professional community, all teachers may be asked to cover classes for their colleagues. Teachers will be compensated. Wage rate is to be determined by the Governing Council.

Dispute Resolution

Process and procedures for dispute resolution will be determined by the pilot design team for the first year and by the Governing Council in subsequent years.

Performance Evaluation

Process and procedures for performance evaluations will be determined by the pilot design team for the first year and by the Governing Council in subsequent years.

BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT, I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ ALL THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ELECTION AGREEMENT AND THAT I AGREE TO ALL ITS TERMS.

Dated _____

Signature _____

Name (Print): _____

Address: _____

10. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers will be encouraged to propose, plan, or deliver professional development that addresses the specific needs experienced in the program. Autonomy over hiring will allow us to realize this vision of a collaborative and collegial professional culture, and autonomy over scheduling will provide the power to institutionalize the time and conditions for professional growth.

Teachers Must be Models of Intellectual Passion

Professional development will focus on what is required to be good teachers: self-reflection, observation, lesson planning, and analyzing student work. We expect students to discover their passion in learning and embrace it authentically, seeking tutoring and extra courses for enrichment or remediation in every zone in which they need growth: teachers must model this passion by identifying and facilitating the professional growth that would improve their service to students.

A New Professional Culture

Empowered by the autonomy of a pilot school, teachers must reinvent the professional culture of the high school. Collegiality and collaboration among teachers are the foundation of this new professional culture, and the essential elements of our future professional development include:

- ♦ **Creation of professional development plans based on teacher-identified needs:** Teachers will collaboratively identify their needs for professional development through reflection on their own questions, practice, and student work.
- ♦ **The Instructional Leadership Team:** This group of teachers will be responsible for gathering information on what types of professional development teachers feel are needed; they will take charge of arranging these opportunities. Professional development goals will also be determined through our teacher evaluation, including peer observations, video taping, and feedback (See Leadership and Staff Selection). Teachers will receive the PD that they need most.
- ♦ **Use of in-house professional development:** We will cultivate the collegiality among our teachers and empower them to share what they know and do best. We will use part of our professional development time to present exemplary lessons to each other, in addition to sharing content-area expertise and best practices. This honors the expertise of our teachers. Furthermore, this approach makes sense from a budget perspective.

Trainings

- ♦ **Advisory Training:** Our advisory class will necessitate training in advisory curricula and the use of portfolios for all of our faculty.
- ♦ **Special Education Training:** As part of our ongoing training, all staff members will be trained in Welligent, the district's special education IEP software. All

members of our program will have access to this software with access to our students' IEPs. This practice will help build an inclusive atmosphere and ensure that all teachers feel involved in the IEP process. We will provide professional development in the many different types of co-teaching models.

- ◆ **English Language Learners:** Ongoing training in SDAIE methodologies and other innovative ways to support our EL students
- ◆ **Ongoing training:** Workshops and conferences by Urban Education Partnership's Humanitas, Facing History and Ourselves, and Equity and Access, Critical Friends

Scheduled Time for Planning and Professional Development

The autonomy over scheduling empowers us to make time for professional collaboration a priority. We will have a minimum of two hours per week of PD time and common conference periods for grade level teams. There will also be four full days of planning throughout the year.

Four of our design team members are trained facilitators of UCLA's Critical Friends protocols. These protocols for effective conversation will frame the professional development dialogue at our school. Our professional development activities will have clear goals and will relate directly to our teaching practice.

