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A. Summary Analysis

1. Vision:

Valley Region K-8 Sylmar Span School #1, for the purposes of this document, called **Sylmar Leadership Academy**, will prepare students to be life-long learners by developing in them self-esteem, respect for others, and commitment to the community beyond the school. Students will acquire the ability to work collaboratively to solve real life problems and will develop the prerequisite skills needed **to become effective student leaders who are college-prepared and career-ready**.

All students will culminate their educational experiences at Sylmar Leadership Academy with 21st century leadership skills to:

- Effectively apply the critical thinking processes of analysis, synthesis and evaluation leading to productive problem solving
- Use disciplined ways of thinking creatively, using curiosity and imagination as resources
- Communicate information clearly and effectively using a variety of media/technology skills
- Value and demonstrate personal responsibility, character, cultural understanding, and ethical behavior
- Work independently and collaboratively to solve problems and accomplish personal goals
- Mentor others, adult and student learners, in achieving short and long term, self determined goals
- Utilize technology and the Internet to support projects and service based instruction including identifying and collecting pertinent information and power point presentations.

Mission:

All stakeholders at Sylmar Leadership Academy will collaborate to support the vision of the school by **mastering pedagogy** needed to teach academic content standards which will raise the achievement bar to a level comparable to those of the best national and international educational systems. In addition, all stakeholders will **fully commit** to supporting the educational and emotional needs of all students. To this end, the school will be organized around three school-wide systematic approaches to Standards-based instruction: **Data-based decision making (using the problem-solving process); Personalized Learning Environments (PLE) for students; and Service-based learning**. As a united force, the school staff with parents, community and partnership members, will analyze student data on an ongoing basis to provide all students timely targeted instruction to ensure that they reach proficiency in all content areas. As part of PLE, all stakeholders will work together to provide students with adult mentors who will be integral partners in the students' academic and service-based learning. Additionally, Sylmar Leadership Academy will develop a system to give older students opportunities to assist younger students to take on the mantle of leadership. This differs from cross age tutoring in that the older students will work in an organized manner to help younger students do what the older students have done: support the development of leadership in their mentees. The intentional and appropriate use of technology will enhance

information gathering and processing of numerical and statistical data by students to validate or justify their positions or solutions in daily work and long term projects.

Sylmar Leadership Academy: Core Beliefs

- All students possess knowledge, values, eagerness to learn, and significant home experiences that, when coupled with the three school-wide systematic approaches to standards-based instruction, will foster student achievement.
- All children can, and must, achieve high content and leadership standards (See Appendix A1-A6: Student Leadership Standards from Region 7 State Student Council Executive directors, 2003-2004).
- Student achievement is best acquired through personalized learning environments and service-based learning, which also cultivates students' leadership skills.
- Student achievement is maximized by the consistent use of data-based decisions to improve instruction.
- The problem – solving process is a powerful tool for analyzing student data on academic and social/behavioral measurements.
- By utilizing leadership principles, and service-based learning with technology as a tool, students will develop critical thinking skills to solve real life problems. Researchers define this type of leadership as “taking on the role of and engaging in the process of influencing others toward a common endeavor, goal, or cause.” (Harvard Business Review Jan/Feb 2012, Volume 28)
- Students can mentor other students in the development of personal efficacy and leadership.
- The active involvement of all stakeholders, students, parents, school staff, community, is essential to improved student achievement.

Sylmar Leadership Academy: Cultivating the Students (Tree Analogy)

Sylmar Leadership Academy will take the well-established practice of vertical articulation and expand it to permeate the instructional structure of the school while still maintaining its focus and mission, implement it to influence the outcome of the students upon leaving after 8th grade, and open it so as to nurture an environment that develops a sense of belonging for the students, staff, parents, and the community at large.

To analogously illustrate how the expanded vertical articulation concept will be implemented, we envision it as a tree where each of its structures corresponds to each of the aforementioned applications.

The trunk of the tree corresponds to the mission and the vision of the school. It is the foundation upon which every aspect of the school will evolve and revolve. There will be no aspect of the school that does not take into account the focus on developing leadership and a sense of community responsibility. Each of the branches corresponds to a PLE where students will stay with the same cohort or team of teachers from first through eighth grades. This will ensure that the growth and development of each student becomes the responsibility of not just the current year teacher, but all of the teachers within the team. In addition, a sense of belonging to an invested group, where the success of the whole is predicated on the success of the individual, will give the families of the students the assurance that their children will not be overlooked and

their concerns will always be addressed. The students and their families will know that the school will provide an environment that shelters them like the shade of the tree. As the roots of the tree do, the school community will provide the resources to nurture their academic and personal growth.

Finally, the fruit of the tree are the students themselves. The outcome will be that the outgoing 8th graders will reflect the leadership that has been instilled in them and understand their place in and responsibility for their community. The purpose of any fruit is to propagate the species and that would be the hope and desire of the school: that the students will leave Sylmar Leadership Academy to become leaders in their high schools with a genuine desire to achieve success for themselves and the communities they serve.

2. School Data Analysis.

Sylmar Leadership Academy, a new Kindergarten to 8th Grade Span School of approximately 1,047 seats, will be located at 14550 Bledsoe St. Sylmar, CA 91342, on the northeast corner of Bledsoe St. and Dronfield Ave. It will be relieving overcrowding at Herrick ES, Hubbard ES, Sylmar ES, Olive Vista MS and indirectly to Dyer ES. Additionally, it will permit Sylmar ES to return to a traditional school calendar from a year-round calendar. The following table displays the projected student population:

Student Population Data*

*LAUSD 2010 – 2011 School Data Summary Sheet

% OF DEMOGRAPHICS BY POPULATION		Dyer ES	Herrick ES	Hubbard ES	Sylmar ES	Olive Vista MS
	African American	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%
	American Indian	0	0	0	0	0
	Asian	1%	1%	0	1%	0
	Filipino	1%	1%	0	1%	0
	Latino	97%	94%	94%	94%	95%
	Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0
	White (not Latino)	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%
	Special Education	10%	11%	10%	10%	14%
	Gifted and Talented	6%	5%	5%	2%	9%
	Economically Disadvantaged	91%	87%	80%	93%	90%
	English Learners	52%	44%	41%	47%	27%
	Reclassified as Fluent English Proficient	7%	10%	10%	13%	38%

The students at the relieved schools are predominantly Latino (95%) with approximately 2% white and few students of other ethnicities (White, African American, Asian). Students with disabilities average from 10%-14% and GATE Students range from 2%-9%. Approximately 87% of the student population at the four schools is economically disadvantaged and receives free or reduced meals. English learners make up an average of about 43% of the elementary school population. Of note is the relatively low reclassification rate at all of the elementary schools, ranging from 10%-13%. The middle school reclassification rate is 38%. Another area of concern and action is the low number of identified gifted students.

Local District 2 recognizes, understands and is dedicated to addressing the needs of the students that will be attending Sylmar Leadership Academy. The District has had success over 5 years in serving students with similar demographics. **Most recently, Local District 2 had the highest yearly gain in cumulative CST scores of all eight local districts** (See Appendix A7). Many of the practices and strategies included in this PSC plan for the Sylmar Leadership Academy are derived from the Local District 2 Common Practices or non-Negotiables (See Appendix A8-A13).

Additionally, these **evidence based and effective practices** which are contained in this PSC Proposal are designed to address student needs and maximize the inherent strength and contributions of students to their own learning and school. We are confident and eager to begin the work.

