



HARRY BRIDGES K-8 SPAN SCHOOL

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A. SUMMARY ANALYSIS

1. Mission and Vision

School Mission:

The mission of Harry Bridges Span School (Grades K-8) is to provide a world-class education for all students by ensuring a safe, nurturing, and collaborative student-centered environment that fosters student achievement, values effort, and promotes social justice. Through frequent and rich collaboration between community and school, we will educate, challenge, and inspire students to achieve at high levels of academic proficiency and excellence in relation to state and national standards. Working with a diverse set of community partners, from local labor unions to global companies, we will engage students in real-world issues such as the protection of our environment, the global economy, and fair labor practices. The namesake of our school, Harry Bridges, is an icon for West Coast working class people, a leader who championed labor reform, civil rights, and social justice. This school's mission will be to continue his legacy in the community of Wilmington, the Port of Los Angeles, by developing students who possess the foundational and exceptional academic skills and competencies that propel them to success in high school and promote readiness for college and career.

School Vision: Upon matriculation from Bridges, all students will be able to:

- Problem-solve, working in inquiry-based groups, to collaboratively answer meaningful questions and respond to challenging situations and scenarios.
- Think and write critically, channeling their innate curiosity into deeper level investigation and explanation.
- Communicate clearly, citing evidence in order to persuade and defend their reasoning, assertions, and ideas respectfully and in academic language.
- Persevere because they have become resilient, independent thinkers who own their own learning and take responsibility for their own success.
- Move upward through the levels of thinking to reach the higher levels of analysis, evaluation, synthesis, and creativity.
- Reflect on their own learning, understanding alternative ideas, and knowing when and how to revise and refine beliefs and knowledge based upon new evidence.
- Demonstrate a global perspective based upon an understanding of the interconnectedness of community, national, and global influences.
- Understand and articulate the historical, social, cultural, economic, and political factors that have shaped and continue to shape local and global communities.



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- Exercise cultural sensitivity and tolerance for diversity to exemplify a concern for social justice.
- Embark on a pathway toward college eligibility and begin to formulate a potential career trajectory by developing proficiency in core academic areas.

As professional educators, the staff of Bridges believes in...

- A high quality educational experience as the foundation of our commitment to social justice. An excellent education is a civil right.
- Actively involving students in the metacognitive aspects of the learning process.
- Fostering a love of learning, character development, and a sense of responsibility to the greater communities of which each student is a member.
- Meeting the needs of adults and student learners through differentiated learning activities with uncompromising high academic expectations.
- Modeling and reinforcing how effort creates ability and intelligence.
- Organizing ourselves as professionals into weekly collaboration centered on student learning.
- Monitoring student progress and achievement at regular intervals so that data informs and motivates students.
- Partnering with parents and community to provide the best support for all students.

Core Beliefs: At Harry Bridges Span School, all members of the school community believe that the provision of a high quality educational experience is the foundation of our commitment to social justice. Staff, both certificated and classified, will work in a professional learning community that meets the needs of adult and student learners through differentiated learning activities with uncompromising high academic expectations.

Harry Bridges Span School will provide a rigorous, standards-based instructional program that engages all students around a solid academic core curriculum, while also ensuring that diverse student learning needs, particularly those of a student population anticipated to be comprised of nearly half English Learners, are met with differentiated and research-based pedagogy. All students will receive a strong academic foundation organized to promote the importance of attitude and effort, active student involvement and accountability for their own learning. In this way, every Bridges student will matriculate from 8th grade securely prepared for high school success and ready to negotiate a pathway to college eligibility and career readiness.

From the earliest grade levels, English/Language Arts will focus on readability (i.e., Leveled Reading with literal and inferential comprehension). In addition, all students will be expected to write on a daily basis across the different subject areas, with the support structure of the writing process and framework of Units of Study. In mathematics, our unrelenting focus will be on



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building the foundation of Number Sense so that students authentically understand the language of Mathematics and how to perform mathematical operations.

We will infuse algebraic thinking from Kindergarten onward, so that students display and portray quantitative relationships. In addition to knowing how to execute mathematical procedures, students will understand how and why these procedures are utilized.

Staff will hold themselves and each other to a high level of involvement and responsibility for the success of students. A rigorous interview process and Commitment to Work Agreement will be implemented to ensure that all team members are equally dedicated to student success. The most important relationship is that of the student and the teacher in the classroom and all resources, professional development, and activities will be marshaled to support the positive, personalized relationships that ensure success for each student.

2. **School Data Analysis:** The narrative below is based on analysis of multiple sources of data including Feeder Schools Charts, Performance Plan (Appendix E), Decision Support System, LAUSD School Report Cards, Star Reports (2009, 2010, 2011), Performance Meter Data Report (2009, 2010, 2011). (Please See Performance Plan Appendix F)

<i>School Name</i>	<i>CST ELA %Prof - Adv. 2009</i>	<i>CST ELA %Prof- Adv. 2010</i>	<i>CST ELA %Prof -Adv. 2011</i>	<i>CSTE LA Diff, Prof- Adv. 2010- 2011</i>	<i>CST Math %Prof- Adv. 2009</i>	<i>CST Math %Prof- Adv. 2010</i>	<i>CST Math %Prof- Adv. 2011</i>	<i>CST Math Diff, Prof- Adv. 2010- 2011</i>	<i>2011- 2012 API</i>	<i>Met AYP</i>
De La Torre ES	39	37	42	+5	58	50	57	+7	772 (+18)	No
Fries Ave ES	30	34	40	+6	46	57	57	0	735 (-4)	No
Gulf Ave ES	38	46	53	+7	47	50	63	+13	805 (+35)	Yes
Wilmington Park ES	42	42	49	+7	57	50	68	+18	816 (+54)	Yes
Wilmington MS	29	31	38	+7	29	32	36	+4	728 (+54)	Yes



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<i>School Name</i>	<i>%FBB-BB 2009</i>	<i>CST ELA %FBB-BB. 2010</i>	<i>CST ELA %FBB-BB. 2011</i>	<i>CST ELA Diff, FBB-BB 2010-2011</i>	<i>CST Math %FBB-BB. 2009</i>	<i>CST Math %FBB - BB. 2010</i>	<i>CST Math %FBB - BB. 2011</i>	<i>CST Math Diff, FBB-BB 2010-2011</i>
De La Torre ES	25	25	23	-2	17	20	20	0
Gulf Ave ES	27	21	16	-5	29	21	14	-7
Wilmington Park ES	23	23	18	-5	18	25	10	-15
Wilmington MS	34	33	25	-8	42	36	37	+1

<i>School Name</i>	<i>% African American</i>	<i>% American Indian /Alaskan Native</i>	<i>% Asian</i>	<i>% Latino</i>	<i>% Pacific Islander /Filipino</i>	<i>% White</i>
Fries Avenue	1%	1%	0%	97%	1%	1%
De La Torre Jr.	1%	0%	0%	98%	0%	1%
Wilmington Park	1%	0%	0%	97%	0%	1%
Wilmington Middle School	2%	0%	0%	94%	2%	1%



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<i>School Name</i>	<i># of Students to attend Bridges</i>	<i>% Eng. Learner</i>	<i>% Special Education</i>	<i>% GATE Students</i>	<i>% Title 1</i>	<i>Total Enrollment</i>	<i># of Students to Harry Bridges</i>
De La Torre ES	230	54%	9%	3%	94%	762	230
Fries Ave ES	430	51%	10%	2%	93%	764	430
Gulf Ave ES	0	48%	11%	3%	91%	996	0
Wilmington Park ES	75	44%	7%	4%	92%	1,078	75
Wilmington MS	240	22%	14%	10%	82%	1,987	240

Bridges will serve a student population that resides in the eastern portion of Wilmington, California drawing primarily from students currently attending Fries Avenue Elementary, De La Torre Elementary, Wilmington Park Elementary and Wilmington Middle School. Wilmington is a largely working class community located near the Port of Los Angeles. Nearly half of the residents are foreign born, typically from Mexico. More than half (61%) are renters and 50% of the households earn less than \$30,000 annually. More than 30% of the adults in Wilmington lack a high school diploma and only 3.8% have completed a four-year college or advanced professional degree. Wilmington also has a 29% poverty rate among children, which is the highest among the most impoverished communities in the South Bay.

Based on feeder school demographics from the 2010-2011 California Basic Educational Data Survey (CBEDS) our student body demographics will likely be comprised of approximately 97% Hispanic, 2% African American, 1% White, and 1% all other. Of all students enrolled approximately 11% will need special education services, 45% will be English Learners, 90% economically disadvantaged and 5% State Identified Gifted and Talented.

The Bridges Team conducted a critical analysis of all the schools in the feeder pattern. The data was disaggregated for all feeder schools. The opportunities for enhanced student achievement are analyzed in depth in this section as well as the academic growth that has taken place over time at each feeder school.



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The primary elementary schools that will feed into the Harry Bridges Span School have an 81 point difference between the highest and lowest performing schools on the Academic Performance Index (API) for the schools: Wilmington Park 816 and Fries Elementary 735. Wilmington Middle School falls just below Fries with at 728 API. It is also important to note Hawaiian Avenue Elementary School, which is part of the reorganization process, but will not directly feed into Bridges, has a 2011 API of 841; Prof/Adv ratio of 64% in ELA and 74% in Math. These statistics are significantly higher than the respective schools in the reorganization. We will also be involved in collaboration with Park Western Elementary, located in our neighboring community of San Pedro, which has a 2011 API of 952; Prof/Adv ratio of 85% in ELA 94% in Math. Discussions have already begun with the instructional team at Hawaiian Avenue and Park Western, which will continue with more focus in the spring of 2012.

Bridges will receive 24% of our students (K-5) from De La Torre Jr. Elementary. 42% of De La Torre students scored at the Prof/Adv levels for the 2011 ELA California Standards Test. De La Torre has achieved a 14.7% increase in students scoring Prof/Adv over a four-year period in ELA. All grade levels achieved increases in the amount of Prof/Adv students in 2011 except 2nd grade which dropped from 40% to 37%. All grade levels of FBB/BB decreased from 25% in 2010 to 23% in 2011. The one exception is 2nd grade, which increased 3% in 2011 and rose to 10% over a three-year period. In analysis of the major subgroups, 11% of English Learners scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 43% scored FBB/BB. 16% of the Students with Disabilities scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 74% scored FBB/BB. The Latino and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged subgroups mirrored the trends of the overall population.

In mathematics, all grade levels had increases in the Adv/Prof levels in 2011 by an average of 7%. De La Torre's Math Scores have shown a 6% growth in the amount of students scoring Prof/Adv over a four-year period. The overall level of FBB/BB remained stagnant at 20%. Fourth grade indicated an 11% increase in the amount of FBB/BB and second grade had a slight increase in 2011, but an overall two-year increase of 23%. The analysis of the subgroups shows 28% of English Learners scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 35% scored FBB/BB. 23% of the Students with Disabilities scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 50% scored FBB/BB. The Latino and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged subgroups mirrored the trends of the overall population.

While the students from De La Torre have shown growth, in both ELA and Mathematics there are student achievement trends that need to be addressed. Second grade has decreased the amount of Prof/Adv. students in both ELA and Math and significantly increased the amount of FBB/BB students. An analysis of the Kindergarten standards demonstrates the necessity to increase the rigor if students are going to meet the demands of first grade. The English Learner



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population is in need of effective instruction and support that will be provided by the Bridges Community.

Bridges will receive 44% of our students (K-5) from Fries Avenue. 40% of its students scored at the Prof/Adv levels for the 2011 ELA California Standards Test. The school had a 20% growth in the amount of students scoring Prof/Adv over a five-year period in ELA. Fries had an overall increase in the amount of Prof/Adv students in 2011. Third grade had an overall increase of 21% in Prof/Adv over a two year period and 2nd grade had a one year decrease of 7% Prof/Adv to 37%. The data also reveals that only 27% of 5th grade students scored at the Adv/Proficient level, which is 13% lower than the overall school average. There was an overall increase of 1% in the amount of FBB/BB in 2011 to 29% with 2nd, 3rd, and 5th grade all above 30%. Second grade and fifth grade had a 6% and 7% increase respectively. In analysis of the major subgroups, 14% of English Learners scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 50% scored FBB/BB. 0% of the Students with Disabilities scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 75% scored FBB/BB. The Latino and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged subgroups mirrored the trends of the overall population.

In mathematics, 48% of all Fries students scored at the Adv/Prof levels in 2011, which demonstrates zero net growth from the previous year. Fries has had a 22% growth in the amount of students scoring Prof/Adv over a five year period in Math. The data also reveals only 27% of 5th grade students scored at the Adv/Proficient level, which is 13% lower than the overall school average. There was an overall increase of 2% in the amount of FBB/BB in 2011 with 2nd, 3rd and 5th grade all above 30%. Second grade had a 6% increase and fifth grade had a 7% increase respectively. In analysis of the major subgroups, 36% of English Learners scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 33% scored FBB/BB. 24% of the Students with Disabilities scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 67% scored FBB/BB. The Latino and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged subgroups mirrored the trends of the overall population.

A more extensive analysis was conducted with Fries' data because 44% of Bridges' students will come from Fries. The fact that second grade had only 37% of the students at Pro/Adv in ELA and 36 % of students at FBB/BB is critical. The trend has implications for core instruction at the Kindergarten and first grade levels. We will address this trend through our Early Options plan, which includes preschool opportunities and pre-kindergarten assessment screening. Students will be measured for Kindergarten readiness skills. The results will be discussed with parents and activities will be designed that will assist in building deficient skills. The results will also be shared with students' future teachers so they can prepare to differentiate instruction prior to the start of the school year. The Bridges' focus is on readability (i.e., leveled reading with comprehension and fluency) at the earliest levels. Teachers will perform a skill gap analysis



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each year in order to specifically focus on proven instructional strategies designed to meet the analyzed gap. Our expectation is that students will exit Kindergarten at a “D” Reading Level. This expectation, combined with laser like instructional strategies, will ensure both an increase in the levels of P/A as well as a reduction in the FBB/BB Levels in second grade.

There is also a need to look at percentages of students scoring FBB/BB in mathematics. Over 30% of our incoming 2nd, 3rd, and 5th grade students fall into this category. Addressing the results in this area will also be addressed through Early Options prior to entering Kindergarten. Kindergarten students will be tested within the first week of school on an End of Year Assessment. We cover many standards in the beginning of Kindergarten that students have already mastered. We want to ensure we are challenging students and addressing rigor in our program that prepares students for the first grade. In addition, our progress monitoring at regular intervals will ensure students are not regressing at any level.

At Wilmington Park Elementary school, from which 8% of our students (K-5) will come, 49% of all students scored at the Prof/Adv levels for the 2011 ELA California Standards Test. The school had 18% growth in the amount of students scoring Prof/Adv over a five- year period in ELA, which included 7% growth from 2010 to 2011. All grade levels had double digit decreases in the FBB/BB category in mathematics. There was an overall decrease of 15% in the amount of FBB/BB in 2011 to 5% with 5th grade notably reducing by 10%. Second grade remained stagnant and is the only grade that did not reduce the FBB/BB population. In analysis of the major subgroups, 29% of English Learners scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 32% scored FBB/BB. 16% of the Students with Disabilities scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 54% scored FBB/BB. The Latino and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged subgroups mirrored the trends of the overall population.

In mathematics, 68% of all students scored at the Adv/Prof levels in 2011. All grade levels had double digit increases in the Advanced/Proficient levels in 2011. Wilmington Park has had an 18% growth in the amount of students scoring Prof/Adv over a five-year period in Math. There was an overall decrease of 15% in the amount of students in the FBB/BB category with each grade level posting double digit decreases. Fourth grade had a one-year decrease of 10% with only 5% of students in the FBB/BB category. In analysis of the major subgroups, 50% of English Learners scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 16% scored FBB/BB. 44% of the Students with Disabilities scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 19% scored FBB/BB. The Latino and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged subgroups mirrored the trends of the overall population.

Bridges will continue to build on the success of the instructional team of Wilmington Park, especially in the area of mathematics where they outperformed the elementary schools in the total amount of students in the Pro/Adv category by 12% and the Middle School by 32%.



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At Wilmington Middle School, from which we will receive 25% of our students, 38% of all students scored at the Prof/Adv levels for the 2011 ELA California Standards Test. The school has a 19 % growth in the amount of students scoring Prof/Adv over a five-year period in ELA. All grade levels had increases in the amount of Prof/Adv students in 2011, with 8th grade posting a 9% increase. Sixth grade performed relatively lower than the school average with only 35% scoring at Prof/Adv. The school had an overall reduction in the amount of students scoring FBB/BB of 8%. Seventh grade had the highest reduction of 10%. In analysis of the major subgroups, 2% of English Learners scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 74% scored FBB/BB. 3% of the Students with Disabilities scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 80% scored FBB/BB. The Latino and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged subgroups mirrored the trends of the overall population.

In mathematics, all grade levels had increases in the Adv/Prof levels in 2011 increasing an average of 4%. Wilmington Middle School had a 16% growth in the amount of students scoring Prof/Adv over a five-year period. Sixth and Seventh grade each had a 3% growth in this area. There was a 3% drop in the Adv/Prof levels in Algebra for the 2011 school year, but 628 students took the test in the 2011 school year as opposed to 478 students in the previous year. The overall level of FBB/BB grew by 1% to 37%. Sixth and Seventh grade each had a 1% growth respectively at the FBB/BB levels. In analysis of the subgroups, 9 % of English Learners scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 68% scored FBB/BB. 6.9% of the Students with Disabilities scored at the Adv/Prof levels and 83% scored FBB/BB. The Latino and Socio-Economically Disadvantaged subgroups mirrored the trends of the overall population.

The data from our Local District demonstrated that 6th graders who stayed at their elementary school performed better on the CST than did comparable students who moved to middle school. We intend to create a successful K-8 learning environment that will utilize the best of practices at both the elementary and secondary level.

The other trend to be discussed is the fact that only 34% of 6th Grade Wilmington MS students scored Prof/Adv on the CST in Mathematics, yet the average percent of students scoring Prof/Adv at the feeder schools in the 5th grade class in 2009-2010 was close to 60%. This trend will initially be addressed in our vertical articulation meetings designed to take place during our Professional Development. Grade Levels will also discuss essential skills and standards that students need prior to entering sixth grade. This will also be addressed not only in our daily instruction but also through our progress monitoring with weekly pieces centered on Number Sense. Finally, the Road To Algebra will be reviewed during grade level meetings to ensure that students have mastery of the standards at each grade level that build to meet the expectations in Algebra.



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The Design Team felt it was important not only to analyze each feeder school, but also to get a data picture at what it would look like in the first year at Harry Bridges. Here is an example of how we combined the four schools together:

Looking at the percentage of students (Pro/Adv) in Mathematics on the CST in 2010 for each school:

De La Torre	57%
Fries	57%
Wilmington Park	68%
Wilmington MS	36%

We then calculated the percentage each of the schools would be to make up HB:

De La Torre	24%
Fries	44%
Wilmington Park	8%
Wilmington MS	25%

For each school's percentage proficient or advanced we multiplied that by the percentage that will make up HB:

De La Torre	$57\% \times 24\% = 14\%$
Fries	$57\% \times 44\% = 25\%$
Wilmington Park	$68\% \times 8\% = 5\%$
Wilmington MS	$36\% \times 25\% = 9\%$
Total	53%

The overall trends suggest organizing for intervention and differentiation will be a priority. This is especially true for ELA, as 26% of our students will be in the FBB/BB category. We have stated in our Curriculum and Instruction section that we will place great emphasis on early literacy skills. Our Kindergarten students need to culminate at a level where they will demonstrate sufficient reading skills to meet the expectations of beginning at a Level "D" in first grade. Some of the reading behaviors at this level include noticing errors and cross-checking information using several sources of information and tracking print by using their eyes and only using the finger at points of difficulty. These skills will eventually lead students to a Level "P" at third grade, which will be the cornerstone to ensuring students are reading at grade level. All students not progressing in this area, including Middle School, will be progress monitored every six weeks to ensure their success. We also plan to build into our schedule a minimum 1.5- hour



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Literacy Block to ensure daily Independent Work Time. This will allow time for targeted intervention to this population. Teachers will have weekly conversations, during grade level meetings, to discuss strategies and monitor progress to target this group of students. We have also committed to utilizing our resources to purchase an Intervention Coordinator to target this population.

The amount of Advanced/Proficient in the English Learner subgroup for the top two feeder schools is 11%. This will be a particularly strong need at Bridges, especially when one considers the reclassification rate for both schools averages 16%. Our designed interventions will be crucial in assisting this population. The team is reviewing the ELD Curriculum for *Treasures* at the Elementary School and its one-hour allotted time block. We will also take advantage of a 1.5-hour plus ELA block at the Middle School in order to provide time for Tier 2 classroom interventions. In addition, we will implement SDAIE strategies at all grade levels. Teacher Teams will conduct observations of the implementation of these strategies and provide feedback at grade level meetings. Through our Cycle of Inquiry process, Teacher Teams will return to assess the implementation of the work.