- ◆ **Planning time:**
 - Organized into three levels: whole group, grade-level teams, and content-area teams
 - Please see the Elect-to-Work agreement for details on the requirements of teachers for annual professional development hours
 - Please see the Schedule for the details on the scheduling of this planning and PD time

Best Practices

We envision the following three areas of long-term professional growth:

- ◆ **Pedagogy:**
Teachers must have professional development time for reflection, collaborative planning, and analysis of student work and data. Our curriculum requires teachers to discuss and plan interdisciplinary essays, thematic unit plans, daily lessons, and opportunities for curriculum enrichment. Teachers must learn and share the best practices for this interdisciplinary curriculum and classroom instruction. Teachers will continue to learn new instructional strategies, classroom procedures, and technology resources.
- ◆ **Content:**
Teachers will seek professional development opportunities in their content-area. Teachers must continue to raise and answer their own questions about the content that they teach. This is especially important in an interdisciplinary curriculum: teachers must have in-depth knowledge of their content-area before they can identify and illuminate connections to the content of other disciplines.
- ◆ **Visual Arts:**

Teachers will receive frequent opportunities to experience and understand the arts. Professional development must support teachers in their efforts to provide an arts-enriched program. We are dedicated to arts-enriched education, and teachers must embrace the commitment to experiencing and incorporating connections between their content area and the arts.

11. STUDENT SUPPORT

To ensure that all students participate in a rigorous, quality curriculum that is culturally relevant and linguistically responsive to unique learning needs, the school will create a structured, supportive, and all-inclusive academic community in which students are encouraged to participate actively in their learning, are exposed to the rich diversity of arts within their own and surrounding communities of Los Angeles, have the support and resources they need for academic success and are empowered as advocates for their own education.

The Learning Center

To establish a support system that can offer individual help to students, the School for the Visual Arts and Humanities will designate a special Learning Center where all students can go for tutoring services. The Learning Center will be led by participating teachers with one on one tutoring, and will have peer tutoring by upper class students as well. The room will offer all students a quiet place to work, and also will house supportive resources such as books on tape, copies of lecture notes, and other resource materials specifically designed for special education students and English learners.

The Art Center

To ensure that our students have the resources to create projects and artwork, we will offer The Art Center where students will have a productive art space. The Art Center will offer after school art programs where organizations such as HOLA and LA's Best will conduct the program.

Advisory Period

In the advisory period, which meets twice per week, students will have the same teacher/advisor throughout all four years and the class size will be restricted to 20. This will be possible because all teachers, counselors, and administrators will participate in the advisory program. In the 9th grade, the advisory period will focus on study skills and test taking strategies. Students will begin to compile a comprehensive portfolio, which will include self-selected work samples from across the disciplines. In the 10th and 11th grade, the advisory period will focus on CAHSEE prep and SAT prep respectively. The 12th grade advisory will be centered on college counseling and portfolio completion. But through the advisory period, students will also be supported with their individual needs.

English Language Learners

EL students below the PRP level will be enrolled in standards-based ESL classes. ESL students will be grouped into level one and two together or three and four together depending on our scheduling needs. ESL students will participate in the core curriculum of our school for all other classes. EL students in the Preparation for Redesignation Program (PRP) will be programmed into mainstream standards-based English Language Arts (ELA) classes. Content area teachers

will use SDAIE (Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English) strategies for all EL students in order to provide access to the core curriculum. The Bilingual Coordinator will be responsible for having all information available in multiple languages for our students and parents.

Special Education

We will work closely with the District's SELPA (Special Education Local Plan Area) office to ensure we are compliant with all IDEA 2004 federal mandates and state guidelines. We will hold monthly meetings with our District program specialist to review our SESAC caseloads and to clarify if any new special education services are needed per the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process. Any designated services, such as Speech or Adaptive Physical Education will be provided as written in the IEP and will be coordinated with our local district program specialist. As a secondary school it is critical that we enlist the support of the District Office of Transition Services (DOTS) to provide our students with IEPs the services needed to help them transition successfully into adulthood.

Special Ed teachers will work with core curriculum (English, math) teachers on developing curriculum, instructional modifications, and differentiated assessment strategies, as per federal IDEA (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) regulations. We will reach out to the greater community to provide additional support to our students with disabilities. There are agencies such as the Lanterman Regional Center, which provides home services to students with developmental disabilities. There is the Foundation for the People with Learning Disabilities, which provides publications, workshops, and conferences for individuals that have learning disabilities or to those who work with people with disabilities. There are numerous autism support groups within the Los Angeles region as well. These are rich sources of information to help us develop the curriculum that all our students need and deserve.