PSC 3.0 STANDARD RFP APPLICATION FOR VR SYLMAR SPAN K-8 SCHOOL #1

API SCORES	DYER ES	HERRICK ES	HUBBARD ES	SYLMAR ES	OLIVE VISTA MS
2006 - 07	721	713	731	705	628
2007 - 08	719	734	730	704	629
2008 - 09	745	745	751	722	642
2009 - 10	768	784	758	713	656
2010 - 11	835	815	792	779	670
1 Yr Change (2011 v 2010)	67	31	34	66	14
5 Yr Change (2011 v 2007)	114	102	61	74	42

AYP - ELA	DYER ES	HERRICK ES	HUBBARD ES	SYLMAR ES	OLIVE VISTA MS
2006 - 07	32.5%	33.8%	39.2%	28.2%	25.2%
2007 - 08	35.0%	36.2%	34.7%	28.0%	26.3%
2008 - 09	41.4%	41.3%	41.3%	34.8%	26.9%
2009 - 10	42.6%	51.3%	44.0%	33.7%	29.7%
2010 - 11	58.4%	56.7%	48.1%	46.0%	34.9%
1 Yr Change (2011 v 2010)	16	5	4	12	5
5 Yr Change (2011 v 2007)	26	23	9	18	10

AYP - MATH	DYER ES	HERRICK ES	HUBBARD ES	SYLMAR ES	OLIVE VISTA MS
2006 - 07	45.0%	49.2%	52.3%	41.9%	20.4%
2007 - 08	46.9%	54.0%	52.3%	42.4%	19.6%
2008 - 09	49.0%	55.1%	54.9%	49.0%	22.4%
2009 - 10	60.3%	59.8%	49.9%	43.5%	28.1%
2010 - 11	75.7%	68.0%	62.8%	58.4%	28.4%
1 Yr Change (2011 v 2010)	15	8	13	15	0
5 Yr Change (2011 v 2007)	31	19	11	17	8

% FBB & BB - ELA	DYER ES	HERRICK ES	HUBBARD ES	SYLMAR ES	OLIVE VISTA MS
2007 - 08	32.9%	27.8%	27.9%	37.7%	40.4%
2008 - 09	27.3%	27.7%	23.2%	30.3%	37.4%
2009 - 10	22.5%	21.6%	19.7%	32.4%	35.0%
2010 - 11	13.0%	16.1%	16.1%	23.4%	28.9%
1 Yr Change (2011 v 2010)	-10	-6	-4	-9	-6

% FBB & BB - MATH	DYER ES	HERRICK ES	HUBBARD ES	SYLMAR ES	OLIVE VISTA MS
2007 - 08	27.6%	23.6%	23.8%	28.7%	56.9%
2008 - 09	23.9%	22.7%	20.7%	26.9%	51.3%
2009 - 10	34.8%	17.7%	22.8%	34.0%	46.4%
2010 - 11	8.5%	12.9%	13.0%	18.3%	45.4%
1 Yr Change (2011 v 2010)	-26	-5	-10	-16	-1

AMAO 3 - ELA	DYER ES	HERRICK ES	HUBBARD ES	SYLMAR ES	OLIVE VISTA MS
2006 - 07	26.9%	28.1%	27.7%	21.3%	19.7%
2007 - 08	27.0%	29.2%	23.4%	23.6%	20.1%
2008 - 09	35.1%	36.2%	30.8%	28.9%	21.0%
2009 - 10	34.8%	47.3%	35.0%	29.2%	18.1%
2010 - 11	49.7%	53.5%	38.8%	41.0%	23.5%
1 Yr Change (2011 v 2010)	15	6	4	12	5
5 Yr Change (2011 v 2007)	23	25	11	20	4

AMAO 3 - MATH	DYER ES	HERRICK ES	HUBBARD ES	SYLMAR ES	OLIVE VISTA MS
2006 - 07	42.2%	46.9%	43.8%	38.1%	17.5%
2007 - 08	40.2%	50.4%	45.0%	37.9%	15.3%
2008 - 09	42.8%	54.7%	47.1%	43.4%	19.2%
2009 - 10	56.3%	62.3%	41.0%	42.9%	20.8%
2010 - 11	74.2%	67.8%	55.6%	56.4%	18.8%
1 Yr Change (2011 v 2010)	18	6	15	14	-2
5 Yr Change (2011 v 2007)	32	21	12	18	1

As part of the review and analysis of AYP in English Language Arts and mathematics, it is uplifting to see that there has been a significant improvement in the numbers of student scoring advanced and proficient in all relieved schools, especially in 2010-2011. Also significant is the decrease in FBB's and BB's in both areas. However, even with the increases, elementary schools have between 43%-54% of their second through fifth grade students in ELA below proficiency. In math, the range of non-proficient students is from 38%-42%. At Olive Vista MS, 66% of the students are not proficient in ELA and 72% are not proficient in math. It is evident that elementary gains are not transferring to the middle school. There is a strong need to overcome the transition drop between fifth grade and sixth grade and reduce the high number of Long Term English Learners. **We feel that the span school model will, in large part,**

help to mitigate this pattern and provide a more coherent and intentional curriculum for our students.

This marks a real sense of urgency and commitment to improve the instructional achievement and the lives of the students for the Design Team, Educational Service Center and the stakeholders of Sylmar Leadership Academy.

The School Report Card, Data Sheets, CST, and CELDT data clearly shows that students bring the following:

- Strong trends toward growth in Math
- A wide range of academic achievement
- Great potential and possibilities based on continuous improvement in academic achievement
- Culture and language
- Parental trust in neighborhood school
- Respectful behavior

The school report card, data sheets, CST, and CELDT data clearly shows that students need the following:

- Consistent and effective first teaching
- Inclusion in decision making processes; school governance (at age-appropriate levels)
- English Language Development
- Access to Core Strategies
- Extended learning opportunities
- Problem solving skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Creative thinking skills
- Leadership skills
- Personalized learning environments which use technology as a tool for authentic and enhanced learning
- Highly knowledgeable teachers
- Teachers who are leaders themselves
- Parents who are leaders themselves

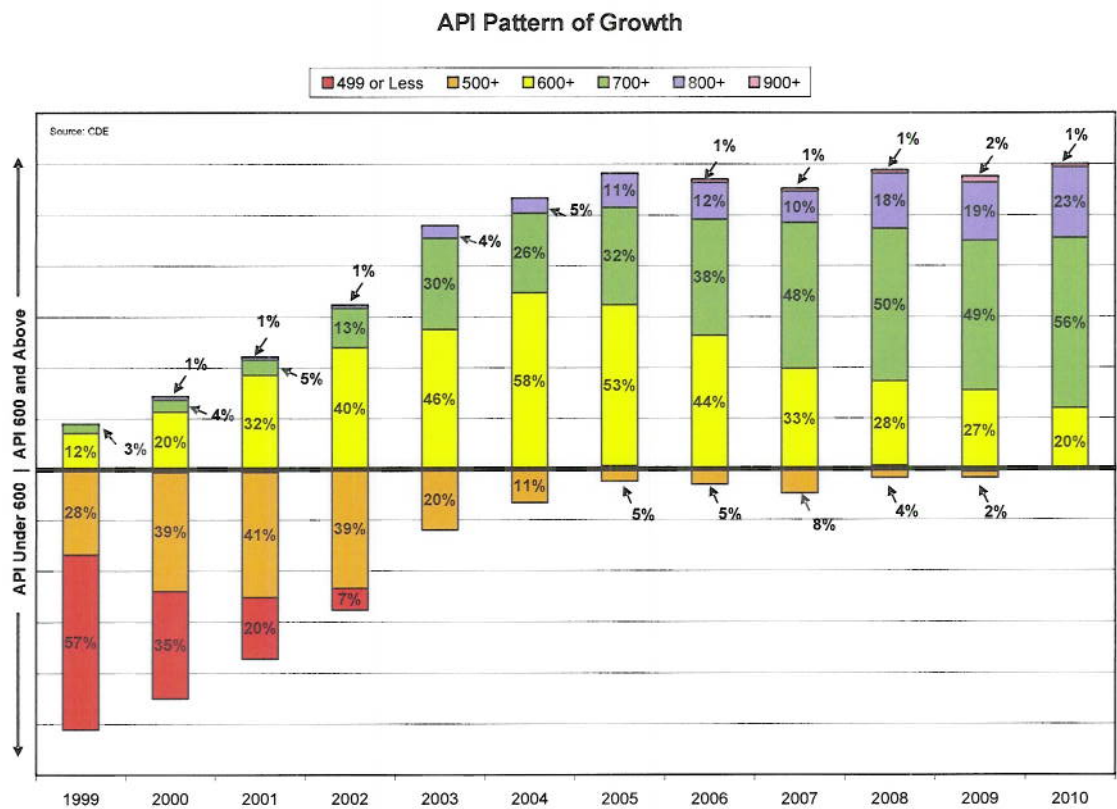
All stakeholders at Sylmar Leadership Academy understand that many of our students are impacted by large, impersonal schools that may lack the ability to disseminate information regarding the path to college, accessing adult or cross age tutors, and how to access a clear, high-quality career pathway. The new school is needed not only to relieve overcrowding at the area surrounding Sylmar Leadership Academy, but also to create a college-bound culture in the community. **Fortunately, Sylmar Leadership Academy, as a new school, will have a unique and exciting opportunity to establish a community school which will provide all students with the opportunity to be college-prepared and career ready. The K-8 grade level configuration will also support the building of a strong sense of community over time.**