One factor to be added to our data in our Culture/Climate and Mission Specific Category was the need to enhance the GATE population, but not just through the lens of identifying students. By adding depth and complexity to the existing lessons, all students will begin to internalize the skills that are often assessed in identifying GATE students.

2. Applicant Team Analysis: (See Applicant History Data Sheet in Appendix E)

The Applicant Team for Harry Bridges Span School has the training, experience, and character to successfully implement this PSC plan with the precision and heart necessary to bring the highest quality education. This plan has taken shape over a 10-month period of research, community meetings, brainstorming, discussion, writing, and editing by teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community members who are committed to the ideals of the plan and the people it will serve.

The Interim Principal who has led the team in creating this PSC plan has a track record that illustrates his experience in improving student achievement. Most recently, at Barton Hill Elementary School, he collaborated with school staff to analyze student data, prepare strategic action plans, and implement instructional interventions and classroom strategies to improve achievement for children at all academic levels. His collaborative efforts with school stakeholders led to a 131-point increase in the school's API in six years. Barton Hill was recognized in 2011 as one of three LAUSD schools with double-digit gains in percentage points; the school also showed sustained growth in English Language Arts over a four-year period. All



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three of the schools recognized have 100% of their students eligible for free and reduced lunches, making their accomplishment of a 20-percentage point increase in proficiency in a four-year period a noteworthy success. This principal has also worked with a large school population (over 800 students) with demographics similar to Bridges, especially in terms of the English Learner population. These students will be a targeted subgroup for Bridges, where 53% of our prospective students have scored at the BB/FBB levels in English Language Arts.

Park Western, Hawaiian Avenue, and Barton Hill were included in the Applicant Data Analysis. The data demonstrates the ability of the group to move forward with the instructional agenda at the new school, especially in the key areas of English language arts and mathematics. All of the API scores of the bold schools are over 800 and include an average of over 20 points on an annual basis, indicating not only the ability to advance students in the Proficient/Advanced range, but also reduce students in the FBB/BB range. The similar schools rank for all of these schools is 8 to 10 for the state of California. The majority of the students at the elementary level are arriving from Fries Avenue Elementary, and the schools listed in bold have demonstrated success with similar groups of students. The demographics for the Design Team included the indicator of 2nd grade FBB/BB in order to illustrate the importance of the team's ability to focus on early literacy. It is clear that the three schools have the ability to intervene early in literacy skills so that few students enter third grade with deficiencies.

The members of the Applicant Team have deep and varied skills and experiences that make them uniquely qualified and ready to take on the task of opening a new and innovative school. Planning meetings have attracted up to 30 dedicated parents, teachers, administrators, and community members, as well as several students who have contributed their ideas to the plan.

Several members are currently working at Hawaiian Avenue Elementary School, mentioned earlier as a positive model for the innovations Bridges will implement. Teachers from Barton Hill, Gulf, Fries, George de la Torre, and Wilmington Park Elementary Schools as well as Wilmington Middle School have given the team insight into the needs of the students who will attend Bridges. Most of the members have served on their School Site Councils and shared-decision-making councils at their schools, making them ready to continue in leadership roles at Bridges. Many members have shown leadership skills as Categorical Program Advisors, GATE Coordinators, STAR Testing Coordinators, Grade Level Chairs, Instructional Coaches, and UTLA Chapter Chairs. This team is comprised of successful teachers who utilize standards-based lessons and research-based pedagogy daily in their classrooms. Most have served as Intervention Teachers, working with struggling students in a variety of ways including during-the-school-day intervention and Saturday intervention in both English Language Arts and Math. They have experience with Response to Instruction and Intervention, differentiated instruction,



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Learning Centers, and the use of technology including Study Island and Accelerated Reader. In order to better serve our EL students, the team (teachers and teacher's aides) has received training in Guided Language Acquisition Development (GLAD) Thinking Maps, and SDAIE, and many are bi-lingual. Several members are Nationally Board Certified, and several team members have credentials and experience in both elementary and secondary schools. Most of the team members work in the Wilmington schools, and many have lived in the community for generations. All can attest to the importance of Bridges as a means to bring an excellent education combined with social services to a severely disadvantaged population.

This team knows that the success of Bridges rests on the faithful and deliberate implementation of this plan. All stakeholders -- school personnel, parents, community, and students -- will be inducted into this new and positive school culture beginning in spring 2012 to ensure a smooth and efficient opening of the school in August. We also believe that the success of this new school environment will be determined by the key component of our mission and vision: We will provide a safe, nurturing, and collaborative student-centered environment that fosters student achievement, values effort, and champions social justice. We are committed to bringing all students to standards mastery by gauging where students are and where they need to be. We are committed to providing the best instruction through collaboration, constant formal and informal assessment, and dedication to true professional development that adapts to changes. We know that through respectful collegiality we will all be school leaders and team builders, open-minded to doing whatever it takes to support our students.

This Applicant Team is well-positioned to implement this plan. This team has the talent and expertise and knows what is working on all grade levels. Not only have we brought our experience as educators, community members, and parents to weekly meetings for the past twelve months, we have also invested many more hours by working in smaller groups to write and edit sections outside of the weekly meeting times. The team has worked collaboratively in challenges that have surfaced, exhibiting in practice the central theme of the plan. Most conversations have centered on student issues. This team has high expectations for students and everyone truly believes all students can learn. In addition, team members have lived and worked in the community and have an intimate knowledge and understanding of the challenges the school will face. With these close ties, team members have been able to reach out to organizations and businesses for support for the Bridges school, which will ensure success.



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Category One: Unwavering Focus on Academic Achievement

B-1 Curriculum and Instruction

a. Instructional Program

Harry Bridges, our namesake and legendary ILWU organizer, famously said, “All I wanted was a decent wage and a good education for my kids.” We view these words as the cornerstone for the development of Harry Bridges Span School (hereafter Bridges). In our working class and largely Latino community of Wilmington, social justice means providing the educational foundation to make college and career readiness a reality for all students.

Bridges is committed to providing a safe, nurturing and collaborative educational environment that fosters student learning, values effort, and promotes social justice by providing a world-class education for our students. Through frequent and rich collaboration between community and school, we will educate, challenge, and inspire our students to achieve at high levels of academic proficiency in relation to state and national standards. In this way, every Bridges student will matriculate from 8th grade securely prepared for high school success and ready to negotiate a pathway to college eligibility and career readiness.

Bridges will provide a rigorous, standards-based instructional program that engages all students around a solid academic core curriculum, while also ensuring that diverse student learning needs, particularly those of a student population anticipated to be comprised of nearly half English language learners, are met with differentiated and research-based pedagogy. All students will receive a strong academic foundation organized to promote the importance of attitude and effort, active student involvement and accountability for their own learning. We are dedicated to utilizing the best practices of both elementary and secondary pedagogy in a consistent, articulated, and unified approach. The SLC will monitor the PSC Instructional Plan on an annual basis and make adjustments according to student achievement data.

In constructing the instructional program for Bridges, we have consciously sought out research on best practices in school settings similar to ours. For example, we have drawn from an EdSource report¹ covering 257 California public elementary schools, which identified the factors

¹ Williams, T., Kirst, M., Haertel, E., et al. (2005). *Similar Students, Different Results: Why Do Some Schools Do Better?* A large-scale survey of California elementary schools serving low-income students. Mountain View, CA: EdSource.



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most highly correlated with improved student academic achievement as measured by the Academic Performance Index. These were (in rank order):

1. Implementing a Coherent, Standards-Based Instructional Program

- The amount of time spent on mathematics and language arts instruction, and the extent to which they are protected from interruption and integrated with other subjects.
- The proportion of teachers in a school who regularly use the same curriculum packages.
- Alignment and consistency in curriculum and instruction, planning and materials.
- Use of state standards to guide curriculum and instruction.
- Use of a standards-based report card.
- Focus on addressing the needs of English learners (EL).

2. Ensuring Availability of Instructional Resources

- Skills, knowledge, and attitudes of the teaching staff at the school.
- Access to qualified support personnel, supplemental financial resources, and supplemental instructional time for students.
- District support for facilities and instructional materials.
- The amount of regular instructional time, including full-day kindergarten and extended school day or year.

3. Using Assessment Data to Improve Student Achievement and Instruction

- Frequency of review of assessment data.
- Teacher use of data to monitor student performance.
- Teacher use of data to inform teaching practice.
- Principal use of data to inform school-wide instructional strategies.
- Principal use of data to monitor and evaluate the practices and performance of teachers.

4. Prioritizing Student Achievement

- Setting clear, high, and measurable expectations for student achievement.
- Teachers and principals taking responsibility for student achievement.
- Priority on meeting State and Federal targets for subgroups of students



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Our design of the curricular and instructional program is also informed by findings from a more recent study on the effectiveness of 303 California public middle schools.² This EdSource study, based on data from 2007-2009, identified a set of characteristics as the most “predictive” or correlated most highly with increased student achievement. These characteristics will guide the design of the instructional program at our school:

Bridges will set goals for improved student outcomes on standards-based tests:

- The curriculum and instructional program will embody clear expectations for improving student outcomes for all students regardless of prior proficiency level.
- Instruction will be guided and modified in relation to measurable goals set by grade level for formative and summative benchmark assessments.
- Bridges will prioritize meeting or exceeding State and Federal accountability targets.

Bridges will exemplify a shared school mission aimed at preparing students academically:

- Curriculum and instruction will be designed to provide strong foundational academic and study skills, including mastery of standards tested on the California Standards Test (CST) and the new national K-12 Core Standards.
- Instruction will promote balanced literacy across the curriculum, as well as common strategies for teaching writing across the curriculum.
- Instruction will be guided by multiple forms of assessment and will include explicit review/examination of student access to a viable, guaranteed curriculum to ensure adequate scope and sequencing of key standards.

Bridges staff will deliver comprehensive and coherent implementation of standards-based curricula and instructional practices:

- Instruction will be closely guided by state academic standards and state-adopted curricula, including a focus on English Language Development (ELD) standards.
- Instruction will emphasize and prioritize key standards in each grade and core subject; teachers will regularly collaborate to “break-down” standards in order to identify prerequisite skills and a variety of specific ways to address them.
- Teachers will regularly collaborate on curriculum pacing, scope, and sequence, as well as development of common benchmarks and formative assessments to design and modify instruction.

² EdSource (2010) *Gaining Ground: Why Some Schools Do Better*. Sacramento, CA.



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Bridges teachers will demonstrate high levels of competence and expertise in terms of:

- Knowing State standards and mapping curriculum to specific instructional practices/strategies.
- Using student assessment data to improve teaching and learning.
- Differentiating curriculum and instruction to meet the learning needs of English Learner (EL) students.
- Understanding child and adolescent development issues and ability to make personal connections with students and their families.
- Working collaboratively with peers in a professional, instructionally-focused manner that puts student needs first.

Bridges is committed to providing a high quality, rigorous academic program for all students, grades K-8. We believe that such an instructional program must be based on providing best first instruction that is informed by research-based pedagogical techniques in order to ensure that all students have access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Bridges will deliver consistent, school-wide approaches to teaching and learning designed to build and reinforce student skills in the areas of problem-solving, reasoning, persuasion, and perseverance.

To provide an academically rigorous instructional program, Bridges will continue to utilize the Instructional Guides and Periodic Assessments adopted by LAUSD as the backbone of the core instructional program until additional curricula are developed (see Curriculum Development and Assessment and Data sections below). The Instructional Guides specify curricular pacing to address key standards, as well as suggested model lessons and practice assessments. Similarly, the Periodic Assessments provide a set of benchmarks for measuring student academic progress tied to the standards “along the way” that can be used to guide and modify instructional delivery. Bridges will take advantage of the flexibility and autonomy afforded in Public School Choice to change how we deliver instruction in order to meet the needs of our students. In as much as instruction is standards-based, deviation from the guides, based on student needs, will involve re-sequencing key standards as often as necessary.

Based on an analysis of achievement data from the elementary and middle schools in the Wilmington community, we estimate our student body to be comprised of 45% English Learners (EL), 90% Economically Disadvantaged (ED), and 10% Students with Disabilities (SWD). Moreover, data indicate that 20%-35% of Bridges’ students (depending on grade level) will demonstrate moderate to severe learning gaps. Therefore, a significant proportion of students will need additional instructional support and overt scaffolding in order to be successful in the core academic program. As such, the Bridges Design Team has come to consensus on three



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research-based instructional strategies that will form the basis of instructional delivery across content areas and grade levels:

1. **Differentiation.** Differentiated instruction is “responsive” teaching that addresses defined student learning needs in a proactive and comprehensive manner. The Bridges approach to differentiation will draw on three research-based frameworks that provide multiple pedagogical strategies for differentiating teaching and learning:
 - *Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE)* is a pedagogical approach that focuses on providing students with scaffolded and differentiated lessons that enable students to access and master rigorous core content through the application of modified speech and explicit modeling by teachers, frontloading of academic vocabulary, student involvement in multi-sensory experiences that address multiple learning modalities, cooperative learning activities³, comprehensible input including use of graphic organizers and other non-linguistic representations⁴ to categorize and organize learning, and frequent checking for student understanding.
 - *Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE)*. We define CRRE as ensuring students receive ample opportunities for: a) Participating in structured peer-to-peer interactions and facilitated cooperative learning experiences; b) Engaging in instructional conversations that employ the use of academic language/vocabulary in each subject area; c) Using higher-level, critical thinking skills including the manipulation of texts and information on their own to make sense and meaning of classroom learning (e.g., synthesis, self-evaluation, inferring, etc.); and d) Practicing written expression by ensuring writing across the curriculum that addresses many genres of writing in all subjects areas.

³ Marzano, R. J. Pickering, J.D., and Pollack, J.E. (2001) *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. See also Hill, J. D. and Flynn, K.M. (2006) *Classroom Instruction that Works with English Language Learners*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

⁴ For example, Thinking Maps are distinct graphic organizers used to scaffold instruction for students in eight fundamental thinking processes (defining in context, describing with adjectives, sequencing and ordering, identifying part/whole relationships, classifying and grouping, comparing and contrasting, analyzing cause and effect, and illustrating analogies). Thinking Maps enable students to organize their thinking and are typically used in conjunction with collaborative learning groups to facilitate brainstorming, pre-writing, and other learning activities that enable students to access and master rigorous content.



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- The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model will also be part of our daily lesson design to individualize instruction. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 2) to incorporate the Gradual Release Model into our lesson design to ensure that student learning is the focal point of our daily instruction. This model defines the stages of scaffolded instruction; represents the mentoring relationship and two-way interaction between the teacher and student; and visually shows how the responsibility of teaching and learning shifts from teacher to student.
2. **Balanced Literacy.** Effective instruction in language, literature and the content areas begins with thoughtful, artful organization and planning. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 3) to supplement the District-adopted curriculum with the Leveled Reading Program and the Lucy Calkins Units of Study in Writing. The supplemental curriculum will not only expand student's reading and writing capabilities but also develop in-depth conceptual knowledge in preparation for the content standards. The level of activity, the content, and the materials may vary by teacher and grade level, but the essential elements of the framework and the expectation for student learning will remain constant in both reading and writing:

Guided Reading: Readability (i.e., leveled reading with comprehension and fluency) has formerly been a missing part of an effective plan for student learning. All students will read fluently at high levels of comprehension as a foundation for literacy. From the earliest grade levels, English Language Arts will focus on ensuring students are matched to text they can readily read with understanding. Guided Reading employs small group instruction for students who read the same text. The group is homogeneous: the students read at about the same level, demonstrate similar reading behaviors, and share similar instructional needs. The small groups (ranging from three to eight students) are temporary; they change as teachers assess student growth and needs. In the small group, teachers introduce a text that the teacher has selected, and then read it silently and independently. Students usually read silently, though teachers might ask individual students to whisper, read aloud, and then talk with a student about the book. Teachers also explicitly teach effective strategies for processing a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts. Teachers determine targeted teaching points based on the reader's needs and extend instruction to fit a learner's next step, or engage a student in brief word work. "Running Records" will be collected on a monthly basis to ensure that students not making adequate progress in attaining grade level benchmarks are provided with timely and targeted intervening instruction. Critical to Guided Reading is that students have daily exposure to text at their current independent reading level and as frequent as possible exposure to their instructional reading level with instructor support.



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Writing Across the Curriculum: In the Bridges' Writing Program students will learn what it means to be a writer: how writers think, plan, compose, revise, and share their work. Fundamental to the program will be a "routine" for writing. The Units of Study provide a structure and a process for transitioning to the expectations in the new common core standards featuring expository, narrative, and informational genres. Writing is a daily activity, rather than a series of assignments. The three contexts of our writing will be independent writing, guided writing, and investigational writing. The three contexts make it possible to offer students more instruction and guidance in specific aspects of writing, and they also allow students to write across the broad range of topics included in the content curriculum.

We believe that effective learners demonstrate their ability to produce competent writing by writing across the curriculum. Students will write daily based on the following principles:

- a) Writing promotes learning.
- b) Integration of writing and the writing process promotes student ownership, a diversity of student voices, and engages students as critical thinkers while promoting their written work as important resources and thinking tools.
- c) Effective writing instruction integrates subject area disciplines.
- d) The opportunity to write in every subject develops effective writers.
- e) Using writing as part of instruction can be used in every classroom.
- f) Only by practicing the thinking and writing conventions of an academic discipline will students begin to communicate effectively within that discipline.

Bridges will be a "school of writers". Students will be expected to write on a daily basis across various subject areas of curriculum using Units of Study. Units begin with an on-demand assessment and progress through a 20-day cycle culminating in an End-of-Unit On-Demand Assessment to complete the cycle (See Example in Appendix H). All Bridges students will write fluently, coherently, and with correct usage/syntax as developmentally appropriate. The expectations for length and quality of writing will grow as students progress through grade levels.

Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) – a research based computer reading assessment program based on the *Lexile Framework for Reading*. The *Lexile Framework* will assist teachers with a way to measure students' reading ability and a matched Lexile level. The most powerful feature



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of the *SRI* is its ability to administer a fast, reliable low-stakes assessment that can inform instruction and help educators place students into flexible accurate placements for continued study. Aligned to the CST, *SRI* helps educators forecast student achievement on these high stakes tests. Implementation in Year 1 will be based on availability of funding.

3. **Constructivist Pedagogy and Applied Learning.** A constructivist framework challenges teachers to create environments in which they and their students are encouraged to think and explore. This pedagogy will be fundamental to our core instruction, especially in fidelity to the standards for mathematical practice. However, we are also committed to imparting a relevant educational experience that takes advantage of our proximity to the Port of Los Angeles to promote a truly global vision for student development that draws on diversity of culture and language, international commerce and trade, widespread use of technology, and interconnected networks of transportation and logistics as examples of how learning is applied in real-world settings right here in the Wilmington community. We will ensure that students have opportunities to participate in learning that is connected to real-life applications that showcase how learning is used in community and career or workplace settings so students understand how and why what they are learning is important. We believe students will be more likely to retain knowledge and skills that draw on the context and applications in the surrounding community, leveraging the interconnectivity between local, regional, national, and international communities. Beginning in Kindergarten students will be exposed to the concept of a Global Economy, especially in relation to Wilmington and the Port of Los Angeles. At each subsequent grade level students will be introduced annually to more advanced experiences regarding the global economy through thematic projects in each grade level as well as out of classroom experiences. Matriculating 8th graders will produce a culminating project in which they research an issue related to the international trade, considering the roles of the three components of the Port economy (government, business, and labor). The response will include both a written and presentation piece (i.e. power point, video, guest speaker invited by the student). In addition, the final presentation will include 15 hours of school volunteer work during the 7th and 8th grade that relates to the individual role in the global economy.

All Bridges students will receive an instructional program that incorporates the regular use of the aforementioned strategies. We believe these instructional strategies are mutually reinforcing and complementary. As such, they provide a common “toolkit” for designing classroom teaching practices and student learning activities that will enable us to reach our vision of all students matriculating to high school with the academic foundation necessary to graduate from high school, college eligible and career ready.



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b. Core Academic Curriculum

In all subject areas, students will participate in scaffolded classroom discussions aimed at helping them access, comprehend, organize, and synthesize information. The teacher facilitates these instructional conversations where students actively engage in the discussions with each other. The teacher leads with a question or topic and the students respond to one another helping to meet the language objective of each lesson. Students will learn rigorous content based on State and newly developed national core standards, as well as receive training on how to learn and master new and increasingly complex knowledge and skills. Our aim is to provide an educational experience where students no longer compartmentalize learning. Instead, students will regularly participate in thinking, reading, and writing across the curriculum. Students will learn transferrable academic skills that will carry them not only through school but also in their future careers.