Ninth Grade Intervention

We will focus our greatest attention on the ninth graders because the organization and study skills necessary to succeed in school need to be solidified in the ninth grade. Our ninth grade students are given extra attention from their teachers: tutoring, calls home, peer mentoring, and a team of teachers who work closely together to monitor student progress. All students with Ds or Fails on their report card are required to attend biweekly mandatory tutoring provided by the ninth grade teaching team. Letters are sent home and a parent signature is turned in to the homeroom teacher. These letters are sent out after each grading period. We would like to expand this 9th grade tutoring program to all students, available to all, but mandatory for students with Ds or Fails.

Awards and Recognition

We will conduct award ceremonies each year to recognize the students' dedication to their education. The students will have a sense of achievement and accomplishment. Parents, teachers, community members, will take part in the ceremony. Awards will honor academic achievements, improved study skills, strong character and exemplary attendance.

Counseling Services

The advisory class will allow much of the day-to-day counseling and academic planning to occur with the advisory teacher. This will take the load off the guidance counselor to advise in college

and career planning as well. The counselor will act as a liaison to community services that our students may need: social workers to support students and families who are homeless, truancy officers. Our school will also be linked to organizations in the community that services the youth with pregnancy, gang and drug prevention.

Health Services

We plan to share a part time nurse with another small school. We will establish partnerships with Planned Parenthood and other health organizations.

12. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Parent participation in the continued development of the School for the Visual Arts and Humanities is critically important. Teachers, parents and community members are partners in our school to ensure the success of the students. Our goal is a reciprocal relationship with the parents where we expect the parents to support the school as we have supported the parents.

At the beginning of the year, we will hold an orientation for students and parents. We will welcome new students and their parents and outline our collective goals and expectations for students and provide information about our support structures. This informs parents and encourages parental feedback and input along with support for students at home. This will be an opportunity for students and parents to meet the teachers and community members.

The School for the Visual Arts and Humanities will hold parent meetings by grade level at the beginning of each year starting in the fall. At these parent meetings, the teachers and counselor will explain our school's vision, the thematic, interdisciplinary nature of our program and the course content for the year in each grade level. The teaching team members will outline attendance, homework policy and the grading system in each of their classes. The school's expectations for the year will be explained, suggestions will be made as to how parents can best help their student succeed and the graduation and university requirements will be examined. At these meetings parents will have the opportunity to ask questions and to share concerns with the Governing Council. To ensure the parents' understanding, we have district interpreters who provide simultaneous translation in multiple languages to ease communication with our parents.

Many of the students will be first generation college students, and our curriculum will support our students with that opportunity. With this in mind, we invite parents to go on field trips to different colleges and universities within the Los Angeles area. Both students and parents will take on active roles to learn about college requirements, college application process, financial aid, scholarship programs, and services that the colleges may offer.

The Parent Center will be a place where parents are supported (this will be shared with other schools). It will focus on the Parent Council where parents can be trained to be facilitators. Workshops will educate parents by providing information on the school's curriculum, how to help their children with homework, how to read report cards, college credits, college application process, and other concerns parents may have. Since most of the students' parents are English learners, English classes will also be offered to the parents. The Parent Center will partner with organizations like Families In Schools, which focuses on the involvement of parents in the

education of their children as skillful, knowledgeable, and effective partners, capable of ensuring that their children receive the quality of education to achieve life long success.

Community Engagement

Visual Arts and Humanities has been committed to the development of internships that reflect strong relationships between the school and the community from its inception. We want to build on the partnerships that we have already developed and sustained for up to twelve years. These partnerships have and will continue to support the Visual Arts and Humanities' focus. We will maintain contacts with feeder schools, colleges, universities and art schools and invite them regularly onto our campus to recruit students.