Sylmar Leadership Academy will be organized around three school-wide systematic approaches to Standards-based instruction: **Data-based decision making** (using the problem-solving process), **Personalized Learning Environments** for students, and **Service-based learning**. The school staff along with parents, community and partnership members will analyze student data on an ongoing basis to provide all students timely targeted instruction and intervention to ensure that they reach proficiency in all content areas. This will be embedded in the framework of student leadership: giving students the opportunity to discover and develop their personal leadership in a way that students understand and can relate to in terms of goals and actions.

See Appendix P: Performance Plan

3. Applicant Team Analysis.

See Appendix F: Applicant History Data Summary Sheet



CDE

Under the guidance and supervision of Local District 2, the API at all of the elementary schools which will be relieved by Sylmar Leadership Academy increased by 198 points collectively during 2010-2011. The one middle school increased by 14 points.

Local District 2 schools scored in API "Bands" (divisions of 100) in the following distributions:

Number of Local District 2 Elementary Schools in each API Performance Band

API Performance Band	# of Schools
600	0
700	35
800	24
900	2
Total	61

Number of Local District 2 Middle Schools in each API Performance Band

API Performance Band	# of Schools
600	4
700	7
800	1
900	0
Total	12

(1) What does it take to be successful in either a turnaround or a new school environment?

In a turnaround or new school environment, there are several variables that are essential for success. These have been explored in the Public School Choice Process 1.0, as well as, in educational research and case studies. These include a clear and well understood vision and mission, an unwavering focus on academic achievement, a school culture, climate and infrastructure that supports personalization and academic achievement and leadership that supports high achievement for students and staff. These wide descriptors contain many elements that can be amplified (See Appendix A14: Key Categories for School Review). This is also explained in Willard R. Daggett's work on the new Three R's: Rigor, Relevance and Relationships. These documents and research highlight the need for building the human framework and the academic focus in the successful education of students.

With this in mind, all stakeholders at Sylmar Leadership Academy will study and implement the following reform elements identified in recent world-wide research on the most improved school systems (Mourshed, Mona., Chijioke, Chinezi., Barber, Michael (2010). *How the World's Most Improved School Systems Keep Getting Better*. London: McKinsey & Company):

- 1. Improvement can start from any student outcome level, whatever the geography, culture or income. Gains can be achieved in six years or less.**
- 2. Focus should be on improving how instruction is delivered rather than on changing the content of what is delivered.**
- 3. Each particular stage of the school system improvement journey has a unique set of interventions. Similar sets of intervention need to be implemented to move from one particular performance level to the next, irrespective of culture, geography, politics, or history.**
- 4. A system's context might not determine what needs to be done, but it does determine how it is done. Persuade stakeholders to comply with reforms. Making mandates does not guarantee**

change.

5. Six interventions should occur equally at every performance stage: (1) Build the instructional skills of teachers and management skills of principals. (2) Assess students. (3) Improve data systems. (4) Facilitate improvement through the study of policy documents and education laws. (5) Revise standards and curriculum. (6) Reward teachers and principals.

6. Systems sustain improvement by balancing school autonomy with consistent teaching practice. Make teachers responsible to each other as professionals for both their own performance and that of their colleagues. Make practice public – such as weekly lesson-planning for all teachers in the same subject, required lesson observations, and joint-teaching –to further develop the established pedagogy.

In other words, collaborative practice becomes the main mechanism both for improving teaching practice and making teachers accountable to each other.

7. Leaders should take advantage of changed circumstances to ignite reforms.

8. Leadership is essential not only in sparking reform but in sustaining it. Two things stand out about the leaders of improving systems. Firstly, their longevity: the median tenure of the new strategic leaders is six years and that of the new political leaders is seven years. The stability of reform direction is critical to achieving the quick gains in student outcomes outlined above.

(2) Why is your team well-positioned to do this work?

1. The Sylmar Leadership Academy Design Team is a group of experienced teachers and administrators from feeder and surrounding schools who volunteered to design and produce a Public School Choice Plan that would be awarded the operation of this new school. By examining the pertinent data, considering cutting edge research and accessing the hopes and dreams of the stakeholders for the children of Sylmar, the team designed the instructional and operational plan that follows. The Design Team was made up of elementary and middle school teachers, an Access to Core Coach, RtI experts, an EL specialist, Sylmar and San Fernando community members and three administrators, all of whom met for many hours during non-school time to develop this proposal. Two of the team members are UTLA Chapter chairs for their schools and three sit on the Valley East UTLA Steering Committee.
2. Two members of the Design Team previously collaborated, wrote and submitted successful Public School Choice 1.0 proposals in the current Local District 2: Julie Korenstein ES, Vista Del Valle Dual Language Academy, and Andres & Maria Cardenas ES. Additionally, five members participated throughout the year and provided ongoing support for the Public School Choice 1.0 Fall and Spring reviews for these schools. This is a critical factor given that studies show the importance of school district administrators in the implementation of now available autonomies (LAUSD-UTLA Local School Stabilization and Empowerment Initiative of 2011) and improvements of teaching and learning derived from them (Honig and Ramsey).
3. API scores for the LD2 PSC 1.0 elementary schools in their first year of operation 2010-2011 are:
 - Korenstein ES -739 points

- Cardenas ES – 752 points
- **Vista Del Valle Dual Language Academy achieved the highest API for Public School Choice 1.0 in elementary schools in LAUSD with 783 points.**

4. Using the results of data analysis as a framework, the Design Team researched current studies on educational reform, effective pedagogy, and systems and structures that move away from highly isolated work environments towards effective “communities of practice.” (See Appendix 15: Sample Design Team Meeting Agenda) There was a specific focus on empowering students as leaders in their school and owners of their work.
5. The Design Team had direct experience and spent additional time consulting with parents and students residing in the Sylmar community regarding their expectations and hopes for Sylmar Leadership Academy (See Appendix # A16-A18: Sample Agenda: Parent Community meeting and PPT Slides from 2011 Community Meeting)