Upon matriculation from Harry Bridges Span School, our vision is that all students will be able to:

- Problem-solve independently and with inquiry-based groups to collaboratively answer meaningful questions, situations, and scenarios.
- Think and write critically, channeling their innate curiosity into deeper level investigation and explanation.
- Communicate clearly, citing evidence in order to persuade and defend their reasoning, assertions, and ideas respectfully using appropriate academic language
- Persevere because they have become resilient, independent thinkers who own their own learning and take responsibility for their own success.
- Move upward through levels of thinking to reach higher levels of analysis, evaluation, synthesis of information, and creativity.
- Reflect on their own learning, understand alternative ideas and demonstrate the ability to revise and refine their beliefs and knowledge based on new evidence.
- Demonstrate a global perspective, based on an understanding of the interconnectedness of community, national, and global influences.
- Understand and articulate the historical, social/cultural, economic, and political factors that have shaped and continue to impact our local and global communities.
- Exercise cultural sensitivity and acceptance of diversity to exemplify a concern for social justice.



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- Embark on a pathway toward college eligibility and begin to formulate a potential career trajectory by developing proficiency in core academic areas.

For the core academic curriculum, Bridges will continue to utilize many of the curricular resources provided by LAUSD. In the first one to two years of PSC implementation, we will use the autonomy provided by PSC to design additional curricula (see Curriculum Development below). While these are being developed, Bridges will use the Instructional Guides, which provide guidance on curricular pacing and concept lessons. We will also continue to use the district assessments, which provide standards-aligned benchmarks on student progress and form a basis for progress monitoring. All textbooks, Universal Access materials, and other supplemental materials will adhere to guidelines from the State Board adoptions.

Under PSC, Bridges will strengthen and augment district curricular resources by implementing cohesive policies and strategies to strengthen student learning in the core academic curriculum. In all content areas, Bridges will promote balanced literacy and common researched based strategies for teaching writing across the curriculum. We will also adopt school-wide practices and protocols for promotion of academic vocabulary and cooperative learning. In addition, there will be a consistent focus on development of academic English language proficiency and Algebra proficiency.

In English Language Arts the core curriculum will center on matching students to appropriate text and reading with meaning. By this we mean leveled reading with comprehension and fluency in all textual genres, and with equal weighting of fiction and non-fiction texts. As students progress through Bridges, more emphasis will be placed on expository reading and writing as preparation for high school. Concretely, this necessitates students spending regular extended periods of time reading high quality, ability appropriate text in small and large group settings (e.g., Read Alouds, Shared Reading, etc.). In addition, interactions with text will be designed to build both oral and written language. Classroom pedagogy will focus on helping students practice communication and discussion of ideas, with learning extensions aimed at cultivating negotiation, debate, and presentation skills. Throughout, students will receive frequent opportunities for practicing oral and written language, with infused SDAIE/CRRE pedagogy in all classrooms. In this way, Bridges is committing to ensuring that all students achieve at grade level within an accelerated framework. Our goal in Leveled Reading will be for all students to be beginning readers by the end of Kindergarten, and all students will be fluent readers upon entrance to 3rd grade. This will begin with our expectation that Kindergarten students will culminate with a benchmark of Level “D” and our 7th graders leave with a benchmark of a level “Y” or beyond. Grade-level teams will conduct regular focused discussions surrounding students who are not progressing at adequate levels, especially at the K-2 levels. Every six weeks, teachers will progress-monitor reading levels in order to adjust



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instruction. Running Records will be consistently reviewed for students not making adequate progress so that intervention can occur. All common core standards succeeding Grade 2 are built with the assumption that students are accessing text at their grade level.

For English Language Development (ELD), Bridges will use a standards-based approach that is aligned with the Common Core Standards. Bridges will allocate daily instructional time to teach English and ELD standards to students whose primary language is one other than English. Teachers are ensuring that language instruction addresses the domains of the ELD Standards and of the CELDT: listening and speaking, reading, and writing across the curriculum to ensure access to the core curriculum at each grade level. Bridges will utilize the District-adopted curriculum in ELD. Key research-based strategies and techniques will be used during ELD such as Thinking Maps, cooperative and communal learning, think-pair-share, linguistic patterning, realia, chants, songs, and poems. ELD instruction will carefully monitor student progress in meeting the goal of advancement one ELD level annually on the CELDT, particularly among ELD level 3 (Intermediate) students who tend to level off without overt support and monitoring.

For Mathematics, we believe in a standards-based approach that is centered on the mathematical practices of the new Common Core Standards. These emphasize the importance of students being able to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. Students need to be able to put mathematical problems into the framework of their own thinking and then utilize effort and known processes to solve problems. We view Algebra I as the culminating middle school course that all students must complete and pass. By affording students a foundation in mathematical procedures and conceptual understanding, they will then be positioned to take higher-level math courses and meet A-G requirements in high school. Bridges provides a unique advantage as a K-8 school in that we will have built-in articulation in math, especially on the key standards that are incrementally developed leading to success in Algebra.

Teachers will collaboratively select specific hands-on activities that support the standards and arrive at appropriate benchmarks of achievement for their grade level in each mathematical strand: number sense, algebra and functions, measurement and geometry, statistics, data analysis, and probability. They will utilize the gradual release model in their concept delivery where the teacher shows the concept by modeling, then the teacher and the whole class do it together, the students do it amongst themselves through cooperative grouping, and finally the student independently completes the task on their own meeting the objective of the lesson. In kindergarten and the primary grades, number sense will be critical to long-term success. Manipulative-based activities, mental mathematics and EnVision textbooks will be used to create a strong conceptual base upon which to build higher mathematics understanding in subsequent years. Appropriate practice will strengthen automaticity of number facts and computation skills



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and provide students with necessary tools for the confident application of math skills through strength in number sense.

Teachers will work collaboratively at each grade level and across grade levels to create an integrated and consistent math program. Instruction will utilize hands-on learning experiences, address different learning modalities, and create a balance between independent and collaborative student work as well as teacher- directed and student-centered work. We will use a variety of instructional tools that are designed to capture the interest of students: interactive computer programs and Internet research; video and related media technology; textbooks and other reading materials; hands-on materials and activities, especially for science and mathematics; experiential learning simulation activities; and projects designed to use the skills and concepts taught.

In preparing for school wide use of the Common Core Standards, Harry Bridges will stress not only procedural skill but also conceptual understanding, to make sure students are learning and absorbing the critical information they need to succeed at higher levels. There will be an emphasis on multiple pathways to solving problems.

According to the National Research Council's report *Adding It Up*, the following skills are essential for a deep understanding of mathematics: adaptive reasoning, strategic competence, conceptual understanding (comprehension of mathematical concepts, operations and relations), procedural fluency (skill in carrying out procedures flexibly, accurately, efficiently and appropriately), and productive disposition (habitual inclination to see mathematics as sensible, useful, and worthwhile, coupled with a belief in diligence and one's own efficacy)⁵. K-1 students the first school year and K-8th grade the following years will use the Common Core Standards. All students will learn how to use the following mathematical practices taken from the Common Core Standards. Focus on the eight mathematical practices found in the Common Core State Standards listed below will guide the students at Bridges in becoming mathematically proficient:

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
4. Model with mathematics

⁵ Common Core Standards Initiative Website.



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5. Use appropriate tools strategically
6. Attend to precision
7. Look for make use of structure
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

In the first year (i.e., 2012 – 2013), K-1 will learn the Common Core Standards and 2-7 will learn state content standards. In subsequent years, all grade levels will transition to the Common Core Standards. Bridges teachers will strengthen and augment the LAUSD district adopted math series, *Envision*, with materials and teaching strategies taken from Marilyn Burns, Marcy Cook, Kim Sutton, and John de Walle. Teachers will select materials to meet the needs of all of their students, including students well below and well above grade level standards, SEL, ELL, special needs students and/or gifted.

Quarterly district benchmark assessments will provide percentages of mastery for each tested standard for each student. Tests from the state-adopted *Envision* program will be administered to assess whether specific standards within the mathematical strands are met.

Science will be an active, exploratory experience for students at Bridges. We believe that scientific knowledge advances when scientists observe objects and events, think about how they relate to what is known, test their ideas in logical ways, and generate explanations that integrate the new information into the established order. The best way for students to appreciate the scientific enterprise, learn important scientific concepts, and develop the capacity to think critically is to actively construct ideas through their own inquiries, investigations, and analyses. All grade levels at Bridges will provide a Science program that is framed by the standards embedded in investigation and experimentation. Bridges will follow the LAUSD Science Instructional Guide, including recommendations for FOSS implementation, so that teachers receive the support needed to ensure that students have received the science content specified by the Science Content Standards. In grades 6-8, middle school teachers will use an explicitly inquiry-based approach that establishes connections between Earth/Space Science, Physical Science, and Life Science. At all grade levels, students will be exposed to scientific issues related to the port and global trade. This curriculum will be developed during the 2012-2013 School Year utilizing the current grade level science framework.

History/Social Studies will emphasize the global perspective of government, business and labor, and will be developed at each grade level using the California Content Standards. It will encompass the chronological study of history, but more importantly develop cause and effect analysis, research skills and a sense of historical empathy through the use of literature. Bridges will use its close proximity and relationship to the Port of Los Angeles as a launching point to connect history/social studies lessons from global to our local history, economy and current events. In addition, we will incorporate social justice and civic values throughout history lessons,



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to stay true to our namesake, Harry Bridges. Our school has partnered with the Harry Bridges Institute in San Pedro in order to utilize historical resources pertaining to the life of Harry Bridges.

Because the 21st century is propelled by technology, all students will practice and master research and media skills to effectively use technology as a tool for teaching and learning. The core academic program will be supplemented via expanded student use of technology in the classroom; students will use technology for multi-media presentations, online research, and online learning tools sequenced with course curricula. In addition, we envision all Middle School students accessing on-line supplemental educational URLs in order to maximize classroom time for hands-on inquiry projects in the classroom. For example, iPod technology will be used to access existing lessons and demonstrations (e.g. Khan Academy) as well as field based projects (e.g. filming global transportation in action). In addition, we will begin exploration around the “flipped classroom”, where homework centers on introduction to concepts through technology so that classroom instruction focuses on implementation and individualized instruction.

Environmental Education will be integrated into the literacy, science and math curricula, giving students opportunities to experience multiple entry points to literacy, numeracy, the sciences, health and nutrition. Green technologies, related to the Port of Los Angeles, will be utilized and explored.

Visual and Performing Arts Instruction is essential to create an engaging learning environment at the Bridges School. We value the creative process as well as the product, and will foster an engaging learning environment with arts instruction (with support of the Arts Education Branch), experiential learning, and enriched assessment. We will collaborate around curriculum, mapping the instruction so that interdisciplinary concepts emerge that encourage cross-curricular integration, and the use of multiple intelligences to structure learning opportunities for all students. The creative, visual, and performing arts (dance, music, theater, visual arts, media arts, poetry, and creative writing) will be utilized to document and demonstrate what students know and are able to do in all disciplines. In addition, all students will be encouraged to continue to explore and develop their artistry and share it with the community.

Use of Curricular Autonomy

Bridges is committed to taking advantage of curricular and instructional autonomy provided under the Public Schools Choice (PSC) process to implement innovative practices aimed at maximizing student learning and engagement. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 3) to incorporate project based learning related to the port that will be developed in the first year. By exposing students to frequent opportunities to apply and connect



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learning to the Port of Los Angeles in our backyard, we intend to actively engage students, encouraging applications of conceptual knowledge, and promoting a problem-solving and critical-thinking mindset. Autonomy will be beneficial in this respect insofar as the development of these kinds of lessons will require re-sequencing of content standards and development of performance-based assessments that measure student mastery in ways that are different from more traditional multiple choice or even constructed response assessments. Our emphasis on applied learning and “big” ideas (i.e., how to learn, rather than merely what to learn) will be aided by autonomy in designing curriculum and instruction that targets competencies that transfer beyond school including:

- Oral presentation skills
- Critical reading/thinking/questioning
- Cogent expository writing
- Explicit citations of hypotheses and evidence
- Summarizing, categorizing, and synthesis skills
- Use of technology for discernment of research and real-life applications

I. Curriculum Development (See Appendix H)

Although we intend to use the district-adopted curricula in both the academic core and for targeted intervention, our plans to supplement these curricula with the Units of Study and Guided Reading will require a plan for integrative implementation. We plan to use our first year under PSC (2012-13) to work within PLCs on developing and articulating how these supplemental curricula are used in conjunction with district instructional materials. In particular, we need to streamline a plan for how these “tools” will be used as vehicles for meeting student needs and standards mastery without unnecessarily complicating expectations for classroom teachers. Our aim is to focus on Tier 1 of Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI2) in Year 1 (2012-2013), ensuring that every student received differentiated in-class interventions. However, Bridges will also focus on the development of Tier 2 (strategic) and Tier 3 (intensive) interventions for struggling students since 25% of our students fall in the FBB/BB category in ELA and math. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 3) to incorporate an additional one hour site obligation each Thursday for teacher professional collaboration based on available funds. The hour will be utilized for grade level/content teams to discuss intervention strategies for struggling students, analyze data, and create formative assessments based on student need.



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For our culminating 8th grade project, Bridges will spend 2013-14 developing a curriculum that is more project-based and interdisciplinary tied to our focus on the Port of Los Angeles. We have access to high school curricula from our primary feeder school (Banning High) as well as Port of Los Angeles High. Port of Long Beach also has developed some curricula with math applications in this area of focus. Nonetheless, we will need to investigate and adapt these curricula to the K-8 grade levels.

During 2012-13, Bridges will also create a curriculum for Advisory Periods for grades 6-8 focused on ensuring that students receive a personalized educational experience as part of the critical middle school years. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 3) to incorporate to the Providence Little Company of Mary ACES Curriculum (Adolescent Coping Education Series) along with programs, such as The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens, to provide a curriculum that meets the needs of our Middle School Students. The Advisory Period will be organized as grade level groupings with an assigned advisor who will stay with the students (i.e., looping) from 6th to 8th grade. The middle school Advisory Period will focus on individualized goal-setting in relation to demonstrating mastery on the CSTs and CELDT, as well as articulating a pathway toward college/career readiness. The Advisory curriculum will draw on materials from Providence Little Company of Mary focused on adolescent developmental needs.

i. Management of Multiple Schools (Not Applicable)

c. WASC Accreditation (Not Applicable)

d. Addressing the Needs of All Students

Our experiences as educators have shown us there is a need for more scaffolding and differentiation of instruction that provides multiple approaches to content, process and product through student-centered pedagogical techniques and strategies. We know that all students do not learn the same way or at the same rate. For instance there are notable differences in how students learn phonics and develop phonemic awareness. Therefore, we will differentiate instruction for our learners from the earliest point in a child's education and embed differentiation into everything we do at Bridges.

Simply stated, differentiated instruction is teaching with student variance in mind. It means starting where the kids are rather than adopting a standardized approach to instruction that presumes all learners of a given age or grade level are essentially functioning at like learning levels. Thus, differentiated instruction is "responsive" teaching rather than "one-size-fits-all". A more complete definition of differentiated instruction is that a teacher proactively plans varied approaches to the content of students' learning and considers many methods in order to deliver



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the ways in which they will learn it. Students can demonstrate what they have learned in order to increase the likelihood that each student will learn as richly and deeply as he or she can in as efficient a way as possible. Concretely, teachers do this by differentiating content (what), process (how), and product (evaluation) in their classrooms.⁶

Bridges is committed to providing consistent access for all students to standards-based curricula that embody high expectations for academic achievement, as well as differentiated instruction that takes into account different learning styles, socio-cultural influences and possible learning disabilities so that students receive individualized, personalized pedagogy. The key instructional strategies that will be implemented school-wide include commitment to providing embedded, in-class differentiation. In addition, instructional technology can play an important role in promoting differentiation. For example, a group of students at grade level could utilize on-line technology to practice skills, enabling a teacher to provide targeted instruction to struggling students. We will also implement grade level teaming to facilitate and structure differentiation. Our constant goal is to provide access to the curriculum for all students, including student with special needs, students of poverty, students with disabilities, gifted students, English Learners (EL), Standard English Learners (SEL), and young children, ages 0-5.

Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE) will also provide an educational framework for ensuring that differentiation is implemented throughout the school. The central elements⁷ of CRRE that will inform the instructional program at Bridges include:

- *Communication of High Expectations.* Rejecting deficit-based thinking in favor of an authentic belief that students from culturally diverse and low-income backgrounds are capable learners. High expectations will be consistently communicated based upon a genuine respect for and belief in student capability.
- *Cultural Sensitivity.* Gaining knowledge of the cultures and languages represented in classrooms and translating this into instructional practice. Teachers will harness diversity

⁶ Tomlinson, C. (2001) *How to Differentiate in Mixed Ability Classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. See also Tomlinson, C. and McTighe, J. (2006). *Integrating Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design: Connecting Contents and Kids*, Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

⁷ For this framework, we have borrowed heavily from the typology from The Knowledge Loom (www.knowledgeloom.org). For the research and theoretical foundation of these approaches see for example, Gloria Ladson Billings (1994) in *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass Publishers and “But That’s Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy” (1995) in *Theory Into Practice* (34:3), pp. 159-165. Tyrone C. Howard, “Culturally relevant pedagogy: ingredients for critical teacher reflection,” in *Theory Into Practice* (Summer 2003)



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for intellectual exploration by “bridging” learning experiences so that students “choose” academic excellence.

- *Culturally Mediated Instruction.* Ensuring that students develop and/or maintain cultural competence through connection to community, national, and global identities. Instruction will be characterized by the use of culturally mediated cognition, culturally appropriate social situations for learning, and culturally valued knowledge in curricular content.
- *Reshaping the Curriculum.* Providing students with experiences that showcase academic success by legitimizing students’ real-life experiences as part of the official curriculum.
- *Active Teaching Methods.* Believing that the co-construction of knowledge is the foundation of the teacher-student relationship. Instruction will engage students in active roles in crafting curriculum and developing learning activities.
- *Small Group Instruction.* Providing students with more collective, collaborative learning experiences, as well as options for demonstrating mastery of skills and standards in learning groups.
- *Teacher as Facilitator of Dialogue.* Developing students’ critical thinking skills through reflective discussions and learning experiences that challenge the status quo (i.e., to critique the cultural norms, values, mores, and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities).
- *Student Controlled Classroom Discourse.* Providing students with the opportunity to control some portion of lessons, so that teachers gain insights into the way that speech and negotiation are used in the home and community.

In addition, we believe that it is essential to provide quality student support services and early academic interventions to bolster student preparation and performance. Towards this end, Bridges will implement a comprehensive Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI²) to meet the needs of all students. As described by LAUSD in Bulletin 4827.1, RtI² is based on supporting students with systematic intervention and extended learning opportunities. In particular, this means designing a tiered “pyramid of intervention” that clearly defines the entry and exit criteria for academic intervention and referral to other “intervention” services.⁸ RtI² is an integrated approach using pedagogy, lesson design, and progress monitoring data to ensure the best instructional decisions for students, to ensure that every student will receive quality, standards-based instruction in all content areas to enable all students to graduate College Prepared and Career Ready.

⁸ For a description of the “Pyramid of Interventions” please see DuFour, R., Eaker, R., Karhanek, G. and DuFour, R. (2004). *Whatever it Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond when Kids Don’t Learn*.



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The RtI² framework establishes a process for providing increasing levels of instructional time and intensity whereby the needs of all learners are identified, supported early and effectively, and high performing students have access to appropriately accelerated learning. The RtI² framework is based on the provision of good, quality, first instruction and the use of data to identify students for appropriate acceleration and interventions. RtI² implementation is everyone's responsibility and advances academic achievement through frequent progress monitoring, on-going data collection and analysis as well as the provision of immediate, evidence-based intervention for students who need it. The intensity, frequency, and duration of support increases and student-teacher ratio decreases as students move up the tiers.

In this plan, Tier 1 of RtI² functions as the instructional program that all students receive in order to succeed in school. Teachers at Bridges will provide instruction that is differentiated, culturally responsive, evidence-based and aligned to grade-level, content standards. All students will have universal access to this high-quality instruction (i.e., the right of all students to have equal opportunity and access to high quality, grade-level instruction and behavioral support, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, background, or disabilities). Differentiation will occur through modifications to the content (what is taught), process (how it is taught), product (how learning is demonstrated), and/or resources available in the classroom (core program or supplementary materials). In order to differentiate instruction to maximize student growth, teachers will add depth and complexity to the curriculum, scaffold lessons, pre-assess students to form flexible groupings, implement interest and/or learning centers, employ appropriate instructional strategies such as front-loading, questioning, allowing for independent study, previewing, reviewing, and re-teaching. Students often need more time engaged in academic language to help them advance. School-wide uses of strategies such as "Think, Pair, Share" allow students to express their thinking. Similarly, sentence frames and starters provide a scaffold for students to participate fully in academic discussions. We view academic vocabulary as an essential element for students to access the curriculum. *Words Their Way* will be utilized to assist students with vocabulary development at their instructional level.