The Ryman-Carroll Foundation's Ryman Arts has partnered with Visual Arts and Humanities for the past fifteen years. The program has provided over a hundred of our students full scholarships to study drawing and painting with professional Los Angeles artists. This is a competitively selected, rigorous visual arts training program and Visual Arts and Humanities students are consistently the largest group accepted into Ryman Arts. The former executive director, Marshall Nalle Ayers, and the current director, Diane Brigham, have served as advisors and supported Visual Arts and Humanities in a variety of ways ranging from providing in-depth instruction through outreach to mentoring our future artists, designers, architects and art patrons.

Facing History and Ourselves, an international educational organization that engages students of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and anti-Semitism in order to promote the development of a more humane and informed citizenry has been a partner of Visual Arts and Humanities for the past five years. They have provided resources, pedagogical approaches, professional development, and guidance in curriculum planning and delivery of sample lessons. By studying the historical development and lessons of the Holocaust and other examples of genocide, students make the essential connection between history and the moral choices they confront in their own lives.

Cerrell Associates teamed up with Visual Arts and Humanities Small Learning Community for a year-long corporate adoption program in 2006-2007 school year. This corporate adoption was part of an effort to help local students receive more personalized training and academic assistance. Cerrell works with students on their creative expression and presentation techniques. Cerrell Associates plans on sharing its public relations and outreach techniques with the students throughout the school year, from reinforcing their writing and presentation skills to showing students how to take on leadership roles in their community.

Our students have been interns and apprentices at LACMA and MOCA for a decade. MOCA educators have come into our classrooms to work closely with teachers. Last year MOCA worked closely with Kati Stazer in her classroom. They organized field trips and invited visiting artists. The collaboration culminated in a three-month art show at the Japanese American National Museum's Institute for the Preservation of Democracy. We have also worked closely with MALDEF to organize Create! and the Architecture, Construction, and Engineer (ACE) program, and we plan to continue these alliances and provide more internships for our students.

13. A SAFE AND SECURE CAMPUS

It is our belief that to have a school that is invested in its own operations, students must be offered the autonomy to play a vital role in the process of creating the guidelines and protocols for campus and community safety. It is our hope that this type of student leadership and participation would grow to become a major component of our school's identity. We will ensure a safe and secure campus through three fundamental ways:

(1) Through our partnership with Facing History, each student takes part in a curriculum focused on ethical awareness and character development, such as the 9th grade "Advocating Change" and "Choosing to Participate" units (see Curriculum and Instruction). This curriculum incorporates a strong focus on diversity appreciation, conflict resolution, and communication participation through art and action, thus instilling a sense of student accountability in the safety of all school community members. To further incorporate this curriculum and make it relevant to their lives, students would also be given the opportunity to participate in the various workshops designed to aid in the development of these skills, such as:

- ◆ Summer Bridge Program for incoming freshman students to build community among students, staff, faculty, and parents, and to orient students to school and community resources;
- ◆ In Touch With Teens Violence Prevention workshops and curriculum, through partnership with the nonprofit group Peace Over Violence, to help youth develop and maintain healthy, violence-free relationships. The eight-unit curriculum empowers youth to have healthy relationships by providing information about power and control, elements of healthy relationships and healthy sexuality, and media literacy as well as education on sexual harassment, sexual assault, and dating violence. The curriculum further addresses the development of pro-social skills such as empathy, impulse control, effective communication, problem solving, and bystander accountability;
- ◆ Social justice education and outreach through after-school programs like MALDEF's (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund) Create!, where students learn to work for social justice and change through art such as mural painting and drama;
- ◆ Formation of student-to-student peer mentoring and counseling groups
- ◆ By partnering with community outreach groups, students will develop the knowledge and skills necessary to foster a sense of unity and commonality among school and community members.

(2) We would involve students in the operations of the school by having a Student Government formed of members of each grade level to assist in creating and addressing school rules and violations, campus security needs, and community safety. This student panel would attend student leadership meetings so as to gain input from the student body as a whole, as well as attend school leadership team meetings twice a semester. This student panel will also be asked to annually review school safety procedures and to report on their assessment.