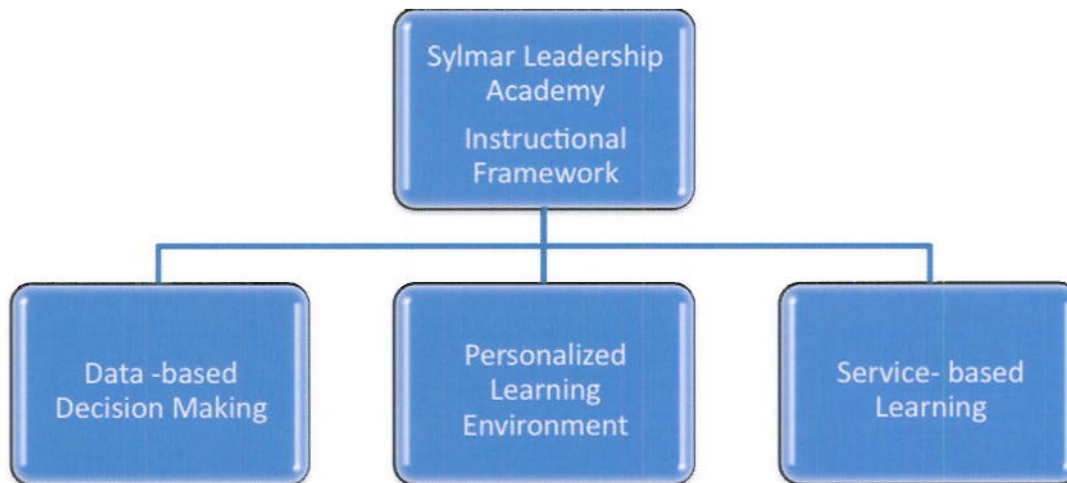
4. Informational Summary: (See Appendix Q1-Q7: PSC 3.0 Informational School Plan Summary for Sylmar Leadership Academy)

B. Instructional Plan

Category One: Unwavering Focus on Academic Achievement

B-1. Curriculum and Instruction

- a. **Instructional Program:** Provide a thorough description of the proposed instructional framework and the underlying theory that drives it. Describe the specific instructional strategies that will be implemented and explain why they are well-suited to address the needs of the student population and will help attain the goals outlined in Section A.



The school will be organized around three school-wide systematic approaches to Standards-based instruction: Data-based decision making (using the problem-solving process: Response to Intervention and Instruction), Personalized Learning Environments for students, and Service-based learning. **Pivotal to the plan, is the development of student leadership in which students take responsibility for their own learning and work effectively and independently as part of a team.** As a collaborative, the school staff along with parents, community and partnership members will analyze and evaluate student data on an ongoing basis to provide all students timely targeted instruction to ensure that they reach proficiency in all content areas. In addition, all stakeholders will work together to create PLE's or houses where students will develop long term educational relationships with teachers and staff from first to eighth grades. Additionally, they will be paired with adult mentors and cross age/peer tutors utilizing the grade level span at the school to best advantage. They will be integral partners in service-based learning projects that will cultivate and develop student's individual leadership skills. Please note that Sylmar Leadership Academy will use the state adopted LAUSD Curriculum.

Data-based Decision Making to Inform Instruction

To support student achievement, all stakeholders at Sylmar Leadership Academy will take part in the analysis of student data using the Problem-Solving Process from the Response to Intervention and Instruction Framework. As a result, at-risk students will be quickly be identified and provided with individualized instruction/intervention in small group settings. Assessment results will provide a basis for regularly scheduled reflection about teaching practices and student outcomes. The Problem-Solving Process will routinely be used school-wide to identify student needs and to assess, adjust, and refine instructional practice. Teachers will work in grade levels and in content specific groups to analyze

authentic, formative, and summative student data, projects, and performance goals to calibrate instruction more closely to student needs. Additionally, teachers will team teach for English language development (ELD), science, history/social science, health and the performing arts (art, music, theatre, dance, and media arts).

For the student at-risk, teachers will implement an intervention plan customized for the student by identifying content standards and clusters that need more time or an alternative group setting. Specific teaching and learning strategies aligned to the challenge area will be identified and implemented to gauge the response of the student to the intervention; Individualized services will be matched to student needs and will be monitored on a systematic basis. Trend data shows that there are significant dips in student achievement in grades three and six. We believe that the span configuration will help us address that pattern.

Effective teaching of standards, curriculum, and personalization of learning environments can only be achieved when there is a system in place that regularly examines how students are progressing. All stakeholders will attend a professional development for a minimum of three days to collaborate and build a common understanding of the steps involved within the Problem-Solving Process before the opening of the school. Progress monitoring will be addressed with staff throughout the year and decisions will be made as to the frequency and type of intervention for targeted groups.

WAIVER REQUESTED: LIS #2: Sylmar Leadership Academy requests the autonomy to implement school determined methods to improve pedagogy and student achievement. It is critical that students have strong first teaching. However, as educators we know that some students will need more time, a different approach or setting to support students to achieve grade level standards and competence. As a professional learning community, teachers at Sylmar Learning Academy, after an analysis of periodic and formative assessments, classroom performance in key standards and other factors, will develop a systematic intervention system that will include in class and after hours intervention. After communicating this to all stakeholders, parent, student and staff, selected students will attend mandatory after school interventions to support their learning. Parents of these students will also be required to attend training sessions, as a part of a **Parent Compact**, in order to inform and help them support their child to be a successful student. The duration of these sessions for students will be determined by the Sylmar Leadership Academy Professional Learning Community and will be systematic and consistent so that each student is guaranteed additional time and support when they need it.

This autonomy is necessary to guarantee that the needs of all students are met, whether during or outside of school hours. It is based on our belief that a school truly committed to the concept of learning for all students will not submit them to a haphazard, random intervention program where each teacher determines the response to the question, "How will we, as a school, respond when a student is not learning?" The factor of the parent being included in the intervention builds on the belief that all parents care deeply about the academic success of their child and that the school is a place that welcomes and serves the community, not just its children.

A Personalized Learning Environment for Students

Sylmar Leadership Academy will provide a Personalized Learning Environment for all students including students with disabilities, English learners, Standard English learners, gifted and high-achieving students, and students at risk. Each student will have an **adult mentor and a personalized learning plan** designed

to motivate and keep her/him on the path toward academic and social/behavioral achievement (Parker, Strategic Schooling) based on the Individual Culmination Plan (ICP) used at sixth through eighth grade. Students, teachers, parents and mentors will use student data as they collaborate in the development, implementation, and review of personalized learning plans and ICP's.

Additionally, as part of the personalized environment, **all students will participate in PLE or a House that will give them the opportunity to stay with or connected to a group of teachers from first through eighth grade.** Teachers in these Houses will work together over years to provide a consistent, nurturing and rigorous pathway towards culmination in eighth grade. Kindergarten students will be supported in their first critical year of school by a trained group of teachers with a skill and interest in early childhood education. This will prepare them for a successful entry into first grade and give teachers the opportunity to provide early intensive intervention for at-risk students.

Additionally, students will start in an integrated technology program that will be embedded in each grade level through eighth grade and blend with the service and academic projects that will be a hallmark of Sylmar Leadership Academy. This will enhance their collaborative work and allow them to utilize available technology in real life situations.

Research from the International Center for Leadership in Education describes learning criteria in sync with the proposed actions at Sylmar Leadership academy. These include:

- Student Engagement: the extent that students are motivated and committed to learning, have a sense of learning and accomplishment and have relationships with adults, peers and parents that support learning.
- Personal Skills Development: measures of personal, social, service and leadership skills and demonstration of positive actions and behaviors ("How Brain Research Relates to Rigor, Relevance and Relationships).

Advisory Program Overview

An advisory program will be planned and implemented within the upper grades. **This will give students a time and place where their non-academic needs can be met, as well as providing support for their academic needs.** A purposeful and planned out curriculum connected to the central vision of the school will be developed through collaboration with teachers and community members. The advisory period will provide students with a personalized learning environment where the needs of each student are met through offerings of enrichment, academic and non-academic intervention, completion of service based learning projects, and character education. This program will foster the core beliefs of the Sylmar Leadership Academy where parents and community members can more easily see the **links of the advisory program to the most desired outcomes of middle school: high levels of achievement, good citizenship, strong concepts of cultural understanding and community, and productive behavior for all students.**

Service-Based Learning Approach to Instruction

Sylmar Leadership Academy will provide students with highly qualified teachers who will use a service-based learning approach to instruction. Students will have multiple opportunities to engage in self-selected explorations of ideas and topics and will benefit from and contribute to their community by sharing their Service-Based projects with community members.