Tier 2 will include the set of strategic interventions for targeted groups of students who have experienced academic setbacks and need accelerated intervention and support to access the core curriculum. Strategic intervention will be implemented for 10%-15% of students that need additional time and type of instruction to learn successfully through more intensive (time and focus) instruction aligned to instructional needs based on data from multiple measures. Strategic interventions will give students more time to learn either by using an instructional strategy used in the core or a different pedagogy - whichever benefits the student more. Tier 2 and Tier 3 services at Bridges may include services of an Intervention Coordinator, if we can get funding.



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Tier 3, known as “Intensive Intervention,” will be for an estimated 1-5% of students that need individualized and/or very small-group instruction that is highly focused and designed to accelerate student progress. Tier 3 will include use of curricula, pedagogy, or instruction that is different from Tier 1 and Tier 2 because student assessment data indicate that academic or behavioral progress is delayed despite well-implemented instruction/intervention. Progress monitoring at Tier 3 will be more frequent, drawing on assessments that provide in-depth information about a student’s instructional needs and are used to identify academic deficits. In addition, close monitoring will allow for the adjustment of curricula and instruction/intervention. Tier 3 services are not synonymous with special education services, but are rather a critical step in providing intensive intervention so that students have an additional opportunity to succeed and learn.

In designing intervention in Tier 2 and Tier 3, Bridges will develop a Coordination of Services Team (COST) structure that connects referred students to outside service providers, as well as the Student Success Team (SST) focused on addressing persistent learning difficulties for specific students. Subject area teachers, intervention teachers, and parents will meet to develop and monitor individual learning plans (ILP) for all students referred to Tier 2 or Tier 3. These ILPs will be regularly revisited to assess progress within interventions.

The aforementioned framework and methodologies will be incorporated into our daily instruction in working with the following groups of students in addition to the strategies mentioned below:

English Learners:

- A key focus group that comprises over 40% of our student population, but contains only 11% in the Advanced/Proficient Category in ELA on the CST.
- A rigorous language arts curriculum that focuses on targeted instruction for early literacy.
- 1.5 hour daily literacy block at Middle School for small and flexible groupings in providing differentiated instruction.
- Focus on CRRE, SDAIE, Think/Pair/Share and implementation of the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model for Lesson Design.
- Response to Intervention and Instruction for EL Learners.
- CELDT Boot camp for students that qualify for reclassification in all areas, except designated areas on the CELDT.



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Students with Disabilities:

- Commitment to full integration as appropriate per Individualized Education Goals.
- Personalized learning environment and Advisory Period.
- Frequent formative assessments to monitor progress and change instruction to meet the needs of the learner.
- Response to Intervention and Instruction for Students with Disabilities.
- Peer-to-Peer mentoring to establish relationships and build trust in a collaborative learning environment.

Students of Poverty:

- A focus group that comprises over 90% of our student population.
- Commitment to fund psychiatric social worker to meet social and emotional challenges of population.
- Establishment of student mentoring and advisory programs to build a personalized learning environment.
- Establishment of parent center with outreach and training to build the capacity of the parents and community to assist with the educational process.
- Extended opportunities in after school programs.

Gifted Students:

- A key focus on identification of more students in this population.
- Accelerated learning opportunities through Leveled Reading, Algebra, and Annual Student Project on the Global Economy, Port of LA internships and Leadership.
- Extended teacher training on the inclusion of depth and complexity in daily lessons.
- Development of learning opportunities focused on this population (i.e., Advanced Class for Robotics).
- Connections to the Port of Los Angeles High School and International Trade Academy for extended learning opportunities.

Standard English Learners:

- Incorporate teaching methodology for English Learners including CRRE, SDAIE, Think/Pair/Share and implementation of the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model for Lesson Design.
- A rigorous language arts curriculum that focused on targeted instruction for early literacy



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- 1.5 hour daily literacy block at Middle School for small and flexible groupings in providing differentiated instruction.
- Continuous monitoring of formative assessments in both ELA and Mathematics to ensure student mastery.

In designing intervention in Tier 2 and Tier 3, Bridges will develop a Coordination of Services Team (COST) structure that connects referred students to outside service providers, as well as the Student Success Team (SST) focused on addressing persistent learning difficulties for specific students. Subject area teachers, intervention teachers, and parents will meet to develop and monitor individual learning plans (ILP) for all students referred to Tier 2 or Tier 3. These ILPs will be regularly revisited to assess progress within interventions.

e. Vertical Articulation

Harry Bridges is committed to creating a community-based school through frequent and rich collaboration among all members of the community. Creating authentic articulation that vertically links within the school, as well as partnerships with the community is critical to the Harry Bridges mission, vision, and core beliefs.

Early Childhood (Preschool)

Beginning with families enrolling children in our Preschool program, a mandatory orientation program will inform families of our mission, vision, and core beliefs. Families will understand that Bridges expects every child to matriculate from 8th grade securely prepared for high school success and ready to negotiate a pathway to college eligibility and career readiness. Families will understand that they will serve as partners with the school in this process. We will screen all students entering Kindergarten to assess “readiness skills” as well as provide parents resources to strengthen academic skills prior to entering kindergarten.

Within School (K-8)

Key academic standards will be identified at each grade level to guarantee efficient transitions from one grade level to the next. Professional development, grade level meetings, leadership meetings, and psychomotor blocks will allow staff to align structures and protocols that will move with the child from K-8. Common school wide instructional themes such as note-taking, instructional conversations, balanced literacy, and graphic organizers will support intra-school articulation. End of the year orientations and accompanying packets will give students and families the opportunity to understand the expectations of the next grade level before the start of summer break.



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With High School

Beginning in the 6th grade, students will research SLC options and career pathways. Bridges will collaborate with Banning HS Small Learning Communities (SLCs), especially the International Trade Academy. Field trips and guest speakers will help students prepare to make informed decisions on the way to high school. Bridges will keep families informed of high school expectations and options. There will also be collaboration with the Port of Los Angeles High School to study curriculum models and culminating projects relating to the concept of the impact of global trade on business, environment, and labor.

Postsecondary

Harry Bridges will create linkages to postsecondary institutions such as Harbor College, El Camino College, and CSUDH. Field trips and guest speakers at all grade levels will help students embark on a pathway toward college eligibility and support them as they begin to investigate potential career trajectories.

Horizontal Articulation

Harry Bridges will connect with other Wilmington based elementary and middle schools to form an “extended family” or regional network of schools that meet the specific needs of the Wilmington community. As part of collaboration with District 8 Schools we will partner with Park Western Elementary and Caroldale Learning Center (K-8). Park Western has demonstrated success and has expertise in the area of Units of Study and Leveled Reading. We will utilize their teachers as a resource for curriculum workshops and professional development. Caroldale has been in operation as a K-8 Span school for over a decade, which makes them a valuable resource for instructional initiatives, especially at the Middle School Level. Bridges is also committed to collaborating with neighboring schools such as Hawaiian Avenue, to refine our instructional practices and continue learning from successful models.

f. Early Care and Education

Research Studies have indicated a return on preschool investment in savings for schools and society at a conservative estimate of two dollars to as much as thirteen dollars for every dollar spent.⁹ The need is even more apparent in Wilmington, where there are more than 1200 eligible

⁹ Calman, Leslie J. and Tarr-Whelan, Linda (2005). *Early Education for All: A Wise Investment*. Recommendations arising from, “The Economic Impacts of Child Care and Early Education: Financing Solutions for the Future” a conference sponsored by Legal Momentum’s Family



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children who cannot be served in preschool due to lack of space. As a result, Wilmington is ranked 19th in all of the LAUSD for highest need of preschool space.

Our first priority will be to work with the LAUSD Early Education Division to establish two State Preschools at the Bridges school site. All students ages 3-5 will be offered a comprehensive program on site through the State Pre-school model of two three hour classes per teacher. We plan to have two teachers, which will ensure we are able to service approximately 96 preschool age students. The school will market the State Preschool Program through the current student population at the site as well as in the community. Contacts will be made with all Preschool Programs that feed into Bridges because Bridges will not have enough seats for all of the potential applicants and we want to ensure every child has access to a preschool program.

Each spring, there will be an Early Options fair at Bridges. Every child entering Kindergarten at Bridges will be provided with a screening assessment that measures his or her readiness skills. This will serve to not only ensure adequate placement for the child, but also to provide opportunity for our educators to provide activities parents can do at home to strengthen students' academic skills prior to entering kindergarten. The fair will conclude with a visit through the Kindergarten classrooms followed by a meeting for parents regarding expectations for student learning at the Kindergarten level and activities they might facilitate over the summer to help prepare their child. All parents will leave the fair with a packet that includes recommended daily activities to be accomplished during the months leading to Kindergarten. Additionally, we will partner with Families in Schools (Transition to Kindergarten) to provide a connection for families with pre-school aged students we are unable to service. These educational opportunities could include: LA universal preschool, Head Start, YMCA and Caesar Chavez Learning Center.

Initiative and the MIT Workplace Center. See
<http://web.mit.edu/workplacecenter/docs/Full%20Report.pdf>



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In order to lay an effective foundation for our Kindergarten and elementary program, Bridges will use the autonomy provided under PSC to:

- Require parents volunteer 15 hours per annum for each student held in attendance.
- Establish a Parent Center wherein classes are offered for parents. Preschool parents will be strongly encouraged to attend.
- Implement Student Led Conferences beginning at the earliest level and require parents to attend as part of 15 hour commitment.
- Offer parent training sessions for volunteers who will be helping present in classrooms in order to empower them with the tools to be successful.

g. Service Plan for Special Education- (See Appendix C)

B-2 Professional Development (PD)

a. Professional Culture

The Harry Bridges Span School is committed to establishing and nurturing a collegial and collaborative staff that are professionally accountable for student success. The professional culture will be based on an expectation of high student achievement based on clear, measurable goals for student success, aligned to clear, academic standards continually modeled and supported by school leadership.

Bridges will recruit and support a student-focused staff committed to personalizing and targeting the delivery of teaching and learning to meet individual student needs. We will exemplify a “can do” attitude where student learning, and not merely teaching, is our core mission. If schooling is centered on learning, then learning cannot and will not be optional. To our students we say, “*We will not give up on you no matter what, even if you give up on yourself.*”

In shaping our professional culture, Bridges embraces the three core tenets¹⁰ of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):

1. PLCs are student-centered: staff focuses on what students have learned, not merely what has been taught. This emphasis on student learning means that we ask ourselves what students have learned, how student learning will be evaluated, what we will do when

¹⁰ DuFour, Richard (2004). “What is a ‘Professional Learning Community’?” *Educational Leadership*. May, 2004. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.



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students struggle with learning, and what we will do once students have demonstrated mastery.

2. PLCs are deliberately collaborative: staff has regular, job-embedded time to plan common lessons, develop common assessments, discuss the students they share, etc. Collaboration is based on collective inquiry, action research, and experimentation. In other words, we reject teacher isolation and recognize that group commitments to implement collective solutions to common problems provide a more productive way to improve student achievement. Lastly, collaboration means that we are always dedicated to the notion that we must make public what have heretofore been private instructional decisions.
3. PLCs are professionally accountable for outcomes and reflective: Staff “own” student success or failure. We commit to looking in the mirror and addressing the factors that are within our control rather than pointing the finger of blame elsewhere or expounding on factors outside of our control that impact student learning. We also commit to using data to evaluate defined outcomes not merely intentions, and to ensure that data (broadly conceived) guides and modifies school-wide, team, and individual classroom decisions.

The professional culture of our school will center on focusing around common goals and structures that support collective inquiry, as well as modeling and coaching to create a shared commitment to excellence. In the professional culture we are intent upon establishing, the Bridges staff will embrace the Seven Norms of Collaboration¹¹: 1) Promoting a Spirit of Inquiry; 2) Pausing; 3) Paraphrasing; 4) Probing; 5) Putting ideas on the table; 6) Paying attention to self and others; and 7) Presuming Positive Intentions. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 7) to incorporate these Norms of Collaboration as operating procedure at our school. As part of our allegiance to these norms, and as guidance for staff collaboration, interactions, and collective inquiry, we assert that our school culture requires staff who commit to the following:

Commitment to Students

- Focus on student growth and advocacy, addressing student learning needs with flexibility and compassion.
- Commitment to teaching children and addressing their learning and developmental needs in a differentiated and personalized fashion.

¹¹ Garmston, R., and Wellman, B. (2009) *The Adaptive School: A Sourcebook for Developing Collaborative Groups* <<http://www.adaptiveschools.com/aspublications.htm#sourcebook2>> , 2nd edition. Norwood, MA: Christopher Gordon.



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- Willingness to adapt curriculum and instruction to meet the learning needs of Standard English Learners (SEL), English Learners (EL), and Students with Disabilities (SWD).
- Acceptance that “counseling and guidance” is a responsibility of every adult employed at the school.
- Agreement that student learning needs to supersede staff convenience, habits, or routines.

Commitment to School Colleagues

- Adherence to a three-year commitment to stay at my grade level or course in order to hone the craft of teaching and deepen the ability to differentiate learning activities with an undifferentiated focus on grade level content standards.
- Participation in peer observations, debrief, and discussions aimed at improving classroom instructional delivery and maximizing articulation between grade levels K-8.
- Demonstration of transparency and authentic collaboration based on making public what have heretofore been private instructional decisions.
- Adoption of a problem-solving rather than a “problem finding” mindset in making individual and collective decisions.
- A passion for one’s own teaching and ownership of one’s own professional growth.
- Involvement in distributed, rotational leadership of PLC through facilitation, presentation, and mentoring.
- Active participation in school decision-making through membership in at least one school committee or governance forum.
- Involvement in developing a truly innovative school that provides a distinctive, meaningful educational experience for all students.

Commitment to Parents and Community

- Engaged partnering with parents and the larger community to educate the whole child.
- Willingness to participate in and model “community connections” and applications of learning that draw on Wilmington’s proximity to the Port of Los Angeles.
- Participation in creating a learning environment that serves as a source of student and community pride.
- Preparing students to transition seamlessly to high school.

We believe that such a professional culture will promote high staff performance and retention. The commitments to students outlined above will create a sense of urgency centered on continuous improvement and improved student achievement. All staff will be part of a team that collaborates to promote student achievement. The three-year commitment to grade level or course will foster respect and trust for common lesson planning. Distributed leadership and mentoring from grade level/department Instructional Chairs will support staff capacity to implement an ambitious instructional agenda.



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b. Professional Development

Professional development and teacher collaboration at Bridges will be organized as PLCs in grade level and content teams. PLCs will meet twice monthly focused on building the capacity of staff to engage in “backwards mapping” such that what is taught (curriculum) maps through assessment back to the key California content and/or Common Core standards using research-based pedagogy. These PLCs will design common lessons by reaching consensus on matching key instructional strategies to lesson plan development, and then analyze the effectiveness of the application of common pedagogy on teaching practices and student learning. PLCs will also focus on developing common formative assessments, reaching consensus on how to evaluate student performance and check for student understanding of underlying standards/concepts. Towards this end, teachers in subject area/course PLCs will administer and use data from common formative assessments to guide and modify teaching.

To ensure collective approaches to the planning, delivery, and evaluation of classroom teaching and learning, the first 1-2 years under PSC will prioritize three curricular (content) priorities: 1) Leveled reading in conjunction with the SRI Inventory; 2) Units of Study for implementing writing across the curriculum; and 3) Eight Mathematical practices from the new Common Core Standards aimed at developing mathematical thinking.¹² For the first two of these content priorities, Bridges will group teachers into three grade spans (primary, upper grade, and middle) for professional development, rotating teachers through a cycle of training on Reading Workshop, Writing Workshop, and Balanced Literacy. Teachers will learn from both formal professional development, as well as regular observation of peers.

Due to the fact that close to 50% of our students will be EL Learners, the district’s Access Strategies will comprise the primary focus of our pedagogical priorities. At Bridges, we have incorporated these as three key instructional strategies that will be the focus of training, collaboration, and peer observations: 1) SDAIE/differentiation techniques, particularly advanced graphic organizers and other tools for scaffolding instruction; 2) Active engagement of students, including small group and cooperative learning approaches; and 3) Instructional conversations and building academic language/vocabulary. Additionally, professional development will support the use of CRRE strategies and pedagogy for SWDs as an on-going focus.

¹² These eight practices include: 1) Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them; 2) Reason abstractly and quantitatively; 3) Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others; 4) Model with mathematics; 5) Use appropriate tools strategically; 6) Attend to precision; 7) Look for and make use of structure; and, 8) Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.



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PLCs organized by interdisciplinary, grade level teams will meet 1-2 times per month focused on Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI²). These collaborative teams of teachers will develop systems for identification, referral, and service of students in need of “intensive” and “strategic” interventions for pre- and re-teaching, discussing the needs of students that they share in common across subject areas.

To supplement and complement the emphasis on PLCs, Bridges will organize monthly school-wide professional development on the larger framework or umbrella for a coherent, student-centered school. We see the following as key priorities for Year 1 as a PSC school:

1. PLC collaboration: Defining how to organize and operate as PLCs (e.g., core tenets, staff expectations) and using the Seven Norms of Collaboration
2. Using data to inform teaching and learning: Understanding the framework and theory behind the move from Assessment *OF* Learning to Assessment *FOR* Learning, including guidelines for development of common formative and culminating, performance-based assessments (see Assessment and Data).
3. Developing *systems* of tiered interventions: Defining staff expectations for RtI², particularly Tier 1, which defines instruction that is differentiated, culturally responsive, evidence-based and aligned to grade-level, content standards.

Our vision for professional development is intended to communicate clear objectives on how we will support, train, and develop our faculty’s capacity. Our watchwords for professional development are -- Coherence, Follow-up, and Continuity. All professional development activities will be practice-oriented with structured follow-up activities. Through the on-going use of collaboration time to refine and revise common lessons, develop common formative assessments, and share instructional strategies and practices, collaborative teams will take solution-centered approaches to address students’ learning needs. Our Bridges educators will value professional inquiry, reflection and problem solving by team members. Lastly, instructional chairs will work with teachers to ensure that evidence-based teaching strategies are implemented effectively in every classroom.

Within PLCs, the focus on Lesson Study will engage faculty directly in deconstruction and prioritization of the standards. Continuity and follow-through on agreed upon curricular foci and instructional strategies will reduce the gap between common planning and actual “transfer” of common implementation to the classroom. Indeed, part of professional development at Bridges will hinge on peer observations of classroom instructional delivery. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 3) to incorporate Instructional Rounds on a monthly basis. All teachers will be expected to participate as both observer and the observed through the Instructional Rounds Model, using protocols and defined tools that measure the use



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of agreed upon instructional strategies. In this way, peer feedback will constitute a source of data considered as part of PLC meetings and teachers will work together to improve practice.

In addition, PLC collaboration tied to intervention will ensure that student data is consistently analyzed to monitor for growth to assess the effectiveness of the instructional program. In particular, we aim to make analysis of formative measures (particularly use of protocols for analyzing student work) central to the “data” that drives instructional practice tied to “intervention” and re-teaching.

We view the autonomy granted by the PSC process as key to designing professional development that encourages depth over breadth, and to shift from external priorities to an authentically local nexus of school transformation. Bridges is committed to taking advantage of professional development autonomy provided under the PSC process to implement innovative practices aimed at maximizing student learning via regular and on-going inquiry, collaboration, and reflection. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 7) to schedule two hour Professional Development meetings twice monthly with the second hour taking the place of a regularly scheduled Faculty Meeting. The structuring of both content/course PLCs and interdisciplinary, grade level team PLCs is one example of our commitment to designing a more innovative professional development calendar under conditions of autonomy.

In addition, the exercise of autonomy in the area of professional development is intended to ensure a guaranteed, viable curriculum for ALL students in accordance with our mission of providing each student with a quality education. PLC-style collaboration, collective inquiry, and action research will reduce teacher isolation and ensure that all students have access to both the core academic program and Universal Access. In this way, our plan for professional development addresses the necessity for increasing access and equity in the classroom. Under our plan, backwards mapping of curriculum, through standards-aligned assessments, to the State content standards is a job-embedded component of professional development and teacher collaboration. As such, we anticipate a higher degree of commonality in terms of shared definitions of academic rigor, curricular relevance, and personalized, differentiated and scaffolded instruction. We also expect that shared definitions and criteria for evaluating student progress will flow from the professional development design set forth in this plan.