(3) Students who are not members of this panel would be able to voice their concerns about school problems in their advisory class, which would then be taken by class representatives to the student leadership meeting where it might be further addressed. Furthermore, whole school community meetings will be held among advisory classes and used to build community and to

teach larger groups about structure, so that students may learn school policies and protocols (e.g., who to go to when there are problems, how to behave during an assembly, etc.) and build important group skills.

We believe by empowering students through individual autonomy and by building the skills they need to utilize and refine their voices as active participants in the successful operation of the school, we will ensure a campus in which students, parents, staff, and faculty all feel safe, and where each member is committed to the well-being and security of the whole community.

14. DESIGN TEAM PROFILE AND PLANNING PROCESS

Design Team Members:

Esther Kim	Math (Algebra 2, Geometry)
Mary-Claire Little	English 9
Carey McDonald	English 10
Amanda Mejia	Social Studies (Geography, World History, U.S. History)
Lydia Okelberry	Math (Algebra 1, Pre-Calculus, AP Calculus)
Katalin Stazer	Art (Art History and Analysis, Drawing, Painting, AP Studio Art), Lead Teacher
Lindy Carll	Community Member, Attorney, Fulfillment Fund Mentor, Guardian Ad Litem
Eftihia Danellis	Community Member, Facing History and Ourselves
Rob Jaffe	Community Member, Director of InnerSpark (California State Summer School for the Arts)
Esmarelda Alvarez	Student
Natalie Sosa	Student
Gerardo Velasquez	Student

Our school has the support of our community partners: Ryman Arts, Facing History and Ourselves and Cerrell Associates. Each of these groups, along with the Museum of Contemporary Art, have provided programs, extra-curricular classes or training and academic assistance for our students. LA's Best has also expressed an interest in partnering with us. Our

school also has the support of community members such as Lindy Carll and Christopher Chaney, attorneys who are mentors to our students and have raised funds for us. Fermentation, the photographer and graphic artist, provides Art Center College of Design's scholarships for our students on a regular basis.

Letters of support will be forthcoming from our partners.

Appendix I: Sample Short-Course Descriptions

Political Art

"No Blood for Oil!" Slogans and visual images such as posters, t-shirts, bumper stickers, billboards surface throughout a political election, but are they art? When does art become propaganda? Who is making this art? What are the different ways that artists express their political views? Who is the audience? What lasting effect do these works have?

This class could look at and compare political images past and present. We can learn about and talk to artists and young entrepreneurs about their process and motivation behind creating these works. Students will survey and interview people about the impact these images have, and students will create their own series of political artwork to be displayed.

Exhibit!

Why does MOCA show work by certain artists? How is an exhibit curated? What works are maintained on their website?

In this class students will visit various museums and galleries to determine why they exhibit the work that they show. We will look at different themes that exhibitions are based on, and determine how well they work. We will visit different traditional and alternate exhibit spaces to find out how well they function and why they present art in the manner that they do. As a final project, the class will work together to propose, create and install an exhibition of work for the school community.

Hip Hop Stories, Art and Dance

First came rappers, break-dancers, graffiti artists. Then came Hip Hop. To some, it has transformed the world and its influence can be seen all over.

How does one define Hip Hop? What is it really? In this class we will look at a body of written work which is being called Hip Hop fiction and examine the Hip Hop culture that includes art work as well as music and dance. What makes this genre unique? What are the stories being told in Hip Hop fiction? Are these stories any different from stories which have come before?

In this class students will be expected to keep up with reading and writing assignments and participate in class discussions.

Looking For an Argument?

Debate controversial issues in our society. Analyze topics from different points of view and take whatever side of the argument you find most convincing. Propose debate topics. Take notes during debates and do in-class reading of articles that relate to topics being debated. Write in-class essays aimed at giving you the kind of time-limited, pressured writing experiences you can expect to encounter in college. You will need to use your notes and your highlighted readings in order to write these weekly essays.

What's Cooking?

Look at history and geography through cuisine: why are certain ingredients used in a particular country? What historical influences contribute to the creation of a particular dish or regional cuisine? How has the slave trade, for example, influenced the cuisine of Brazil? How has colonialism or imperialism influenced the cuisine of other countries?