Teachers will support students by drawing on their previous knowledge, understanding how they learn best, addressing their learning styles, holding high expectations for all students, and being responsive to their cultural needs.

The teaching staff at Sylmar Leadership Academy will begin the study of Data-based Decision Making and Personalized Learning Environments and their interrelationship during the first school year of instruction. They will do this using their students and classroom as the arena for hands on professional development, learning by doing the work (Learning by Doing, Du Four).

b. Core Academic Curriculum:

Sylmar Leadership Academy will provide all students with an academic environment that will ensure their active engagement in learning. Instruction in all content areas will be designed to meet specific student needs to ensure that all students receive customized instruction aligned with the content standards in the California State Frameworks for California Public Schools. Quality instruction of grade level standards is acknowledged to be critical to student success. In addition, the Common Core standards will be systematically integrated into instruction. The curriculum will incorporate three school-wide systematic approaches to standards-based instruction as stated in the school's vision and mission: Data-based Decision Making, Personalized Learning Environments, and Service-based Learning designed to provide a context and content for instruction and to meet individual student learning needs.

Personalized Learning Environments

Students at Sylmar Leadership Academy will participate in an environment where they will have the opportunity to learn rigorous content standards via a personalized instructional plan. Teachers will match their teaching strategies to meet student needs and students will take ownership of their own learning through personalized educational plans based on the content standards (See Appendix A13 for samples of a fourth grade personalized Student Goal Plan). There have been numerous studies that show the positive correlation between the use of relevance strategies and the level of student engagement (Newby; Cohen, Garcia, Apfel and Master; Daggett). Teachers will set criteria with students to help them achieve mastery of the content standards with the expectation that students eventually will set their own goals and the criteria to successfully meet those goals. Additionally, student-led conferences will encourage students to accept personal responsibility for their academic performance and facilitate the development of students' organizational and oral communication skills. It will also provide the opportunity for students, parents, teachers, and mentors to engage in dialogue around mastery of California's state content standards and subsequently the Common Core standards.

Service-Based Learning

In addition to providing Personalized Learning Environments for students, teachers will encourage students to use higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills through a self-paced service-based learning process that will be student-centered. Students will practice leadership skills by learning how to guide their own learning, reflecting upon their own ideas and opinions, exercising voice and choice, and making decisions about their own learning. Research has proven that student engagement through a service-based model contributes to better student achievement and interest in school amongst English learners and Students with Disabilities. It has also shown that service-oriented projects and connections to their community infuse students with pride in their surroundings and increases self-confidence. Building students' strength of character can act as a preventative measure against negative peer pressure (such as gang involvement) when students enter secondary school.

Overarching Academic and 21st Century Leadership Skills

English Language Arts: The foundations of English Language Arts include phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, reading comprehension, and writing. Information gathering, analysis, critiques and connections are also found in the ELA standards and provide more of an advanced literacy demand. To succeed in such courses, students need to acquire vocabulary and word analysis skills, including roots and derivations. Similarly, students need to utilize techniques such as strategic reading that will help them read and understand a wide range of fictional and non-fictional texts. Students at Sylmar Leadership Academy will learn when to slow down reading to understand key points, when to re-read a passage, and how to underline key terms and concepts strategically so that only the most important points are highlighted. They will utilize these strategies to aid in the comprehension and retention of key content. In the higher grades, these well developed skills will be applied to the reading and analysis of grade level narrative, expository text and literature. Many opportunities to read, explicate, interpret, critique and respond to different literary genres will be part of each student's language arts curriculum.

English Language Development (ELD):

English Language Development (ELD) is a component of all program options for English learners. ELD is separate from but complimentary to English language arts instruction. It is considered core instruction for English learners and not an elective or an instructional service from which students may opt out. As described by Dolson et. al. (2011), the purpose of ELD instruction is "to advance English learners' knowledge and use of English in increasingly sophisticated ways". The intent of the ELD component of the instructional program for ELs is for teachers to explicitly and intentionally teach English in order to develop a strong English language foundation in both social and academic settings.

Current research indicates that providing ELD instruction is valuable for ELs. In addition, there is strong supporting evidence that ELD instruction should include interactive activities among students, but they must be carefully planned and carried out. (Saunders and Goldenberg, 2010). Instructed ELD is defined as targeted instruction for second language learners that focuses on those elements of language not likely to be acquired adequately or efficiently in other instructional and social settings such as: Sheltered content, Mainstream English instruction, and everyday school, community, and family interactions.

ELD instruction is standards-driven, systematically planned, and follows a scope and sequence of language skills to ensure that students learn English within a reasonable amount of time. It is planned and delivered with specific language objectives in mind. Teachers at Sylmar Leadership Academy will explicitly teach elements of the English language such as vocabulary, syntax, grammar, functions and conventions. They will implement four quality indicators of effective ELD instruction:

1.Think - Pair- Share: Oral Language, Listening Comprehension & Reading Comprehension/Fluency

2.Sentence Frames by Proficiency Level: Oral Language and Writing/Spelling

3.Use of Visuals: Vocabulary & Listening, Comprehension

4.Choral or Partner Reading: Reading Comprehension/Fluency sections

Writing:

Writing is one of the primary means by which students are evaluated in nearly every grade-level. Expository, narrative, and persuasive writing are important types of writing in middle school, high school and college. Advanced writing requires students to present arguments clearly, substantiate each point, and utilize the basics of a style manual when constructing a paper. Students at Sylmar Leadership Academy will learn how to write frequently and on demand. They will learn how to pre-write, draft, revise, edit, and

publish different genres of writing before the final product is submitted. Writing is an area where access to technology is critical. Students can produce, publish or update individual or shared writing product, displaying their work flexibly and dynamically.

Research:

The rigorous content standards in California increasingly require students to be able to identify and utilize appropriate strategies and methodologies to explore and answer problems. Students must conduct research on a range of questions using current technology to access a variety of informational sources including blogs, video streaming and the Internet. Students at Sylmar Leadership Academy will learn how to access a variety of types of information from a range of locations, formats, and sources. Using both print and digital sources, students can gather information using advanced searches effectively. They can also evaluate the appropriateness of a variety of resource material and synthesize and incorporate the material into a paper, report and/or presentation.

Mathematics:

To be successful in middle school math, students must have a thorough understanding of the basic concepts, principles, and techniques of algebra. This is different than simply having been exposed to algebra concepts. If students understand mathematical concepts deeply they will be more likely to apply their skills when needed. College-ready students possess more than a formulaic understanding of mathematics. They have the ability to apply conceptual understandings in order to extract a problem from a context, use mathematics to solve the problem, and then interpret the solution back into the context. They know when and how to estimate to determine the reasonableness of answers and can use a calculator appropriately as a tool, not a crutch. Students at Sylmar Leadership Academy will begin to learn the rigorous mathematics and algebra concepts beginning in Kindergarten and culminating with students who will be prepared to take algebra in eighth grade. In the first year of operation, Singapore math will be incorporated with the help of our sister school, Carpenter ES, in Studio City.

Science:

Science standards emphasize all facets of scientific thinking. In addition to utilizing all the steps in the scientific method, students learn what it means to think like a scientist. This includes the communication conventions followed by scientists, the way that empirical evidence is used to draw conclusions and how such conclusions are then subject to challenge and interpretation. Students learn that scientific knowledge is both consistent and changing at any given moment, and that the evolution of scientific knowledge does not mean that previous knowledge was necessarily “wrong.” Students understand that scientists utilize models and systems as ways to comprehend complex phenomena. This helps them make sense out of the flow of ideas and concepts they encounter in entry-level college courses and the overall structure of the scientific discipline they are studying. In their science classes, students at Sylmar Leadership Academy will master core concepts, principles, laws, and vocabulary pertaining to the scientific discipline being studied. Laboratory settings, experiments and hands on experiences will be the environments where content knowledge and scientific key cognitive strategies converge to help students think scientifically and integrate learned content knowledge.