The SLC will continue to analyze student data in the planning and implementation of professional development. Autonomy in professional development will also ensure that there are substantial professional developments built into the school calendar, with multiple opportunities for common planning time and focused professional development. In order to provide training for our instructional initiatives we will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative



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(LIS # 7) with a requirement that faculty attend five six hour professional development sessions prior to the start of the school year and five six hour professional development sessions on selected Saturdays during the course of the school year based upon available funding. There will be one Saturday make-up session for those teachers not able to attend one session for extenuating circumstances. Our plan includes a mix of individual teacher, collective teacher groupings, and school-wide professional development opportunities that are intended to be mutually reinforcing and aligned with each other. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 7) to utilize outside vendors, such as Growing Educators, as well as district teachers from local area schools that have expertise in our curricular initiatives that are not part of the LAUSD core.

i. Management of Multiple Schools

Local District 8 is providing on-going professional development for Administrators and Teachers regarding content areas identified through data analysis including conceptual instruction in Algebra, and Expository Reading and Writing in 6th and 9th Grades, as well as the Common Core Standards, Standards-Aligned Instruction, universal screening, differentiated instruction, progress monitoring to ensure that instruction is meeting student needs, and access to core strategies for English Learners. All aspects of the performance meter are addressed, and support is provided district-wide and at specific sites, as indicated by data. The Common Core State Standards are being introduced to increase the rigor of instruction and ensure that students are prepared for the new standards and assessments. Because the Performance Meter does not include explicit academic accountabilities for Kindergarten through Second Grade, the decision was made to create Local District goals for Kindergarten and First Grade to ensure that instruction is rigorous enough to provide students with the required academic foundation and background for proficiency by Second Grade. The Kindergarten and First Grade goals include effective use of Benchmark and Progress Monitoring assessments to design differentiated instruction, and a focus on the Common Core State Standards to increase the rigor of instruction and ensure that students are prepared for success as measured by the new standards and assessments. Under the leadership of the Local Superintendent and Directors, Local District Instructional Support Personnel including ELD and Title 1 Coordinators and their teams, Content and RtI² Teams, and expert teachers from school sites are utilized to provide professional development to support schools in meeting Performance Meter goals, and Local District identified goals.

Administrator Meetings

During the monthly Principal and Assistant Principal meetings, Local District 8 provides content and leadership professional development to ensure continuous growth in instructional leadership



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capacity. The meetings focus on analyzing formative and summative assessment data, coaching for appropriateness to the content standards, and analyzing the rigor and relevance of student work. Administrators study the fields of interaction and practice using reflective conversations to assist teachers in recognizing and increasing the rigor and relevance of standards-based instruction in the classroom. Administrators have the opportunity to share experiences and identify best practices for developing a strong instructional program at each school.

Directors' Groups

Monthly directors' meetings are held with groups of 7 to 11 principals. The director, the middle school principals, and the high school principals meet together to discuss strategies for improving instruction. There is a continuing focus on the effective supervision of instruction through the building of instructional leadership capacity. During these group meetings, principals review the Teaching and Learning Framework in order to understand the rubric that identifies effective instruction for LAUSD. In addition, observation tools are shared across schools so that each school, in their observation of classroom teachers, uses the most effective, aligned tools. These trainings ensure a consistent, articulated approach to instruction from Kindergarten through 12th grade.

Level-alike Groups

Effective pedagogy, differentiation of instruction, and project-based learning to enhance conceptual understanding in math, as well as expository reading and writing across curricular areas, were identified through the data as targets for improvement. Principals provide input to determine topics for monthly meetings by level (elementary, middle, and high school). Level specific topics, such as building an effective master schedule, are also presented and discussed.

Principal Leadership Action Network Seminars (PLANS)

PLANS is a series of monthly meetings to increase the knowledge of content, pedagogy and leadership for secondary school principals in the area of Algebra. These meetings are well received and include analyzing student work for appropriateness to the content standards, and analysis of the rigor and relevance of the work. Principals also continue their study of the fields of interaction for instructional leadership and practice using reflective conversations based on videotaped lessons.

Principals' Roundtable

These 30-minute meetings occur monthly at the school sites with the principal, other school site leaders, the director, and the superintendent. The meetings continue the focus on Algebra



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instruction and instruction of expository reading and writing. The meetings address the effectiveness of the teachers, and aligning and monitoring the School Leadership Team's plan of action for improving teacher practices.

To ensure sufficient support and follow up for implementation of professional development at the school sites and at the classroom level, all Secondary Directors are present for support at their designated schools on a daily basis to observe classroom instruction with the Principal, Assistant Principals, Instructional Specialists, Instructional Coaches, or other instructional support staff. While the Director does not always walk with the entire team, the Director does have frequent conversations with the team to discuss academic rigor, differentiated support for teachers, and quality of the overall instructional program. The Local Superintendent joins the Directors to visit classrooms on a consistent basis. The purpose of the visits is to support continuous growth in the capacity of Administrators to:

- Observe and analyze standards-based instruction on a daily basis
- Meet with teachers to reflect upon their practice to improve content/ pedagogical knowledge and application
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of professional development
- Collaboratively design a plan of action to improve academic achievement for all students.

Based on analysis of student CST data, classroom observations are primarily focused on

- Algebra 1
- English/ Language Arts in 6th grade, especially expository reading and writing
- Special Education
- Probationary 1 and 2 Teachers
- Developing teachers
- Differentiated instruction
- Rigor of instruction in Kindergarten and 1st Grade

Teachers who have received a Below Standard Stull in the previous year are also visited on a frequent basis. The Directors' job is to assist the Principal with making decisions about Curriculum Mapping, Academic Rigor, Professional Development, and the support and evaluation of struggling teachers.

Frequent classroom visits and a continuous plan of action to improve instruction will provide a structure for implementation of professional development to increase student academic achievement in the school and across the entire local district. Administrators have the



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opportunity to share experiences and determine the best practices for developing a strong instructional program at each secondary school.

Local District Instructional Support Personnel provide additional technical support through school visits, lesson studies, and professional development provided at Local District meetings and at school sites.

c. Teacher Orientation

For teacher orientation, Bridges will focus on introducing and reinforcing the Professional Culture described above with new staff members. Given the type of innovative school we are developing and the specific staff characteristics that we feel are desirable, it will be necessary to acculturate new staff to our mission, vision, values, and goal.

To accelerate this process, Bridges will hold monthly New Teacher Meetings for all teachers new to the teaching profession, as well as for veteran teachers new to the Bridges campus. Led by a 2 to 3 member team, the New Teacher meetings will focus on uniform application of Bridges and LAUSD policies and procedures. Teachers will learn about the COST and SST teams as well as their role in the IEP process. In this small group collaborative setting, new staff members will be able to review previous professional development material, inquire about classroom best practices, and reflect on any issues, challenges, and/or successes of being a new teacher at Bridges. These meetings will also serve as an example of the three core tenets of PLCs, thus assuring that all new staff is well acquainted with this philosophy.

In addition to the New Teacher meetings, Bridges will pair staff, whether new to the profession or new to the school, with a peer “buddy.” Staff will be matched to a colleague who is in the same content area/content PLC. All teachers will rotate as “buddies” to build capacity and a sense of ownership. Via peer mentoring, we aim to assist staff in becoming acquainted in depth with the roles and expectations for PLC collaboration, as well as the school’s conception on how to analyze and use data to guide instructional practices. Using previously described peer observation protocols; peer mentors will add individual support to ensure implementation of school-wide practices and goals.

The dual orientation program described above augments the district mandated professional development days calendared yearly, as well as common planning times for PLCs/grade level/content area calendared monthly/weekly. By providing guided small group collaboration and one-on-one peer mentoring, new teachers receive differentiated support enabling them to better organize and expand their teaching methodologies to embrace all components of Bridges



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instructional program and core academic curriculum. This is especially true with regards to Bridges definition of “data” to include formative and performance-based assessments that will be constructed within the PLCs.

Most importantly, the professional development structure described above will be responsible for reinforcing the shared definition of best first instruction at the heart of our instruction program. The ultimate goal is that all staff will understand that quality instruction that actively engages students is the best and most authentic preparation for high-stakes assessment that comprises school accountability.

d. Professional Development Program Evaluation

Because the majority of professional development will occur within PLC collaboration, the evaluation of professional development is essentially the method by which PLCs will be held accountable. The high-leverage principal leadership strategies advocated for this¹³ include an evaluative role in monitoring: a) teachers’ examination of curriculum and standards; b) teachers’ analysis of summative and formative data; c) teachers’ definitions of quality, rigorous student work via assessment practices such as criteria charts and rubrics; d) submission of products (e.g., common lessons, common formative assessments) that flow from collective inquiry; and e) documenting progress and learning across PLCs with vertical articulation. For Bridges, this will be an evaluative expectation for administrators charged with oversight and supervision of PLC teams. In sum, Bridges administrators will hold staff accountable for active participation in PLC work (i.e., the teacher role in collaboration and follow through with agreed upon actions) with evidence of student achievement from multiple assessments.

In addition, Bridges is proposing to implement Instructional Rounds.¹⁴ This methodology involves educators in structured observations of classroom instruction in order to discuss instructional practices linked to school improvement efforts and to identify instructional exemplars as strategies for systemic change. As part of Instructional Rounds, observers engage in “landscaping” in order to focus on a key issue that impacts the instructional core, is directly observable, is actionable, and connects to a broader strategy of improvement. Observers then observe, debrief, and identify next steps as part of the evaluation of classroom teaching and learning. As part of PLC collaboration, teachers will read the book on Instructional Rounds as a professional study topic.

¹³ DuFour, R and Marzano, R. (2009). “High Leverage Strategies for Principal Leadership,” *Educational Leadership*, Vol 66, No. 5 (February)

¹⁴ City, E.A., Elmore, R.F., Fiarman, S.E., and Tietel, E. (2009) *Instructional Rounds in Education: A Network Approach to Improving Teaching and Learning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press



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Bridges will employ the Instructional Rounds methodology to evaluate the “transfer” of professional development to the classroom by a) Observing classroom practices (*What are teachers and students saying and doing?*) b) Debriefing observations (*What did we see?*); and c) Identifying the next level of work (*What will help us to know our teachers well instructionally in order to offer more targeted support?*). Four broad domains will comprise the focus of Instructional Rounds: 1) Classroom Management; 2) Student Interactions and Active Engagement; 3) Rigorous Expectations, Planning and Organization; and 4) Differentiation and Varied Instruction.

In addition to regular administrative observations, we envision Instructional Rounds occurring as monthly peer-to-peer observations. For example, a group of grade level teachers will engage in regular cycles of peer observations against agreed upon criteria (linked to PLC foci) to determine how much professional development “transfer” has occurred. Peer observers would debrief and provide descriptive feedback aimed at improving instructional practices and student learning. Timing of the Instructional Rounds will align with the work of content area/course PLC foci. Likewise, PLCs providing targeted in-class interventions offer an opportunity for evaluating professional development under the Instructional Rounds method.

Analysis of student work will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness (or transfer) of professional development to the classroom. Each PLC will examine multiple sources of data (common formative assessments, peer observations, and structured analysis of student work) to examine how the implementation of common research-based instructional strategies has impacted student achievement. Using protocols that dissect student work into its component parts and with prompts to stimulate teacher reflection, student work analysis will show definitively the extent to which classroom teaching and learning are changing in line with professional development priorities.

The SLC will conduct ongoing and yearly assessments of the professional development program and its impact on student achievement. The team will look at summative and formative student data, survey faculty input, and make adjustments as needed.

Professional Development Schedule/Calendar- (Please see Appendix G)

B-3 Assessments and School-wide Data

a. Student Assessment Plan

The research literature on comprehensive school reform is replete with references on the need for schools to become data-driven, results-oriented, and committed to equity and excellence through



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on-going data analysis and inquiry tied to student achievement results. At the same time, few schools seem able to translate this vision of a data-driven school into reality. Both the lack of knowledge and time often conspire to limit the propensity of schools or districts to move beyond a cursory analysis of achievement data let alone empower teachers to restructure instructional delivery based on student assessment results.

The Harry Bridges Span School is determined to change this. We are committed to “data-driven” accountability, which transforms analyses of data from reports into true information that drives concrete actions for continuous program improvement. We will no longer make excuses or conveniently disregard uncomfortable data. We accept the “high stakes” metrics, which form the basis of State and Federal school accountability. However, we wish to expand the notion of “data” to include performance-based measures, structured analysis of student work against standards-based rubrics, as well as observational data from regular classroom observations of instructional delivery tied to the key research-based instructional strategies that we aim to infuse school-wide. In this way, we will build a sustainable system for accountability, which is objective and data-driven, incorporating both growth and attainment measures to ascertain effectiveness.

The foundation of our assessment philosophy is the need to move from assessment *OF* learning to assessment *FOR* learning.¹⁵ We believe that the overriding purposes of assessment are 1) to gather evidence to inform instructional decisions and 2) to motivate students’ behavior toward increased academic achievement. In designing such an assessment system, we are guided by Popham’s definition of formative assessment as “a planned process in which assessment-elicited evidence of students’ status is used by teachers to adjust their ongoing instructional procedures or by students to adjust their current learning tactics.”¹⁶ Therefore, the chief elements of our assessment philosophy can be summarized as assessment that is: a) deliberately planned; b) evidence- and outcome-based; c) capable of immediate use by teachers in the classroom; and d) shared with students (and parents) so they understand and use information on their progress to change their own classroom and academic performance.

In the table below, we have summarized the battery of multiple, common assessments that will be used to measure student progress in English/Language Arts (reading and writing) and Mathematics. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 4) to

¹⁵ Stiggins, R. (2005). “Assessment FOR Learning: Building a Culture of Confident Learners,” in *On Common Ground: the Power of Professional Learning Communities*, Eds. Richard DuFour, Robert Eaker, and Rebecca DuFour. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

¹⁶ Popham, J. W. (2008) *Transformative Assessment*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD



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incorporate monthly Leveled Reading Assessments (Running Records), SRI Inventory (based on available funding) and Monthly Writing Assessments from the Units of Study. We will also implement weekly basic mathematics facts quizzes for Kindergarten-3rd grade and weekly algebraic skills quizzes for 4th-8th grade. In addition, we will use the autonomy under Local School Initiative (LIS #4) to evaluate all district assessments for validity and purpose at the beginning of the year, and decide which assessments will be implemented. The decisions on assessment will be made with a 50% plus one faculty vote. Most of these are formative assessments aimed at providing teachers and other staff with information “along the way” that can be used to improve student achievement and guide collaborative (PLC) planning and discussions tied to targeted academic intervention. We have found many district assessments to be valid in tracking student progress, but we need the autonomy to choose in light of the additional assessments we have proposed in our plan.

Table X: School-wide Student Common Assessments in ELA and Mathematics

Content Area	Name of Assessment	Grade level	Timing/ Frequency	Rationale and Purpose of Assessment
ELA – Reading	DIBELS (TBD)	K-3	3x/year as benchmark with monthly progress monitoring	Benchmark assessment to screen for underperforming students. Progress monitoring for struggling students
	Running Records	K-5 6-8 (if below grade level)	Every 4-6 weeks	Progress monitoring fluency and reading comprehension. Measures the level of a student’s text complexity and whether students can read with both literal and inferential comprehension.
	Words Their Way	K-5	Every 2 months for K-3	Benchmark in addition to DIBELS that measures sound-symbol development. Screens students for advanced placement and early intervention.
	Core K-12	K-8	Ongoing determined by early assessments.	Tailored item analysis by PLCs specifically targeting standards in need of progress monitoring to ensure gaps in student learning are identified and addressed.
	District Periodic Assessment	K-8	3x/year	Formative benchmark assessment



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	PLC Common Assessments	K-8	Monthly	Teachers in PLCs will regularly create lessons and assessments of benchmark standards to determine conceptual understanding and determine need for re-teaching.
	SRI (Based on funding)	1-8	Monthly	Used to determine student lexile level and assess comprehension
ELA– Writing	Teacher’s College: PLC Common Assessment	K-8	On Demand pre/post for each component of writing:	These Units of Study assessments will determine the next steps to take to ensure students are writing on or above grade level, giving the teacher and student information on where to intervene and accelerate.
Math	Basic Math Facts	K-4	Weekly	Each grade level will select appropriate important math facts for monitoring automaticity.
	Algebra Essential Skills	4-8	Weekly	Through the “Road to Algebra” there are identified standards at each grade level that need to be mastered in order to be successful in Algebra. These will be tested on a weekly basis.
Science	Periodic Assessments	5-8	Quarterly	Formative assessments
Social Studies	Periodic Assessments	6-8	Quarterly	Formative assessments

All formative and summative assessments will be aligned to the State and new Common Core Standards. It is the responsibility of all teachers to ensure that their use of assessments is directly aligned and used for the benefit of student success, as measured by multiple measures. In particular, the assessments’ blueprints will be used to guide instructional pacing and delivery. In addition, Bridges will continue to use the district’s Periodic Assessments as a formative measure of student progress in all core subject areas.

In using item analysis of formative assessments to pinpoint key standards where students have struggled to achieve standards mastery, Bridges will provide additional time for teacher collaboration for data analysis and collaborative discussion on use of data for:



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- Informing best first instruction based on thorough examination of assessment blueprints to guide strategic sequencing of standards.
- Shaping lesson planning aimed at re-teaching key concepts/standards where students continue to struggle and/or correcting any lingering misconceptions and errors.
- Making inferences about most effective instructional strategies for additional replication and systematic implementation.

Bridges will also develop rubrics for student assignments, as well as performance-based assessments. For example, our plan to develop students writing skills across the curriculum will be supported through the development of standards-based rubrics that we develop and score collaboratively. Similarly, the Cycle of Inquiry at the heart of our Professional Learning Communities (PLC) model for teacher collaboration and professional development (see Professional Development section) will include structured analysis of student work using agreed upon protocols.

Assessment Development and Use of Autonomy

While Bridges will continue to utilize the Periodic Assessments from the District, we will refine and strengthen existing use of teacher-developed formative assessments within each PLC. Bridges also intends to take advantage of new features of the District's Periodic Assessments, which allow test creation to targeted standards/strands, as well as more strategic use of item analysis possibilities. For example, the new Core K-12 system provides opportunities to augment the formative test items by content area or make customized selections.

Bridges is also committed to taking advantage of assessment autonomy provided under the Public Schools Choice (PSC) process to implement innovative practices aimed at maximizing student learning and use of assessment to diagnose and target instructional resources. One area of assessment autonomy will center on the development of common formative assessments in each grade level and/or subject area PLC.

Historically, writing has only been formally assessed in the fourth and seventh grade. However, in preparation for the CAHSEE as well as the future adoption of the Common Core Standards, we plan to analyze writing proficiency using the Units of Study. This assessment of writing will be across the curriculum and all teachers will assess transference of skills. With time, we aim to develop a set of holistic and analytic rubrics to objectively set criteria for performance-based writing assessments.



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b. Graduation Requirements

Bridges plans to add an 8th Grade Project as a requirement for matriculation to high school. The 8th Grade Project will function as a culminating assessment, requiring students to research a topic relevant to the global economy and the Port of Los Angeles, incorporating the perspectives of government, labor, and business industry on the topic selected. We view this requirement as a community research project that gives students an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills and competencies:

- Oral communication and presentation skills
- Critical reading/thinking/questioning
- Cogent expository writing
- Explicit citations of hypotheses and evidence
- Summarizing, categorizing, and synthesis skills
- Time management and self-directed learning
- Use of technology for research and real-life applications

To prepare students for this culminating project, Bridges will provide students with exposure to multiple, smaller scale culminating projects at grades 6 and 7. For example, 6th grade students will brainstorm a selected topic of interest in small teams, submitting an individual written essay and make an oral presentation on this topic. In 7th grade, teams of students will revisit and revise their prior year project, taking it to the next level of complexity guided by teachers. The 7th grade year will provide time for more in-depth research, as well as provide additional practice in both written and oral communication tied to the topic. In 8th grade, students will complete the project building on prior knowledge and experiences. As a culminating project, this will be an individual assignment. In addition, the culminating project will be judged by a panel of school and community stakeholders in order to provide concrete, real-world prescriptive feedback to students on their performance.

c. Data Collection and Monitoring

Student progress and performance will be measured at regular intervals with multiple metrics in order to ensure that outcomes and data guide decisions at all levels (school, grade level, classroom, and individual student). The systems of assessment that we have committed to developing will provide the basis for data informing teacher classroom practices, as well as providing descriptive feedback to motivate student learning. Moreover, a significant proportion of time set-aside for weekly teacher collaboration by grade level and/or subject area will focus on developing appropriate targeted interventions in and out of the classroom so that struggling students receive the assistance necessary to be successful and perform at grade level. When areas of weakness are identified, curricular adjustments and possible professional development



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revisions will occur. Moreover, school-wide professional development on data analysis and use will emphasize the use of data for differentiation and scaffolding. In this way, Bridges is committed to building an outcomes-based school culture based on holistic assessment (diagnostic, benchmark, summative) disaggregated by standards/skills and student subgroups. Bridges will be authentically data-driven in its use of data to:

- Set achievement goals for subject area/course, subgroups, and individual students
- Inform individual students about learning gaps and measurable progress in their learning
- Identify effective instructional practices, as well as correct gaps in instructional delivery

Three key premises will guide data collection and monitoring at Bridges:

1. There must be provision of a user-friendly set of formative, diagnostic, and progress monitoring assessments that reflect the standards and curriculum.
2. Data systems must be both useful and used to track student achievement and to inform key decisions. Staff must have access to the data that are most needed and useful and receive training about data use and data systems as needed.
3. School leaders, teachers, and students must discuss assessment results openly and honestly in large-group, small-group, and individual meetings.

Assessment and data will serve as the foundation for making instructional decisions at the school, grade level/department, classroom, and individual levels. The Curriculum and Instruction Team will be responsible for meeting quarterly to review key indicators of school performance and student achievement. Most importantly, the Curriculum and Instruction Team will act to “filter” the data in a strategic fashion with an eye toward guiding (PLC) teacher collaboration so that data is used to:

- Identify areas for school-wide improvement
- Set goals for selected (targeted) students
- Develop strategies to help these students reach achievement goals
- Follow up on progress of targeted students
- Determine the professional development needs of individual teachers, or of all teachers in a subject area

Each PLC will meet to analyze the results of the progress monitoring assessment and their collaborative lesson/assessment. They will discuss what to do for intervention and what changes need to take place for those not performing to expectations. Each team will discuss the strengths of each lesson based on the student data as well as the continuing needs. They will modify their curriculum as needed and adjust their delivery of instruction as well as the data shows what



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strategies are working at assisting students to master the material. Professional development will be differentiated based on the results of the data collected as we monitor each professional learning team with their lessons and assessments to insure teachers are receiving the proper professional development.

In addition, all teachers will also be trained and expected to use *MyData*. We intend this data platform to enable individual teachers to get to know each student's data profile – past achievement, English Learner status, etc. so that they can authentically differentiate instruction and personalize the delivery of instruction. These data will be a key plank of tracking the progress of students referred for academic interventions in our system of tiered intervention.

In the first year, Bridges will follow the District adopted calendar for student assessments. In addition, we will implement our own timeline for additional formative assessments (See Appendix H). We will evaluate assessments prior to the second semester to determine the effectiveness of the data in informing instruction.

In sum, Bridges is focused on creating an assessment culture where teachers no longer disregard or make excuses about data; instead, data will be the starting point for reflecting on what students have learned, not merely what has been taught. All employees will held accountable for and take responsibility for improved student outcomes. Moreover, teachers will be expected to analyze data on their students before coming together for structured collaboration so this time is focused on devising collective, strategic *responses* to student learning needs based on data rather than simply noting what data says about student learning needs.

i. Management of Multiple Schools

LAUSD Performance Meter Goals are monitored, and the most recent data provided to all administrators, at monthly Principals' Meetings. In Level-alike sessions, and during RtI² meetings, Title I and ELD meetings, the progress toward the Performance Meter goals and the goals for Algebra 1 and 6th Grade ELA is also analyzed using the schools' Periodic Assessment data Progress Monitoring Data, and observational data.

The monthly principals' meetings are also used to review and analyze CST, API and AYP data to determine action steps for meeting the Performance Meter and NCLB targets. Information from Benchmark and Progress Monitoring assessments, as well as Core K-12, and Periodic Assessments in Literacy and Mathematics are also used to drive the formulation of action plans. At every meeting, each school receives updated data for all schools for Attendance, Suspension, and Reclassification. All schools have received, or are currently in the process of receiving, Professional Development in the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI²) Problem Solving Model. At RtI² Professional Development, as well as through on-going technical



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assistance provided by the Local District RtI² Team, schools are assisted with application of the problem solving process to address targeted school goals identified through data analysis.

B-4 School Culture, Climate, and Infrastructure

a. Description of School Culture

School culture and climate are key factors in school success. Without a culture that supports and recognizes student learning, change and improvement is unlikely to occur. Moreover, culture affects what both adults and children focus on and their motivation to work toward these foci. Most importantly, school culture and climate impact the willingness of staff and students to put time into continuous improvement.

In reviewing the research¹⁷, the Harry Bridges Span School has prioritized five key factors or “pillars” that will characterize the school culture and climate we are committed to building:

1. **High expectations:** staff will believe and feel responsible for ensuring continuous, high level student learning. We believe that the mission of schooling is learning, and therefore learning is not optional.
2. **Collegiality:** staff professionalism will be manifest as a widely shared sense of purpose and consistency in order to harness the energy of true collaboration. When educators share ideas, problems and solutions, they feel “we are in this together” and are more likely to work together to build a better school.
3. **Tangible Support:** support will be visible and accessible so that there is a “no excuses” attitude for both staff and students.
4. **Honest and Open Communication:** a culture of transparency and regular dialogues will permeate school interactions and reinforce the importance of ongoing staff learning. When educators interact and open up about the craft of teaching, they improve their teaching and collectively improve.
5. **Appreciation and Recognition:** Bridges will identify and recognize exemplary achievement, positive growth, and best practices in order to celebrate and build upon successes to maintain a culture of continuous improvement.

Our nascent school culture and climate is inextricably linked to the K-8 grade span structure. As a K-8 school, we have a unique opportunity to craft a school culture and climate that has built-in personalization, articulation and an authentic “family” atmosphere for students and their families. In particular, Bridges can enhance social capital and give at-risk students greater opportunities for success by building relationships with staff over a course of nine or more years

¹⁷ Saphier, Jon and King, Matthew (1985) “Good Seeds Grow in Strong Cultures” *Educational Leadership*, vol. 42, no. 6 (March 1985)



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of schooling. The culture and climate envisioned for Bridges will foster positive, respectful, and empathic relationships among and between students, parents, and staff. Our school culture will empower and motivate students to succeed, while ensuring a personalized and safe learning environment. The organization of faculty into grade-level teams will help to support a positive and caring school culture by promoting a student-centered atmosphere.

The K-8 structure at Bridges will also help to develop a school culture and climate characterized by accountability. Transitions will enhance teacher collaboration and articulation within and across grades because teachers know personally to whom they are sending their children next year, and from whom their students are coming.

Another advantage of the K-8 span school is the continuity of expectations for maturing student behavior built from preK to 8th grade culmination. Because students will remain at Bridges, they are more likely to behave in a positive manner since they will continue their relationships with students and staff; they will not experience the isolating anonymity of a larger, comprehensive middle school which often leads to emotional and academic problems. Bridges will provide opportunities for older students to mentor younger ones in academics, sports, and student activities. Students will gain true self-confidence and maturity through these good acts and their academic success, making their transition to high school easier.

Students will be immersed into the school culture in several ways. Each year, parents/guardians and students will attend a summer orientation meeting prior to the opening of school to learn the expectations for academics, behavior, and service. This orientation will also highlight the resources Bridges has to ensure all students reach their potential. Students and parents will tour the school, meet teachers and staff, and get an overview of the academic program and the high expectations for success. For those enrolling after summer, the school will hold monthly orientations for new students and families on an as-needed basis. From the first day of classes, teachers will introduce students to the mission and vision of the school to inspire them to achieve, both as an individual, a member of the Wilmington community, and the larger world.

For students, the culture of high expectations will permeate both their academic and social life. Teachers will work with students to set personal goals, using agenda books, so that students regularly monitor their own progress through reflective writing and discussion. Morning assemblies, awards ceremonies, student recognition for improvement as well as achievement, cross-grade tutoring, and reading buddies are just a few of the ways students will participate positively and develop a loyalty for their school. Bridges will also institute a student uniform policy to further build on the collegial atmosphere and professional learning environment.



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The K-8 structure will assist in the development of deep relationships between school and parents/community. Our premise is that the Bridges exists to serve students and families. Therefore, Bridges is committed to providing a school culture and climate where staff listen and are responsive to parents and community, as well as demonstrate respect. Bridges intends to take advantage of the K-8 grade span to build and maintain positive parent involvement. Typically, parent involvement is more pronounced in elementary grades (particularly the primary years). In the K-8 setting, parents are more likely to stay involved precisely because they will be already comfortable with the school and its staff AND because younger siblings/family will be enrolled in the same school. To solidify linkages to families, Bridges will use its website, letters home in English and Spanish, the local newspaper, and phone calls home to regularly communicate with parents and invite them to school to volunteer, attend informational and recognition assemblies and meetings, participate in parent-teacher conferences, and otherwise take an active role in the school.

i. Management of Multiple Schools – Local District 8

Local District 8 Professional Development structures provide new learning as well as the sharing of best practices among teachers, principals, and leadership teams to support the professional growth of all school team members. In addition to content and pedagogy, the shared learning contributes to the building of a school climate and culture focused on student achievement consistently across the Local District.

During Principals' meetings and additional professional developments, Principals and School Teams are strategically grouped. Schools with similar demographics but disparate API scores work together to share challenges and best practices, allowing the less successful schools to learn about strategies that are working with similar student populations.

Teachers are also provided with the opportunity to network and learn about best practices at similar schools. Teachers who have demonstrated success with academic growth are utilized to facilitate professional developments for conceptual lessons in mathematics, including algebra, expository reading and writing, differentiated instruction, and intervention strategies. Multiple schools collaborate to participate in these professional developments.

Additional Culture and Climate Indicators, including student and teacher attendance, and student suspension rates, are reviewed at monthly principal meetings. Central and Local District personnel often attend to address topics such as RtI² support for academics, attitude, and attendance. The unwavering focus on student achievement is modeled and supported as a Local District Culture to be replicated at each school site.



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b. Student Support and Success

Bridges is committed to constructing a school culture and climate that fosters student support and success. We have defined these as the development of a set of actions aimed at building key competencies and characteristics including:

- Building love of learning and resilience among students
- Cultivating student autonomy and independence; students will learn to become self-directed
- Developing student ownership of school traditions and facilities, as well as reinforcing student responsibility/character development.
- Establishing a culture and ethos of “service” based on giving to get and reciprocity
- Providing encouragement and descriptive feedback early and often, tied to specific student goals that reference student progress and growth.
- Ensuring the provision of a safe, welcoming, and challenging learning environment
- Promoting equal opportunities for ALL students in order to foster access and equity

As a school that serves K-8 students, we have the unique ability to define and shape the academic and social foundation for these students all the way to high school transition in the 9th grade. This structure provides an ideal opportunity for delivering a consistent and continuous message to students, with built in articulations from grade-to-grade. In this way, we aim to help students avoid the decline in performance that often accompanies the transition from elementary to middle school. The small size of our middle school population (approximately 300 in grades 6-8) means that Bridges will be able to provide personalization to students. Students will not be able to “fall through the cracks” and we will not give up on them, even if they begin to give up on themselves. The Bridges family is committed to intervening proactively to assist and nurture all students to achieve their potential.

Positive Behavior Support

In order to support students, we will have a campus that is safe, civil and productive. All students will receive unconditional acceptance from school personnel who will hold them to high expectations. We will utilize the Foundations Model of Safe and Civil Schools with supplemental support from The Six Pillars of Character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Caring, Citizenship, Responsibility, and Fairness. Through this model, we will ensure that all of the adults in our school bear the ultimate responsibility for making the school safe, civil, and productive. Expectations for student behavior in all settings will be clear, consistent, and equitable and taught directly to students. We will be consistent in recognizing students for doing the “right thing” such as “Caught You Being Good”.

The following will be the cornerstone of our Foundations Process:



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- It establishes and relies on a culture of data-driven decision making.
- It is directed by a representative site-based team.
- It emphasizes and facilitates productive involvement by the entire staff in all school improvement activities.
- It encourages the involvement of students, families, community members, and social agency representatives in school improvement activities- as appropriate.
- It is designed to be ongoing- and is built around an “improvement cycle”.
- It is centered on “Guidelines for Success” as opposed to rules. The shift in thinking is on assisting students to “do the right thing” as opposed to establishing rules and then enforcing infractions.
- It emphasizes positive interactions. We plan to interact at least three times more often with each student when he or she is behaving appropriately than when he or she is misbehaving.

Bridges will implement school-wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) per LAUSD policy (BUL-3638.0). The policy requires that Bridges provide the foundation for clear expectations for all and outlines consistent behavioral expectations that have consequences. Bridges will develop our own innovative strategies for communication and teaching the tenets of this policy for broad dissemination of the school’s behavior support and discipline plans. For example, Bridges will place a school-wide emphasis on tolerance and acceptance (e.g., anti-bullying campaigns, awareness of what constitutes harassment, exposure to diversity, etc.) in order to challenge students to think and act in accordance with global citizenship.

To ensure that every stakeholder feels safe both physically and emotionally, Bridges will establish Common Standards of Behavioral Expectations and School Culture for both students and adults by means of full implementation of the Safe and Civil Schools program. These standards will be presented for the students at the beginning of each school year initially at grade-level assemblies coupled with classroom reinforcement discussions between teachers and students. These standards will be posted and reiterated school-wide throughout the year. Parents/caregivers, students and school staff members will actively participate in this process and all stakeholders will be accountable for adherence to these standards.



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Targeted and Intensive Student Support

Teachers will be assigned as advisors to students who have scored FBB for two years in a row and/or students who have more than four at-risk factors as defined in LAUSD's MyData system (e.g., chronic non-attendance, low standardized test scores, suspensions, poor grades in academic subjects, work habits, and/or cooperation, etc.). Counselors and a Psychiatric Social Worker will be used to provide targeted counseling based on available funding.

The school will utilize the processes of Coordination of Service Team (COST) and Student Success Team (SST) referrals to identify students who need additional intervention. Staff will be trained on routines and processes for referring students to a school-wide COST. This body will function as a “clearinghouse” for identifying student needs and making recommendations on referrals to specialized services. For example, students referred to COST for fighting on campus could be referred, in turn, to counseling services. Students with potential learning disabilities would be referred through COST to a SST.

The effectiveness of interventions will be measured by analysis of data from such sources as MyData, informal interviews with teachers, counselors, students, and parents and a self-designed exit survey for counselor lead personal development workshops. Data will direct future school policy decisions.

Students with Disabilities will be provided extended opportunities for mainstreaming. Students will also be integrated with the general education peers in core subjects as academically appropriate in an inclusion model. EL Learners will goal set in order to advance levels in their individual portfolios and to meet reclassification goals.

Articulation

Guidance counselors and administrators will work closely with the high schools that our graduates will attend ensuring a smooth and informed transition. For example, Bridges’ focus on using the Port of Los Angeles as a “community classroom” that reinforces a global outlook provides a good basis for transition to the International Trade Academy at Banning High School and with nearby Port of Los Angeles High School which has a similar thematic orientation.

In addition, we will host high school representatives at assemblies for our middle school students in informing them of their high school options. Eighth grade Bridges students will also attend curricular trips to visit these campuses for a first-hand look at their options.



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Student Activities, Leadership, and Extracurricular Involvement

Bridges will assemble a student leadership body of elected representatives that will meet regularly to set yearly goals, plan activities, and assess their effectiveness in enhancing a positive school culture for students. This group will organize events such as school dances, friendly competitions and contests, lunch time music and or performances, and displays and performances during Arts Week and other calendared activities. In addition, teachers by team and/or grade level will sponsor and participate in structured positive interaction games and/or activities with students at nutrition and lunch. For example, students will engage in friendly cross-team competitions like sports tournaments, spelling and geography bees, door decorating contests, and scavenger hunts. In keeping with our mission and vision, Bridges' student activities will extend beyond the usual ones organized for elementary and middle school students. Community service projects, informational assemblies on real-world social issues, international art, music and dance events, and environmental projects will help build a student sense of connectedness to the global stage.

These student leaders from grades 4-8 will design extracurricular activities, define student roles, rules, and responsibilities in the classroom; and shape school-wide rules, policies, and consequences for common areas. Bridges will also establish a targeted plan for enlisting student leaders (especially from the middle school grades) in peer support, including peer mentoring, peer mediation, and peer tutoring.

Bridges will exercise autonomy by developing sports teams that will compete in local park leagues in the South Bay. We also plan to extend the COPA program into the evening. Bridges will have a partnership with Families In Schools, Wilmington Boy's and Girls Club Afterschool Programs and South Youth Services to provide academic and social support to students and their families.

c. Social and Emotional Needs

Bridges is committed to supporting positive personal growth, and meeting the social and emotional needs of students. While support will primarily exist outside the classroom, Bridges is committed to establishing key points in its curriculum to address the social and emotional needs of its students. Based on input gathered during the PSC process from school, parent, and community stakeholders, the following factors are the most pressing social and emotional needs in the Wilmington community:

- Substance abuse/Alcoholism
- Prevalence of single parent households and grandparents raising grandchildren
- Limited quality interactions between parents and children



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- High incidence of household poverty
- Lack of after-school supervision and positive connections
- Parents reluctant to access external help and support services

As a result, the following behaviors are apparent among some students and families at existing Wilmington public schools:

- Low student interest/motivation; apathy
- Absenteeism and truancy
- Student defiance and rebellion
- Learning gaps pronounced and growing as students move upward through grades
- Homework not completed
- Students up late (due to parent work hours)
- Student promiscuity
- Gang rivalries and attendant violence

At Bridges we see our role as ensuring that all barriers are removed to achieve overall student academic success. We recognize that schools are often the hub of the community and have learned that a focus on Social/Emotional Needs through the lens of RTI in prevention, early identification, and treatment is key to improving academic achievement.

A key plank of support at Bridges is the Coordination of Services Team (COST), which will function as a forum for centralizing student referrals to support services. Using a standardized COST referral form, student needs will be assessed with appropriate referral to services and supports available on campus, though the district, and in partnership with outside providers. The “umbrella” for COST is the Response to Intervention (RTI) model, which addresses “tiers” of needs. This approach allows us to provide basic services for all students (and families) as well as provide more specialized services for students (and families) that have additional needs.

Another key support for Bridges students will consist of after-school intervention, tutoring, and enrichment. After-school services will prioritize homework completion and snack during the first 45 minutes. School staff will develop entry/exit criteria for students referred to after-school intervention, defined as “re-teaching” in smaller ratios with rotational staffing by credentialed teachers.

In addition, Bridges will provide after-school enrichment options based on surveys of students and parents. We envision instituting after-school sports, dance, the arts, and music programs. To the extent possible, these enrichment offerings will draw on existing staff talents and strengths



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among staff and parents/community. For example, we have begun to reach out to the Wilmington Boys & Girls Club and the local branch of the Parks and Recreation staff. Due to its proximity to the campus, we will cultivate a relationship with the Wilmington Public Library for Homework Completion, Reading Club, and other concrete linkages to curriculum.

Another aim is to expand student and family access to counseling and mental health services. We will utilize the current expertise of LAUSD in providing services in the Mental Health Fields. Our first goal is to fund, at least part time, a psychiatric social worker that is a Master Level Social Worker. This Healthy Start Coordinator is a primary resource for the community for medical health, mental health, food resources, homelessness, domestic violence and other factors affecting stability. We also plan to partner with USC, and use the interns from the Masters in Social Work Program to work with our students. The interns will be exposed to prevention strategies and intervention methodologies to ensure success within the 3 A's (Attitude/Behavior, Attendance, Academics). Interns will work to assist students and families by removing barriers through various interventions and learning supports. Interns will collaborate with schools and agency staff by connecting families to school and community resources and provide follow-up through case management services. We will also partner with other Community Based Organizations to provide in-depth services to our students such as the South Bay Center for Counseling.

To support the social and emotional needs of students, Bridges will also nurture partnerships that bring professionals (e.g., public health nurses, mental health counselors, etc.) to talk with parents about and de-stigmatize outside referrals and community-based support services (e.g., Little Company of Mary). We will provide targeted workshops and education classes for parents tied to "teenage" developmental issues (how to support and monitor your teenage son/daughter) at the Parent Center. Lastly, we plan to create "Safe Passages" and "Peace builders" programs to enhance student safety and clearly identify campus volunteers.

d. College and Career Readiness

Consistent with our school mission to provide a world class education to students in the Wilmington community, our school culture will provide a foundation for high school readiness and college readiness by fostering intellectual curiosity, risk taking, purposeful effort, and collaboration in order to cultivate and nurture self-directed life-long learning.