Social Studies:

The social sciences entail a range of subject areas, each with its own content base and analytic techniques and conventions. The scientific methods that are common across social studies standards emphasize the skills of interpreting sources, evaluating evidence and competing claims, and understanding themes and

the overall flow of events within larger frameworks or organizing structures. Students at Sylmar Leadership Academy will discover that the social sciences consist of certain “big ideas” (theories and concepts) that organize and structure all of the details that may often overwhelm them. This subject area will serve as a foundation for leadership projects and service based learning.

World Languages:

In the upper middle grades, second language instruction is a necessity. The goal of second language study is to communicate effectively with and receive communication from speakers of another language in authentic cultural readiness contexts through the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Second language proficiency can improve learning in other disciplines, such as English, history and art, and expand professional, personal, and social opportunities. Language learners need to understand the structure and conventions of a language, but not through word-for-word translation or memorization of de-contextualized grammatical rules. Instead, students of a language need to master meaning in more holistic ways and in context. Students at Sylmar Leadership Academy will be taught that learning another language involves much more than memorizing a system of grammatical rules. It requires the learner to understand the cultures from which the languages arise and in which it resides, use the language to communicate accurately, and use the learner’s first language and culture as a model for comparison with the language and culture being learned.

Visual and Performing Arts:

Visual and performing arts include: art history, dance, music, theater, and visual arts. Students ready for college-level work in the arts possess an understanding of and appreciation for the contributions made by the most innovative creators in the field. Students at Sylmar Leadership Academy will demonstrate mastery of basic oral and physical expression through sound, movement, and visual representations. They will explore the role of the arts as an instrument of social and political expression and formulate and present difficult questions through their personal vision. Students will justify their aesthetic decisions when creating or performing a piece of work and will make decisions regarding the proper venue for performing or exhibiting any creative product.

This instructional approach will also allow students to be creative thinkers, and to use visual and performing arts to share their learning in traditional and non-traditional ways. Teachers will use research-based pedagogies and applicable technology to allow students the opportunity to construct and apply their knowledge and to demonstrate proficiency, application, and understanding of concepts, information, and skills in novel, multimedia formats.

The above academic skills contain an expansion of the formulaic teaching characterized by first order outcomes, those that have been traditionally used to measure student performance including fluency, comprehension, calculation proficiency and long term retention and information retrieval, including performance on standardized tests. Sylmar Learning Academy will teach and attain higher order outcomes for our students. These are skills that will support their success in the 21st century:

- Knowledge transfer skills: Being able to use knowledge to understand and solve similar problems
- Knowledge generation: Applying their knowledge and skills to solve real life problems
- Reflection: Judging and understanding deeply what they have learned, and processing its implications and applications (Creating an Opportunity to Learn, Boykin and Noguera)

Standards for Student Leadership developed by the Executive Directors of the Student Council Association are included as a starting ground and a support for the work that Sylmar Leadership Academy will do with all of its students.(See Appendix A1-A6: Leadership Standards)

i. Curriculum Development. N/A

ii. Management of Multiple Schools: N/A

b. WASC Accreditation: N/A

Addressing the Needs of All Students:

The teaching at Sylmar Leadership Academy will be designed to differentiate instructional strategies to support all students. The strategies will be based on analysis of student data to provide all students equal access to the curriculum. Teachers will assess students regularly in order to monitor progress and provide targeted instruction.

In addition to the strategies referenced in section a, the following research-based strategies in California's Frameworks- English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science, Visual/Performing Arts - will be used to support every child at Sylmar Leadership Academy.

The following issues will be studied and incorporated by all teachers at Sylmar Leadership Academy to meet the needs of all students:

Students of Poverty:

Create a safe and trusting environment

Model concrete strategies for learning and appropriate behavior (Caine, 2000)

Provide cooperative learning and shared decision making opportunities such as service-based learning (Kovalik and Olsen, 1998)

Model ways to construct broader concepts from pieces of information

Link new learning to students' prior knowledge

Deliver direct, explicit, and systematic instruction in reading, writing, English phonology, morphology, syntax, grammar, and semantics to guide students in their learning
 Provide students with abundant opportunities in oral language and speaking activities to process new information
 Build personal relationships with students, family and community to build trust and respect
 Identify and address the learning styles of students (Brauldi, 2000)
 Use Thinking Maps and graphic organizers to help students organize, integrate and retain information (Fogarty, 1997)
 Model leadership skills in cooperative groups with real life situations

Students with Disabilities

Provide Students with Disabilities the needed accommodations or modifications per their Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
 Provide a safe environment that encourages students to talk and ask questions
 Deliver systematic, explicit instruction that emphasizes phonemic awareness, decoding, phonics, word recognition,
 Use a wide variety of strategies to explain a concept
 Provide students with abundant opportunities in oral language and speaking activities to process new information
 Guide students to show leadership skills in a variety of ways, such as service-based projects, oral presentations etc.
 Build personal relationships with students, family and community to build trust and respect
 Provide tutoring before, during, and after school

English Learners:

Pre-teach, and re-teach essential elements of concepts, such as academic vocabulary, background information, and English language grammar
 Create classroom structures that foster learning by modeling, scaffolding, and helping students construct understanding
 Access prior knowledge to help students acquire new learning
 Use visuals and clues to help students understand new concepts
 Use the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model to help students access the core content
 Deliver direct, explicit, and systematic instruction in reading, writing, English phonology, morphology, syntax, grammar, and semantics to guide students in their learning
 Provide students with abundant opportunities in oral language and speaking activities to process new information
 Build personal relationships with students, family and community to build trust and respect

Monitoring of Long Term English Language Learners and Reclassified Fluent English Learners:

Sylmar Leadership Academy intends to support Long Term English Learners (LTELs) as well as Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEPs) students by monitoring their progress toward language and academic proficiency and providing interventions that meet their specific needs.
 The language proficiency of LTEL's and RFEP's will be monitored at the school and district level. The principal will monitor the progress of these students at the school site by visiting classrooms, reviewing data, and meeting with teachers, students and parents to create attainable goals.

A Long Term English Learner is an English Learner who has been attending a school for 5+ years and has not reclassified, is at a CELDT Level 3 or below, has remained at a CELDT level for 2+ years, or has lost ground on CELDT. Is struggling academically (e.g., Elementary – Grades of 1-2, Middle School- GPA below a 2.0 or grades of D or F in two or more core classes.)

(Adapted from Reparable Harm Report by Laurie Olsen, 2010)

Some interventions that Long Term English Learners will participate in include:

Before and After school Mentoring Program

CELDT Test Chats

Classroom Intervention based on CELDT results

CELDT Boot Camp

Student led Parent/Teacher Conferences

English Language Skills (ELS) Classes

Standard English Learners (SELs)

Explicitly teach Standard English within the context of the lesson

Deliver direct, explicit, and systematic instruction in reading, writing, English phonology, morphology, syntax, grammar, and semantics to guide students in their learning

Provide students with abundant opportunities in oral language and speaking activities to process new information

Use Thinking Maps to compare Standard English to Informal English

Model the difference between grammatically correct and incorrect statements

Provide opportunities for students to use Standard English

Build personal relationships with students, family and community to build trust and respect

Deliver culturally relevant and responsive instruction

Migrant and Homeless Students:

Address identified needs based on a Family Questionnaire completed at enrollment. Design and implement an Individualized Response Plan.