Research has shown that students, especially in 8th and 9th grade, need to see the relevance of their schooling for motivation to stay in school. Beginning in Kindergarten, students will be exposed to the economic engine we refer to as the Port of Los Angeles. There will be project based learning at each grade level that incorporates both classroom learning regarding the port as



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well as field-based learning. Projects will include “Beyond Thomas the Train” in first grade, that exposes students to the concept of a train being utilized for cargo that provides people with necessary commodities. The culminating eighth grade project, “Follow that Container”, will track a container from China to the Port of Los Angeles. Students will write a final piece that places this container in the context of its impact on global trade, labor, and the environment. Students will illustrate how we find “common ground” in balancing all of these items. Our partnership with the Port of Los Angeles will help students make connections between mathematics, geography, social studies, and literature. Students will not only be exposed to careers throughout this journey, but they will also see first hand the skills required to obtain jobs in a 21st century work force. We will team with the International Trade Academy at Banning HS as well as the Port of Los Angeles.

All students will receive personalized counseling in the areas of college preparation and career exploration as part of their ICP (Individualized Culmination Plan). As part of an annual meeting with students and their parents, the ICP process provides information about the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) and other high school graduation requirements, postsecondary A-G requirements, the College Board, and resources for career, academic, and personal success. The ICP lays the ground work for the high school IGP (Individual Graduation Plan) and, as such, constitutes another way in which Bridges is articulating with its feeder high schools. We will additionally encourage students to take the PSAT in the 8th grade and maintain an active chapter of the California Junior Scholarship Federation for our 7th and 8th grade students.

In the fall of each year as a kick off to on-going College and Career learning activities, all students in the 7th grade will be introduced, through a counselor led guidance lesson delivered in social studies classes, to the *Career Cruising*¹⁸ website providing them with the tools necessary to begin the informed exploration of career options. Additional developmentally appropriate counselor-led guidance lessons will be presented to students in each grade level.

Among teachers, the focus of college and career preparation will be on ensuring a daily infusion of information to students on the key transferable skills for success in college (e.g., categorizing and synthesizing information, importance of academic language in writing) and in careers of the 21st century (e.g., use of technology, teamwork and collaboration, effective communication skills). Staff will be expected to talk about the importance of postsecondary education, the different pathways to postsecondary, and that it is “never too early” to start thinking about

¹⁸ *Career Cruising* is a career exploration and information program licensed by LAUSD and available through the district’s Digital Library at www.lausd.net



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college and career. In addition, Bridges will organize a “College and Knowledge Academy” for parents on college access and preparation.

The SLC will be responsible for organizing activities to support college and career awareness. Bridges will also hold an annual Career Fair. Presenters will be recruited to give 20 - 30 minute small group presentations about their careers. Teachers will prepare students to gain the maximum benefits from this event by working with them to create focused questions for presenters ahead of the event. A Career Fair committee will work with presenters before the events to help them prepare for the presentation. Outreach will be made with these professionals to continue building community ties to our school.

To promote college access, Bridges will apply for a “Gear Up” Grant prior to the opening of school. We will also hold an annual College Day. Wilmington alumni who are currently attending various colleges will be recruited to present information and share their college “journey” with our students. University Outreach Center (UOP) representatives at several area campuses will present information on college expectations at this event. Through various activities throughout the year students will build a personal profile and support system laying a foundation for college readiness.

Bridges will plan a series of college and career activities such as College Gear Fridays, weekly Friday announcements by staff briefly highlighting various colleges, which they attended, etc. These activities will lead up to and culminate with College Day and The Career Fair. Bridges will also form a College and Career club to provide intensive guidance in College and Career preparation to participating 7th and 8th grade students. Students in this club will participate in activities such as college fieldtrips in the 7th grade and career-themed fieldtrips in the 8th grade. As part of these efforts, Bridges will cultivate partnerships with local postsecondary institutions including: CSU Dominguez Hills, CSU Long Beach, CSU Los Angeles, USC, UCLA, and Loyola Marymount University.

e. School Calendar and Schedule

We will adopt the LAUSD calendar. Bridges will use its autonomy under Local School Initiative (LIS # 3) to schedule a minimum 90 minute literacy block at the middle school level to allow for intervention on a daily basis within the classroom. We will also schedule a mathematics intervention block for those students not achieving grade level standards (see Middle School Master Schedule Appendix I). It also provides for in class intervention through the RTI model. In addition, grade level and department chair meetings will be imbedded in our school day using the COPA Program. We will also use our autonomy to incorporate a middle school advisory period. The curriculum will be developed in the following manner:



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Start Up, Year 1

The priorities for Year 1 are goal-setting, leadership, and our Adolescent Coping Series. The class will also be utilized to brief seventh grade students on the final culminating project for 8th grade that focuses on global trade. The curriculum will include ACES from Providence Little Company of Mary, and they have agreed to bring in guests speakers on topics ranging from healthy dietary choices to avoidance of the peer pressure from gangs.

We will also begin to implement aspects of “The Seven Highly Effective Habits of Teens”, which has been popular with teens in schools we have studied. In addition, we will work with Providence Little Company of Mary to develop lessons that are appropriate for our future eighth grade students.

Year 2

We will continue to implement the priorities for Year 1 in terms of goal setting, leadership, and our Adolescent Coping Series. The goals will utilize the summative assessment data that was collected in Year 1. The lessons that were determined to have the most impact in “The Seven Highly Effective Habits of Teens” will be incorporated into the advisory period.

Year 3

In Year 3 our primary goal will be to sustain class size reduction accomplished in the previous two years. As additional funding becomes available, we will work at increasing our ability to reduce class sizes for all academic core content classes. We will continue funding the Professional Development Priorities that were established in Year 1 and 2.

The Bridges school believes that smaller class size directly contributes to a positive school culture. Bridges will be staffed initially with the numbers of staff normally allocated to elementary and middle schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District. In our current Middle School double block ELA and Mathematics Intervention schedule, we will be required to purchase an additional teacher, just to meet the established LAUSD class size norms. The class size norm for middle schools is 34:1 in academic core classes and 42.5:1 in all other classes. In addition, intervention classes such as Advancing Academic Literacy and English Language Skills for English Learners are normed at the lower rates of 20:1 and 25:1 respectively. After these norms are met, it is the intention of Harry Bridges to further reduce class size in academic core classes at all grade levels to the extent possible. Most of the class size reduction will occur in the second semester of the first year after categorical funds are released. In addition, we will utilize community resources to assist us in the process of obtaining grants for school needs.



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f. Policies

Bridges will follow the District policy on Criteria for Culmination of Middle School Students with adjustments allowed under LAUSD's Culmination Appeals Committee Policy (BUL-3850, 721, and revisions Feb. 5, 2010 and November 4, 2010). The criteria will be disseminated to all stakeholders (parents, students, and staff) and posted school wide. Students' progress toward middle school culmination will be monitored through twice annual meetings and culmination eligibility checks conducted by the Guidance Counselors and/or administration.

Bridges will also use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 12) to institute a school uniform policy. It is required that students wear a solid white short, or long sleeved polo shirt, and dark blue pants, shorts, skirts, dresses or overalls. Shirts must be tucked in at all times. Additional dress code regulations will be posted on the school's website. This will enable the school to establish an atmosphere of safety and learning.

Bridges will follow the LAUSD Attendance policy as described in the *Student Health and Human Services – Attendance Policy and Procedures Manual* and BUL- 3638.0 *Discipline Foundation Policy: School-Wide Positive Behavior Support* published by LAUSD. Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students.

Every parent will be informed annually of the Compulsory Attendance Laws, Bridges' attendance policy and procedures, and the resources available to improve student attendance through the LAUSD Parent-Student Handbook. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of the reasons for their child's absence or tardy. Bridges will notify parents of their child's absences through letters, conferences, phone calls, and the Connect-ED telephone system.

Bridges will follow LAUSD policies in regard to Discipline Protocol, Suspensions, and Expulsions (Bul.-4478.0, 1038.1, 4655, 3819, and 3638.0). Bridges' will develop a Discipline Policy through the Safe and Civil School Team Model that teaches school rules, as well as social emotional skills; includes teacher training on the use of effective classroom management; enlists parent/caregiver collaboration; and, prioritizes early intervention for discipline problems. Bridges is committed to reducing the number of school suspensions by developing alternative interventions. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 12) to require parents to spend one half hour in a student's classroom the day after a student is served and out-of-classroom suspension for behavior. This will prevent behavior from increasing in intensity and it will also show our support for parents as partners in the education of their children.



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Bridges will support the District's Positive School Behavior Support Plan in order to enhance students' academic and social growth. School-wide Information Student Services (SWIS) forms and LAUSD's MyData programs will be used to collect and analyze data on disciplinary and behavioral incidents, and direct school policy in the area of discipline.

In RtI Tier 1 (e.g., universal services for all students), the Bridges student behavior policy will promote positive student behavior with rewards such as: awards assemblies, free dress days, and grade level social activities. The Bridges Discipline Committee will establish behavioral expectations for both students and staff. These will be distributed to all stakeholders (parents, students, and staff) and posted school-wide.

In RtI Tier 2 (e.g., targeted interventions for struggling students), the Bridges' student behavior policy will promote positive behavior with interventions and/or consequences such as: peer mediation, individual and group counseling for behavioral remediation, the assignment of teacher/team detentions, administration detentions, and or campus clean up, parent contact, referral to Coordination of Services Team (COST) and/or Student Success Team (SST), behavior contracts, referrals for mental health services, and parenting classes. Referrals for intervention will be made to the school's Pupil Services Attendance (PSA) counselor, Psychiatric Social Worker (PSW) and/or outside agencies when indicated.

In addition to these specific policy bulletins, Bridges will follow the LAUSD retention policy and all other mandates and policies adopted by the LAUSD Board of Education.

B-5 Parent & Community Engagement

a. Background

The Harry Bridges Span School will serve the community of Wilmington, drawing primarily from students currently attending Fries Elementary, de la Torre Elementary, Gulf Avenue Elementary, and Wilmington Middle School. Wilmington is a largely working class community located near the Port of Los Angeles where nearly half of the residents are foreign born, typically from Mexico. More than half (60%) of the adults in Wilmington lack a high school diploma, and only 9% completed a four-year college or university degree. Mirroring community demographics, the student population at Bridges will be largely Latino/Hispanic (94%), with approximately 40%-45% of students expected to be English Learners from homes where Spanish is the primary language.

As part of the PSC process, we have consulted with and heard parent and community voices. Their input has been invaluable and has been incorporated into the design of the school. In particular, here are some of the parent requests:



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- Higher and more consistent student attendance (reduced absenteeism and truancy).
- Higher high school graduation rates.
- More students eligible for and attending colleges and universities.
- Expanded access to tutorial and homework assistance.
- Educational experiences that allow for career exposure and exploration via real world applications of learning where students learn workplace competencies and begin to develop the “skills to pay bills”.
- Increased counseling assistance for students.
- English courses for parents.
- Enhanced safety for the students through school uniforms, and increases staffing at the exit and entry points of the school.

Because Bridges will serve a largely immigrant and working class Latino community, it is essential that we help parents understand our educational system. Our parents tend to be active in the primary grades (K-2) but parental involvement drops off precipitously as students matriculate in our system. Similarly, we face the challenge of shifting parent-teacher conversations from student behavior to student learning. We must empower parents to exercise more voice in shaping and reinforcing their child’s education. In addition, we see a role for the school in assisting parents in reinforcing and supporting learning at home via parental conversations and questioning.

The Wilmington community has experienced relatively high levels of crime and for many years has been faced with gang activity problems. The effects of growing up in neighborhoods where safety is a concern present special challenges to both children and adults in our community. Therefore, we feel that our school must provide access to safe, high quality after-school programs and services for homework completion and extracurricular activities.

Despite these environmental challenges, we have a number of assets and strengths upon which to draw. For example, Wilmington is a stable community; families may move but they largely stay in the area. An essential element that strengthens our collaboration is the fact that families genuinely want to be involved and partner with the school to support student learning. Additionally, strong family values and the support from extended family members exert a positive influence on the academic achievement of our students.

In addition, Wilmington has a host of potential community partners. Bridges will be able to draw on business/industry/commercial entities, as well as many community-based organizations and fraternal organizations. Our proximity to the Port of Los Angeles facilitates linking education to global interchange, commerce/trade, and world connections tied to diverse languages, transportation networks, and technological change. We also benefit from potential



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linkages to local history, which will help us build school community pride and make history come alive for students.

At Bridges, our vision/mission has defined social justice in terms of “leveling the playing field” and providing a “world class education” so that students become college and career ready. Our school is focused on building the foundational academic skills that will “set the stage” for students to transition successfully to high school, college, and career. We stand by our promise to provide students with experiences that will enrich their lives and challenge their thinking while at the same time giving them hope and inspiration for a better future. As part of this vision and mission, Bridges is committed to making families and the larger community partners in its educational mission.

b. Parent and Community Engagement Strategies

At Bridges, the principal and the Parent/Community representative will be primarily responsible for engaging the parents and community in support of our students and school. We plan to fund a minimum 3 hour per day Community Representative. We believe that building and supporting partnerships with families and the community are fundamental elements that contribute to student success. To ensure that our connection to families and community partners are guided by a firm research-base, Bridges will use the six-part framework developed by Dr. Joyce L. Epstein:¹⁹

1. *Parenting*: Helping all families establish home environments to support children as students.
2. *Communicating*: Designing effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children’s progress.
3. *Volunteering*: Recruiting and organizing parent help and support.
4. *Learning at Home*: Providing information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.
5. *Decision-making*: Including parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.
6. *Collaborating with Community*: Identifying and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, student learning and development.

These six approaches have proven to be effective ways to increase parent involvement and positively impact student achievement. It is our shared hope and commitment to the education of

¹⁹ Epstein, Joyce L. (2010). *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Educations and Improving Schools*. 2nd Ed. Westview Press.



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our students that brings this community together and it is our high expectations and collaboration that will contribute to the success of our students.

Given that Bridges is a new school in the community, we feel that it is essential to involve families and community in the school from the outset. During our first 1-2 years under PSC, we have opted to focus on the Communicating, Decision-making, and Collaborating with Community components of the aforementioned typology. Specifically, Bridges envisions the following strategies to engage and involve parents and families in a meaningful educational partnership:

Communicating:

- Providing families with regular, consistent, and predictable communication from school-to-home and home-to-school.
- Committing to responsiveness so that Bridges' faculty and staff respond to and answers family and community questions and concerns within 24 hours.
- Communicating both the importance of family participation by stressing the importance of parents and extended family members.
- Holding "town hall" meetings at least twice annually to solicit input from families and interested community members so that we receive real, regular feedback.
- Following up with families and community members who attend school activities and events to get their feedback and answer lingering questions.
- Guaranteeing access to translation for all documents, school information, school policies, and conferences. These will be translated into Spanish, and written in clear, concise language that is largely free of educational jargon.
- Reinforcing the school's emphasis on literacy with community events that bridge the gap between school and home (e.g., Literacy Posada)
- Posting monthly success stories of students and adults from Wilmington who have gone onto success in professional walks of life.
- Highlighting and publicly acknowledging students for growth and performance on a monthly basis.
- Requiring teachers to make at least five phone calls per month that provide parents with feedback on student strengths and weaknesses.

Decision-making:

- Setting a tone that "we are in this together" by creating a warm and welcoming school environment where families and community members have voice.
- Cultivating a cadre of informed and active parents and community members for the School Leadership Council (SLC), School Site Council (SSC), English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), and Compensatory Education Advisory Committee (CEAC) which will be the basis of school governance.



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- Building the capacity of parent leaders through leadership training.
- Focusing parent/community decision-making on those areas where “voice” is most beneficial, relevant, and needed. We see these defined areas of influence as including:
 - School-Home communication
 - Student recognitions and assemblies
 - Major school activities and events
 - After-school extracurricular activities
 - Parent outreach
 - Campus safety, security, and discipline
 - Review of school discretionary budgets
 - Relationships with community-based organizations

We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 12) to require parents to volunteer 20 hours per year that can be met through parent training, conferences with teachers, and volunteer opportunities. This will build a culture of parents as partners in the school environment. Bridges will also set a goal of 15 hours of parent/family involvement annually. Families may meet this goal through participation in any school activities and events (Back-to-School, Open House, etc.), as well as attendance in governance meetings, parent workshops, volunteerism, and meetings with a counselor or teacher. We view setting a goal for family involvement as a way to ensure that all families participate actively in the life of the school and see, for themselves, how it operates in the support of their children.

Key to implementing this plan is the Parent/Community Representative working in our Parent Center to enhance parental involvement. A critical component of their job is to educate parents to be advocates for their children. This person is also a vital element to link the principal and the school with parents and the community. The members of the School Leadership Council will also be responsible for this work. The teachers on the team have many years of experience with effective parent involvement strategies, including letters home, literacy and math nights, and utilizing parent volunteers in the classroom. Bridges’ interim principal has a rich experience increasing parent involvement at his former school. Attendance at monthly parent meetings was increased by over 30%. Additionally, he has sponsored a comprehensive program of parent education to help parents craft more effective questions for teachers to better support their child’s education. His communication skills in both English and Spanish and his open door policy created a warm and welcoming environment where parents were valued partners in the school. His implementation of a monthly Coffee and Conversation gave parents the opportunity to voice their concerns in a supportive setting.



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c. Key Community Partnerships

Our school vision identifies families as key partners in educating students. We also understand that engaging the broader community is critical to our school's success. Indeed, we feel that the "Collaborating with Community" strand of the Epstein typology is essential to the success of our school. Because we are designing a school that is explicitly building on the proximity of the Port of Los Angeles for more learning applications and real-world curricular experiences, the relationships we have with community partners is key to our identity and success.

The Design Team was fortunate to have representation from community members during the design team meetings. However, the design team also scheduled meetings with parents from all feeder schools on 10/7/2011, 10/13/2011, and 10/21/2011 at the Wilmington YMCA to seek input on the plan. The meetings were held with support from United Way and the Wilmington YMCA. We also gathered feedback from the meetings that were held by PSC 3.0 in the months of November and December. The team felt strongly that parents are key partners to our success and their input would be essential. The timeline for parent and community engagement has already begun and will continue through spring and summer 2012 with parent meetings and orientation sessions to educate stakeholders about the vision and mission of Bridges and the ideas in the PSC plan.

The meetings not only provided a forum for parents to provide input on critical aspects of the plan, but it also informed the design team about existing barriers to parental involvement and the current resources that parents utilize in the community. Community members discussed aspects of their "Dream School" provided input into items such as the needs of the 25% BB/FBB Population, EL Learners, Future Parent Engagement, and volunteer opportunities and requirements. Parents felt strongly that communication between the school and families was essential. There was strong sentiment for the establishment of a parent center, a twenty-hour parental volunteer commitment, and a school uniform policy.

In the table below, we have sketched a list of community partners, as well as the role and/or type of relationships we envision developing over time. The interim principal has met with representatives from these groups to form strong partnerships that will support our students:

Type of Partner	List of Potential Partners	Role/Relationship with School
Community Based Organizations	YMCA Boys & Girls Club of	Peer tutoring and reading with students After School Programming (Homework Club, Teen



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	<p>Wilmington</p> <p>Parks and Recreation</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Providence: Little Company of Mary: Seventh Grade Curriculum</p> <p>COPA- Creating Opportunities for Physical Activity</p> <p>Families In Schools</p> <p>First 5 LA</p> <p>Volunteers of America</p> <p>International Trade Academy (Banning High School)</p> <p>Port of Los Angeles High School Global Trade Academy</p> <p>Wilmington Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Wilmington Family Health Clinic</p> <p>Tsu Chi Foundation</p>	<p>Assistance, etc.)</p> <p>Environment/recycling</p> <p>Design brochures/newsletters</p> <p>Weekly Medical Van Visit for underinsured students & Seventh Grade Adolescent Curriculum</p> <p>Physical Education Specialist & Training for teachers</p> <p>Parent Outreach/Training</p> <p>Early Options Education</p> <p>Volunteer Children's' Service Opportunities</p> <p>Vertical Articulation/Curriculum Development, Global Trade Experiences.</p> <p>Global Trade Curriculum Development & Vertical Articulation</p> <p>Business Outreach/Development</p> <p>Vaccinations, referral for health care, wellness clinics.</p> <p>Health and Wellness</p>
Institutions of Higher Education	<p>Harbor College</p> <p>CSU Dominguez Hills</p>	<p>Curricular trips</p> <p>College visits</p> <p>Student teachers</p> <p>Summer programs</p>



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Labor Organizations	ILWU - International Longshore and Warehousemen's Union OCAW - Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union Teamsters	Service learning Homework assistance Mentoring Student participation in charity drives
Religious organizations	St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church Holy Family Catholic Church Church of Christ First United Methodist	Family literacy campaigns, Health/nutrition campaigns
Local government	Public library Fire Station Banning Museum	Extended opportunities for access to text and literature Career awareness Field Trips/Family activities
Business and Industry	Local refineries Juanitas and Food 4 Less FAMSA (furniture) Wilmington Chamber of Commerce Score (textiles) Shipping Terminals Stevedoring Companies	Career exploration and guest speakers Donations and financial support Student incentives/scholarships Reinforcement of science/environment Student mentoring

In order to achieve our mission of high academic proficiency for all students, we have continued to seek support and resources from our community partners. To build our network of community partners, Bridges has already established a presence on the Wilmington Leadership Council. United Way has already agreed to sponsor a Read With Me and Reading Roads Program in conjunction with Families In Schools. We will partner with Wilmington Boys' and Girls' Club,



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which has demonstrated success at Wilmington Middle School, to establish our afterschool program. We will also partner with Providence Little Company of Mary to establish the COPA Program (Creating Opportunities for Physical Activity) as well as our ACES (Adolescent Coping Education Series) Curriculum for Middle School advisory. We will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 13) to partner with Providence Little Company of Mary to house a Medical Van on site one time per week. This same partnership will also support a COPA instructor that will provide guidance on enhancing our physical education program. Our student population has extensive health needs in relation to over 90% of our population identified at Title One. In addition, as previously mentioned, we have an obesity rate of over 35% in the local community.