Provide a safe and trusting learning environment

Build personal relationships with students, family and community to build trust and respect

Provide students with abundant opportunities in oral language and speaking activities to process new information

Provide case management to reach homeless and migrant students via the Pupil Service

Attendance (PSA) counselor

Train school staff and parents on the Migrant Education Program and services for homeless children and their families

In addition, Sylmar Leadership Academy will support the needs of all students through the utilization of the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI2) framework. RtI2 is a systemic multi-tiered framework that guides the development of a well-integrated and seamless system of instruction and intervention that is matched to student need and directed by student outcome data from multiple measures. In a multi-tiered approach to instruction and intervention, teachers provide instruction at each tier of service that is differentiated, culturally responsive, evidence-based and aligned to grade-level content standards.

Because literacy skills are fundamental to student achievement, all students in grades K-3 will be given universal screens at the beginning of the school year, such as the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), to detect student strengths and challenges.

(Tier 1) All students: will receive quality core instruction (Tier 1). Teachers will provide high-quality, standards-based instruction using the curriculum with an emphasis in mathematics, science, and technology. Teachers will engage students using effective strategies and techniques as indicated in sections (a & b). 80-85% of students receiving Tier 1 instruction will be expected to reach proficiency.

(Tier 2) Strategic At-Risk Students: Students identified by universal screens or who fail to make grade-level benchmarks on ELA or math periodic assessments will receive Tier 2 differentiated instruction and intervention. Support for students will address targeted needs and the timely acquisition of concepts and skills. During Tier 2, teachers will work with identified students during *Workshop* for 20 minutes a day on targeted standards and skills. To provide additional assistance to identified students, teacher assistants will work with students under the guidance of the teacher in small groups. To monitor student progress, teachers will assess students using the assessments in the *Consortium on Reading Excellence (CORE)* every 2-3 weeks. All identified students will be expected to reach benchmark in targeted grade level standards after 6 weeks of Tier 2 intervention.

(Tier 3) Intensive At-Risk Students: Teachers will work with students identified as needing intensive intervention (Tier 3) either independently or in small groups for 40 minutes a day on highly focused instruction. Student progress will be monitored closely to evaluate the effectiveness of the instruction and intervention. Teachers will assess students on a weekly basis using the CORE assessments. Teachers will work with students on the specific skills identified on the CORE assessments. Teacher assistants will assist students under the direction of the teacher in the areas of need. In addition, student teachers and staff members from *LA's Best* program will tutor students after school in identified area(s) of need. Students identified in Tier 3 will be expected to master the benchmark grade level standards after 6 weeks of intensive intervention.

Accelerated Learning: Students identified as gifted, (intellectually, by achievement, talented, or potentially gifted by their teachers) will be provided highly cognitively challenging instruction during Tier 1 instruction. Teachers will enhance the curriculum with leadership skills to provide gifted students with high quality differentiated learning to give students opportunities to make instructional choices.

Students will create or select their own service projects, their own topics to research, and will present their projects to members of their community. The projects will be aligned to and may grade-level standards.

Teachers will be provided professional development related to making changes in the pacing, levels of complexity, and depth of instruction.

A committee will be formed to review how to identify gifted and talented students from all subgroups and prepare the documents to have the students assessed for intellectual ability, screened for academic achievement and talent.

Teachers will provide an education infused with leadership skills to challenge students and keep them interested in guiding their learning.

Students will be arranged in flexible and strategic groups to have their educational and social needs met.

Vertical Articulation:

Sylmar Leadership Academy is committed to providing all students with a Personalized Learning Environment where mentors will support students in academic and social/behavioral development of skills that will prepare them for college and future careers. Strategies to support college and career pathways will include:

- Clear expectations for promotion to high school will be made explicit to students and parents. Parents with students in the primary grades, pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and first grade, will participate in instructional workshops with their children and community partners designed to provide effective and clear-cut transitions to middle school, high school and beyond.
- The California State content standards taught in elementary and secondary schools that connect to the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) will be highlighted and focused on. Connections will also be established with the neighboring middle school, Olive Vista and Sylmar Senior High and Valley Region High School #5, which our students will attend.
- Clear communication about college and university entrance requirements and a full range of post-secondary options, including careers and vocational training. Budgetary priority and partnership with CSUN, Mission College and other community colleges will make possible curricular trips to college campuses to bring post secondary options alive to students and families.
- A partnership will be established with a “sister” school Carpenter Elementary, in Studio City, to provide a key relationship with students from a different demographic. This partnership will also spearhead the implementation of Singapore Math, which Carpenter is currently using to supplement EnVision math.
- District requirements will be adhered to in terms of Middle school Culmination Activity and Certificate of Completion (BUL-3815.0). This relates to the participation in Culmination Activity and the earning of the Certificate.

The Leadership team and staff will hold quarterly assemblies and smaller group discussions with students to reinforce:

- Habits of organization and study skills that will lead to successful and strong academic standing
- The importance of effort and collaborative structures including study groups and peer tutoring
- The importance of a personal attendance rate of no less than 95%

Additionally, programs will be in place at Sylmar Leadership Academy to

- Provide additional time for students for academic interventions for students at risk during the school day
- Plan and provide an attendance recovery and/or Independent Study option for students as needed
- Continue to keep parents or caregivers informed as to student progress, attendance and school activities

d. Early Care and Education:

Los Angeles Unified School District Early Education programs are committed to provide high quality early education experience that prepares students for success in school and in life while valuing and respecting the needs, languages, and cultures of all students, families, staff and the communities it serves. In this spirit, Sylmar Leadership Academy will offer California State Preschool to eligible families and will develop articulation sessions and activities for parents and students to facilitate their transition to kindergarten.

Successful students become contributing adults who enrich our world. Research tells us that the ages between birth and eight years of age are the most critical in the development of the brain, and thus, these years predict future academic success. Even more significant are the years from birth to five years old since this time is critically important in shaping a child's capacity and enthusiasm for learning. What a child experiences and learns in the years before kindergarten is far more important than anything he or she will learn thereafter.

According to the Universal Preschool Task Force report, *Ready to Learn: Quality Preschools for California in the 21st Century*, preschoolers in quality programs:

- Enter Kindergarten with skills needed for coping with school tasks
- Show greater knowledge of verbal and numerical concepts
- Receive higher ratings on social competency
- Are more likely to make normal progress throughout the primary grades
- Are less often retained or placed in special education classes

Description of Early Education Program: California State Preschool Program (CSPP)

- Offers three (3) hours per day, Monday thru Friday for 180 days per school year for three and four year old children to maximize school readiness and academic achievement before enrolling in kindergarten.
- Provides high quality and developmentally appropriate early education experiences to foster the social-emotional, physical and cognitive development and well being of preschoolers
- Supports educational enrichment and care for pre-kindergarten students and their parents in the articulation and transition between early education programs and its kindergarten feeder elementary schools.
- Enroll eligible families who represent the most at risk population, as identified by the Dept. of Children and Family Services and the LAUSD Homeless Education Unit for school success.
- Provides students opportunity to increase their ability to listen, to speak, to use vocabulary appropriately to develop academic skills.

The California State Preschool Program Curriculum

Sylmar Leadership Academy will utilize the instructional program called "*Developmental Learning Materials*" (DLM). This program is based on best practices of child development. The curriculum emphasizes oral language, early math skills, and early literacy development. Each lesson is designed to present information in a way that makes it easy and fun for children to learn. The cycle is modeled on knowledge gained from the latest neuroscience research.

The core and essential documents of the early childhood program are explicit and intentional in supporting improved student achievement. *Desired Results for Families and Children, Preschool Learning Foundations, and Preschool Framework* are aligned to the California Kindergarten Standards in Language arts and Math. The documents are used to guide instruction and individualized lessons. On-going authentic assessment of each child's development needs, and interest continues throughout the year. Anecdotal information resulting from staff observations and parent input is recorded for each child. A minimum of two conferences per year are held with the parent regarding the child's growth and development.

e. Service Plan for Special Education: See Completed Appendix E.