We will host community meetings, and will invite and encourage community partners to be part of every school-wide event. Once a partnership begins to blossom, community partners will be asked to establish their commitment to support Bridges via a Commitment Letter outlining how they will support student success. In all, Bridges is committed to strengthening connections with all stakeholders and ensuring that families and the community play a more active role in the academic and social growth of all students. The relationships will serve not only to supplement our resources in providing intervention services for our students, but also to bolster the curriculum that is currently being established.

B-6 School Governance and Oversight

a. School Type - Not Applicable

b. **School Level Committees:** The leadership at Bridges will consist of elected representative bodies and committees that will lead the instructional and operational components of the Public School Choice plan.

- **School Site Council (SSC)** – elected, representative membership from all stakeholder groups operating under federal and state guidelines to create and implement the *Single Plan for Student Achievement*, focusing on allocating federal and state funding to support the instructional program.
- **School Leadership Council (SLC)**– elected, representative membership from all stakeholder groups with control over scheduling, professional development and non-categorical resources.
- **Categorical Education Advisory Committee/English Learner Advisory Committee** – elected, representative membership from all stakeholder groups serving as an advisory group for socio-economic disadvantaged and English language learners.
- **Personnel/Staff Selection Committee**– sub-committee responsible for recruitment and selection of classified and certificated personnel.



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- **Budget/Finance Committee** – sub-committee of SSC responsible for making recommendations based on data on how to allocate fiscal resources.
- **Curriculum and Instruction/Professional Development Committee** – sub-committee responsible for supporting and assessing the PSC plan as it relates to curriculum, instruction, and professional development.
- **Positive Behavior Support/Safe and Civil School** – committee of representative stakeholders responsible for implementing program to sustain a positive and safe school culture.
- **School-wide Safety Committee** – committee of representative stakeholders responsible for implementing the school's Safety Plan.
- **School Activities/Calendar Committee** – sub-committee of the SLC responsible for coordinating time and space to support school activities, the instructional program, parent participation, and all other events involving the school.
- **GATE Parent Advisory** – committee of parents of gifted and talented students to provide input into programs and services for GATE students.
- **PTO** – organization that will provide support to students and families.

a. Governing Council – Not applicable

B-7 School Leadership

a. **Principal Selection:** The principal of the Bridges school will be a dynamic school leader, actively leading the effective implementation of their PSC plan while respectfully honoring all stakeholders in a collaborative and supportive school culture. The Distributed Leadership model will mobilize the expertise and talent of the staff and community to deliver the richest educational experience to all students. Shared decision-making requires an educational leader who is receptive to all viewpoints, able to assess each situation and act in a consistent manner in keeping with the mission and vision of the school. This leader will be knowledgeable of the curriculum, effective teaching strategies, assessment, and operations, and work to support the highest quality teaching and learning in every classroom. School leadership will ensure that Bridges will be a safe, nurturing, and collaborative educational environment with high expectations that fosters independent student learning, values effort, and champions social justice.

The following skills and attributes will be considered in selecting a principal at Bridges:

- Shared beliefs (consistent with school vision)
- Flexible
- Collaborative
- Communication skills as advocate/spokesperson for the school
- Knowledgeable about the curriculum, instruction, and assessment



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- Focused
- Disciplined
- Intellectually skilled
- Highly visible
- Affirmative, up-beat
- Inspiring
- Creative in problem-solving
- Connected to community and business

A deep understanding of the connection between the local and global communities is paramount for this principal. The individual should demonstrate a track record of past performance in the area of student growth, academic achievement in math and English language arts, and the ability to establish and achieve goals. This person should also possess a commitment to the ideals of social justice that the school's namesake exemplified. A clear understanding of the myriad challenges a student in this community faces in successfully completing an education path to college and beyond is also necessary. Bilingualism in Spanish is a desirable attribute since our English Learner student population will be just under 50%.

The job description for the principal will center on the *LAUSD School Leadership Framework* and its six standards: 1) A shared vision based on student needs, current education research and the belief that all students can achieve at high levels; 2) Supervision of instruction involving ongoing, coherent guidance for implementation and continuous improvement of teaching and learning; 3) Investing in teacher quality involving an ongoing commitment by school leaders to work collaboratively toward the development of highly effective teachers; 4) Culture of learning and positive behavior reflecting high expectations modeled by the school leadership and embraced by the entire school community; 5) Family and community engagement involving collaborating with family and community partners to promote the success of all students; and 6) Systems and operations ensuring that there are structures and processes in place to assess the school's needs and align resources allocation to drive school improvement. In addition to these characteristics, the principal must have a solid commitment and understanding of the State and national content standards.

The process of selecting a principal for Bridges will begin with outreach by the Personnel/Staff Selection Committee to the surrounding community of educators. In addition to the traditional flying of the position on the LAUSD website, the Personnel/Staff Selection Committee will further publicize openings at the Local District, LAUSD School Board local field office, LACOE, job placement offices of local universities (CSU Dominguez Hills, CSU Long Beach,



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USC, etc.), and human resources offices of surrounding school districts for qualified candidates. The school will maintain an on-going file of qualified candidates to anticipate future openings.

The Personnel/Staff Selection Committee will be developed according to the guidelines of The LAUSD-UTLA Local School Stabilization and Empowerment Initiative of 2011. A letter of intent, letters of recommendation, resume, evidence of prior accomplishments, and a check of references will be key components in principal selection. Candidates will produce proof of their commitment to social justice, ability to lead others in reform, active participation in the community, connection with parents, use of data, knowledge of and experience with curriculum and instruction, knowledge of and experience with school operations, and ability to problem-solve. An evaluative toolkit, containing job announcement flyers, job descriptions, interview questions, and rubrics for application packets and interviews will aid in the fair and unbiased screening of the candidates. The most qualified will be interviewed by the Personnel/Staff Selection Committee; interview questions will include scenarios to help determine the candidate's problem-solving abilities in action as well as display knowledge of the social, cultural, economic, and political factors that impact the local community.

A separate element in the evaluative toolkit will be an annual reflective piece for the school principal centered on the six standards of the LAUSD School Leadership Framework. Elements will include school-wide standardized test scores, participation in community-based activities and connection with community partners, effective collaboration with teachers and parents, and creation of a positive and nurturing school culture.

b. **Leadership Team:** In addition to the principal, Bridges will staff an assistant principal, bilingual coordinator, title one coordinator and intervention coordinator at a level where funding will permit. This team will work with the SSC to implement the PSC plan, monitor the effectiveness of the instructional program, and take steps needed to improve the workings of the school.

The SSC, in accordance with the PSC plan and the SPSA, will set goals for the school and assess the progress the school is making toward those goals. Their charge is to progress monitor at each of their monthly meetings by looking at a variety of current data in order to make informed decisions. Members of this team will regularly meet with their constituencies in two-way communication; sharing the decisions made by the SSC and bringing forth issues from each group that pertain to student progress. The sub-committees under the SSC, for instance, will work to create opportunities for meaningful professional development, so that teachers can continue to support a viable, standards-based curriculum and use effective methods of instruction to ensure that all students learn.



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The SSC will solicit input from their stakeholder groups using meetings, surveys, and protocols so that all voices will be heard. The principal will hold a weekly Coffee and Conversation so that parents can drop in to share concerns in an informal environment. Faculty meetings and grade-level meetings will give teachers the opportunity to participate and share ideas. The school's website will also be a place for interested stakeholders to get information and contribute ideas via email and blog postings. The school will hold open forum meetings so that parents and community can converse whenever issues arise. Students, through school Leadership, Student Council, and participation in the SLC and SSC, will also be heard.

B-8 Staff Recruitment and Evaluation

a. **Staffing Model:** Harry Bridges Span School will be staffed initially with the numbers of staff normally allocated to elementary and middle schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District, then adding teachers to reduce class size to the extent funding allows. In addition, we plan to utilize the services of Intervention Coordinators for targeted intervention. We also plan to double block ELA in the Middle School Grades and potentially purchase an auxiliary period to supplement our intervention efforts in Middle School. In our current Middle School double block ELA and Mathematics Intervention schedule, we will be required to purchase an additional teacher, just to meet the established LAUSD class size norms. The class size norm for middle schools is 34:1 in academic core classes and 42.5:1 in all other classes. In addition, intervention classes such as Advancing Academic Literacy and English Language Skills for English Learners are normed at the lower rates of 20:1 and 25:1 respectively. After these norms are met, it is the intention of Harry Bridges to further reduce class size in academic core classes at all grade levels to the extent possible. Most of the class size reduction will occur in the second semester of the first year after categorical funds are released. It is our intent to establish the School Site Council as soon as possible to take advantage of the categorical funding. Reduced class sizes will be maintained and improved for all academic classes at a level where funding will permit. In addition, we will utilize community resources to assist us in the process of obtaining grants for school needs.

Certificated Year 1 - 20 (k-3) teachers, 8 (4-5) teachers, 9 (6-7) teachers, 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal, Bilingual/Title One Coordinator, Special Education teacher numbers will be determined by the Local District, 1 librarian, 1 campus aide and School Nurse, School Psychologist, Psychiatric Social Worker at a level where funding will permit.

Classified Year 1 - 1 SAA, 1 MCD Office Tech, 2 Office Techs, 1 Plant Manager, 3.0 buildings and grounds workers, 1 campus aide, Special Education Assistants, 1 per Special Education classroom, 6 Supervision Aides, 1 community representative and 8-10 Teacher Assistants at a level where funding will permit.



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Certificated Year 2 - 21 (k-3) teachers, 8 (4-5) teachers, 13 (6-8) teachers, 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal, Special Education teacher numbers will be determined by the Local District, 1 librarian, and School Nurse, School Psychologist, Psychiatric Social Worker at a level where funding will permit.

Classified Year 2 - 1 SAA, 1 MCD Office Tech, 2 Office Techs, 1 Plant Manager, 3.0 buildings and grounds workers, 1 campus aide, Special Education Assistants, 1 per Special Education classroom, 6 Supervision Aides, 1 community representative and 8-10 Teacher Assistants at a level where funding will permit.

Year 3 Maintain staffing ratios for certificated and classified positions. Utilize categorical funds and grant writing team to supplement the services listed in Year 1 and 2. There will be a strong focus on obtaining funds for a full time psychiatric social worker, increased time from the Arts Branch, and physical education.



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b. **Recruitment and Selection of Teachers:** The Bridges school will provide all students with a high-quality, rigorous academic education, featuring best first instruction coupled with high expectations. In addition, teachers at this school will ensure that diverse student learning needs, particularly those of English learners, are met with differentiated and research-based pedagogy. While bilingualism is not a requirement, it would surely be an asset. The mission and vision of the school centers on collaboration, the valuing of effort, and appreciation of social justice, all qualities that a Bridges' teacher must embrace. Since the most important factor in the success of a school is the quality of its teachers, every effort will be made by the personnel team to ensure that the best become part of its faculty. To this end, we will use the autonomy provided under Local School Initiative (LIS # 9) with a requirement for "mutual consent" by school and employee with respect to the filling of UTLA-represented, site-based openings at the school, meaning no District-mandatory priority placements.

Teacher candidates must exhibit a strong commitment to the school, the community, and the PSC plan. The job description is based on the *LAUSD Framework for Teaching*: Standard 1) Planning and Preparation; Standard 2) Classroom Environment; Standard 3) Instruction; Standard 4) Additional Professional Responsibilities; and Standard 5) Professional Growth. In addition to the specifics of each of these standards, candidates should be willing to serve on school-wide SLC committees to develop shared responsibility for the school's success.

We intend to apply for a waiver (LIS #15) with respect to the filling of UTLA-represented, site-based openings at the school. The Personnel/Staff Selection Committee will require a letter of intent, letters of recommendation, a resume, and evidence of the following: knowledge of content, pedagogy, and lesson-planning; management of routines, procedures, and student behavior; student progress-monitoring and intervention; communicating with families; and collaboration with colleagues. As stated in the LAUSD-UTLA Local School Stabilization and Empowerment Initiative of 2011, the personnel team, with the independent concurrence/consent of the Principal, shall be permitted to select District transfer applicants to fill a number of the new positions so that the total of such selections, when combined with the number of designated members of the Design Team, will constitute up to 50% of the initial full complement of faculty at the new school.

All other initial positions at the school will be filled by interview with candidates being selected from all schools affected by the relief pattern for Harry Bridges Span School including De La Torre Elementary, Fries Avenue Elementary, Gulf Avenue Elementary, Hawaiian Avenue Elementary, Wilmington Park Elementary, and Wilmington Middle School.



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The purpose of implementing the interview process at Harry Bridges is to create a dynamic team of like-minded teachers who are dedicated to implementing the Public School Choice Plan as written. In addition, this established equity for all teachers to apply at Bridges who will be affected by the Relief Plan.

Candidates must demonstrate the ability to plan and deliver standards based lesson by conducting a demo lesson with students or the selection committee, submitting a video, or explaining the steps he/she would take to plan and deliver a lesson.

A Personnel/Staff Selection Committee created evaluative toolkit, containing job announcement flyers, job descriptions, interview questions, and rubrics for application packets and interviews, will aid in the fair and unbiased screening of candidates. Bridges will use its staffing autonomy to find and retain the best possible teachers and staff to ensure the successful implementation of the PSC plan.

c. Performance Reviews: Bridges is committed to implementing the UTLA-LAUSD contracted method of staff evaluation. In addition to the requirements set down by the district, Bridges will further support improved instruction by implementing Instructional Rounds. This collaborative, collegial approach to classroom observation will support an open and honest evaluative process. The staff will yearly participate on a school reflection aimed at assessing progress the school has made and setting goals for the coming school year. This yearly assessment process will additionally feature stakeholder surveys and structured conversations that will focus on school improvement in the areas of instruction, communication, operations, and school culture. Since Bridges requires participatory leadership, all staff will contribute to the school community by serving on committees and being involved in school activities.

The evaluation will align with the UTLA-LAUSD standards of instructional excellence and also include a piece on self reflection for administrators and teachers. There will be formative feedback throughout the process, which will include observational debriefs and analysis of student work and achievement. In addition, the professional learning communities will also provide formative feedback through the additional grade level/department meetings. All conversations will include a review of student achievement data.

B-9 Sharing a Campus – Not applicable



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C. Internal Management

C-1 Waivers

Bridges will apply for a waiver from the LAUSD Collective Bargaining Agreement concerning Article XI Transfers and Sections 16.0 Staffing a New School. As stated in the LAUSD-UTLA Local School Stabilization and Empowerment Initiative of 2011, the personnel team, with the independent concurrence/consent of the Principal, shall be permitted to select District transfer applicants to fill a number of the new positions so that the total of such selections, when combined with the number of designated members of the Design Team, will constitute up to 50% of the initial full complement of faculty at the new school.

All other initial positions at the school will be filled by interviewing qualified candidates from all schools affected by the relief pattern for Harry Bridges Span School including De La Torre Elementary, Fries Avenue Elementary, Gulf Avenue Elementary, Hawaiian Avenue Elementary, Wilmington Park Elementary, and Wilmington Middle School. If fewer candidates from the relief pattern schools apply and/or are deemed qualified by the personnel team, District transfer applicants may be considered.

C-2 – Budget Development

We plan to establish an academic environment that will educate, challenge, and inspire students to achieve at high levels of academic proficiency and excellence in relation to state and national standards. The school will use the appropriate data to assess the effectiveness of expenditures and guide future decisions in a cycle of continuous improvement in student achievement.

Harry Bridges Span School will receive funding via Los Angeles Unified School District's transparent budgeting process (using COST Center controls which are based on per pupil funding and student ADA.) Additionally, Bridges will receive categorical funding from Title 1, Bilingual and Special Education. The School Site Council (SSC) is ultimately responsible for creating and approving the annual school budgets for categorical and grant funded programs with recommendations from the CEAC and ELAC parent advisory councils. These funds will support 975 students, year 1 with an enrollment of 1,095 in year 2 and beyond.

An active grant writing team consists of the principal/designee and representatives of the School Leadership Council. We will seek out and apply for grants in a wide variety of venues including teacher grants from Fedco and Target, grants from local refineries, such as Valero and BP, the Port of Los Angeles Stevedoring Companies, the Providence Little Company of Mary COPA



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Grant (school wide, nutrition, fitness and social services), United Way Literacy Grants, and Toyota USA Foundation (for support of math and science in the middle school).

Priorities for Funding

Start Up, Year 1

The priorities for Year 1 funding are to establish the class size norms for the school based on the need to reduce class sizes from the District norms. In addition it is a priority to staff the school with an administrator, assistant principal (secondary experience), intervention coordinator, and campus aide. An additional priority will be in the area of professional development for Balanced Literacy including Writing (Units of Study) and Leveled Reading.

We will add support services for students and families as we acquire more resources. The supports we most value are the psychiatric social worker, increased nursing services, and extending the arts.

In addition we will implement a strong grant writing team to seek out and apply for grants on a continuous basis. Grants have already been obtained through United Way for the Families In Schools “Read With Me” and “Reading Roads Programs”. Grants also will be sought to support academic intervention, technology, and afterschool programming.

Year 2

We will continue to complete our staffing priorities as we add an 8th grade class to the campus and grow to our total enrollment of approximately 1,200 students. Professional development opportunities that involve a major commitment of funds include: Balanced Literacy (Units of Study Writing Training and Leveled Reading), Key Standards for Algebra Training, Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) training for sharpening SDAIE skills.

For parents/guardians in Year 2 we will implement the Families in Schools Power of Teacher and Parent Partnerships in addition to programs offered in Year 1 that include Read with Me and Reading Roads.

Year 3

In Year 3 our primary goal will be to sustain class size reduction accomplished in the previous two years. As additional funding becomes available, we will work at increasing our ability to reduce class sizes for all academic core content classes. We will continue funding the Professional Development Priorities that were established in Year 1 and 2.

For parents/guardians in Year 3 we will offer the Families in Schools Transition to Middle School in addition to services offered in Year 1 and Year 2.



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Harry Bridges will follow all LAUSD guidelines on all matters of fiscal soundness and legal compliance. We will begin establishing our instructional priorities aligned to student achievement data in the fall. Next, we will review the District's projected annual budgets with the SSC and align our priorities accordingly. We will ensure that the ELAC and CEAC are provided an opportunity to make formal recommendations to the final budget. The SLC will also provide formal recommendations based on input from the staff and community. A schedule to present a proposed budget to all stakeholders will be implemented so that all individuals have the opportunity to provide structured feedback prior to a final budget being adopted and presented to the District for approval. To ensure fiscal soundness and legal compliance, the school will use Front End, the District's electronic budget management system to generate monthly financial reports for School Site Council meetings, advisory council meetings and ESBMM management.

The principal, school administrative assistant and categorical program advisor will meet monthly with all leadership team members to review budgets. They will report monthly to School Site Council and advisory councils for monitoring purposes. Questions asked at monthly meetings will be answered conclusively at the School Site Council meeting the following month. Student achievement data will be shared to help assess the effectiveness of the expenditures to determine which activities should continued to be funded, which should be modified and which should be eliminated.



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D. Operational Management

D-1 Portfolio Development

- a. Portfolio Growth- Not applicable
- b. Operations- Not applicable
- c. Portfolio Evaluation- Local District 8

The Performance Meter Goals, effective progress monitoring, differentiating instruction, alignment of Kindergarten instruction with the Common Core Standards, Algebra 1, and 6th Grade ELA have been identified through the data as key focus areas in Local District 8. These areas are addressed district-wide through on-going professional development of administrators and teachers. Implementation and results are assessed through analysis of the progress monitoring and benchmark data at the regularly scheduled meetings, as well as the daily observations at school sites.

D-2 Organizational Responsibilities and Goals (For Charter Schools and Network Partners)

- a. Core Functions – Not applicable
- b. Leadership – Not applicable