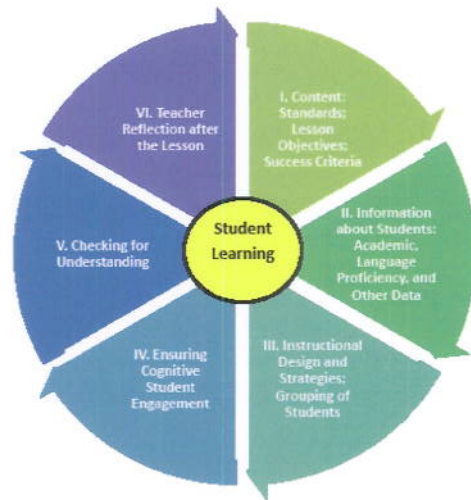
B-2. Professional Development (PD)

a. Professional Culture:

Sylmar Leadership Academy is committed to the belief that all students can learn and that they learn best in a small, nurturing, environments using a variety of rigorous instructional practices that address all learning modalities, constructivist teaching practices, brain-based research, and input from every student. The faculty will work together to help foster a climate where all teachers and mentors are reflective life-long learners. Teachers will engage in a process of six steps when planning lessons:

- I. Content: Standards, Lesson Objectives, and Success Criteria
- II. Information About Students: Academic, Language Proficiency, and Other Data
- III. Instructional Design and Strategies; Grouping of Students
- IV. Ensuring Cognitive Student Engagement
- V. Checking for Understanding
- VI. Teacher Reflection After the Lesson

(Adapted from Teaching and Learning Solutions for LAUSD)



The school culture of Sylmar leadership Academy will feature a (1) rigorous education for all students in line with the California State Content Standards, (2) a student-centered supportive environment where all students can interact with their peers and adults, (3) staff that is focused, involved and concerned. Our PLC focuses on learning and achievement for each student. We believe that by increasing personal connections and our understanding of the motivations, aspirations, and learning styles of each student, our students will become engaged in their own learning and they will achieve to their full potential. All support personnel, including, coaches, coordinators, and administrators, will learn the names of all students. This degree of personalization will provide a caring and safe environment which will make the Sylmar Leadership Academy experience much more successful. The key component of fostering personalization will be the student/mentor relationship. Faculty mentors will review and guide students' academic progress allowing for individualized attention through student-specific, engaging and challenging curriculum that incorporates

career pathways for post-secondary experiences. The mentors will allow students to develop academic skills, reflect on their academic success, collaborate with teachers for additional support, and receive guidance and direction in their college and career path.

Interpersonal relationships between staff and students will strengthen the commitment to the academic and personal success of the students and provide ongoing encouragement and identify intervention as needed. This atmosphere will be highlighted by a caring, high-quality staff that will respond to and help students struggling with learning by developing strong “Habits of Mind.” This will be enhanced by the participation of all students from first through eighth grades in PLE or Houses. Teachers will know which students will be coming to or linked with them in the future and family connections will be nurtured before and after the students are assigned to a teacher. We will set high, clear expectations for our students at various stages of the learning process and monitor student growth.

Progress will be monitored frequently through a variety of assessment procedures. Our culture will engage students in active reasoning built upon the Essential Learning’s Power Standard (Ainsworth, Reeves) identified by the faculty. We will truly be a 21st century community-based school that ensures equity and access for all students.

Sylmar Leadership Academy will promote its vision and mission by creating and maintaining a culture where students and families feel respected and valued. All stakeholders will work together to address the needs of the whole child. We believe that with the proper support, all students will perform at high levels of academic and social/behavioral achievement. The School Site Governance Council will work to align budget expenditures as well as community and personnel resources to the school’s vision. All stakeholders will be recognized as essential partners in the education and creation of an accepting and caring school culture that is personalized for students. To promote academic and social/behavioral achievement, students and their adult and student mentors will be publicly recognized and honored at the following events:

- Weekly morning assemblies
- Monthly assemblies
- Literacy Night
- Math and Science Fairs
- Service-Based Learning Art Exhibits
- Student-led parent conferences
- Tea Time with a Mentor
- Coffee with the Principal
- Family Picnic
- CSUN Field Trips
- Academic achievement celebrations

The School’s Library Media Center will serve as a resource to students as part of their Service-Based Learning. Students will visit the library weekly to learn research and information seeking skills using both online and in-house technology and reference book skills. Additionally, the school will establish a website containing links to student projects, awards announcements, and the community resources.

- b. Professional Development:** Describe what effective PD will look like at your school. Identify the school’s goals and strategy for ongoing PD. How are PD strategies tied to the goals identified in Section A and the specific needs of the student population? In the appendix, attach a tentative PD schedule that illustrates your allocation of time for PD activities

throughout the year. Discuss how the school calendar, daily schedule, interim assessment process, and staffing plans align with the PD schedule. If you are a traditional, pilot, ESBMM, or network partner team seeking PD autonomy, include a description of how you will use the autonomy.

Beginning in the summer of 2012, Sylmar Leadership Academy will provide ongoing PD for the staff with an emphasis on analyzing student data to determine school and student needs as well as to plan for targeted instruction. **The purpose of this PD will be to operationalize the strategies and actions in this Public School Choice Plan and to provide a space and time for highly qualified teachers to become an effective working team.** Teachers will engage in PD on a weekly basis through grade level and department meetings. Teachers and administrators will all develop assessment binders that they will take to their weekly meetings. In addition, students will be dismissed one hour early on Tuesdays to allow teachers to participate in PD for an additional hour (Banked Time). The time will be split between grade level teams and content teams within departments. Improving English Language Arts skills and English Language Development will be part of every PD to reduce the number of Long Term English Learners and raise the number of reclassified EL's as seen in the data. In addition, the following non-Negotiables will be studied and implemented:

- All teachers will post daily standards, objectives and agenda
- All classrooms will have academic word walls/vocabulary board(s)
- All classrooms will have authentic student work posted with teacher feedback
- All classrooms will be clean and respectful where learning is evident
- All students will have individual Data Chats
- Every student will be treated with dignity and respect

(See Appendix B1-B7: Professional Development Calendar)

Fiscal resources will be allotted from the school budget to allow teachers to engage in this differentiated professional development.

To personalize professional development for teachers, staff and administrators, the school will provide the following:

- School staff and parents will be surveyed on a regular basis to determine personal professional development needs
- Every 7-8 weeks, teachers will meet in professional learning communities (PLCs) to analyze student assessment results and student work samples in all content areas to determine future professional development needs.
- Specialized professional development will be provided to all staff on how to plan and teach California's rigorous standards with an emphasis in mathematics, science, and technology, community service, service-based learning and 21st Century skills. Early introduction and study of the Common Core Standards and concomitant assessments will be scheduled.
- Professional reading and research will be a consistent part of professional development. Seminal and relevant texts will be identified and selected by the school leadership team with input from stakeholders. Some of these may include: Change Leadership, Tony Wagner et al; The Leader In Me, Steven Covey; Creating the Opportunity to Learn, A. Wade Boykin and Pedro Noguera; Instructional Rounds, Richard Elmore.

- The school staff and community resource coordinator will engage in professional development aimed at building a cohesive team to strengthen the community school through team-building activities and community resource mapping.
- All teachers will participate in lesson studies in identified areas of improvement, as determined by extensive analysis of student data results. Each lesson study will include refining teaching practices and strategies that maximize teacher-student engagement. This process, described by Stigler and Hiebert as “perhaps the most fully developed model of teacher collaboration to improve teacher practice” will be used as part of the communities of practice that will be an integral part of the professional development for Sylmar Leadership Academy.
- All teachers will be responsible for organizing, planning and sharing in their area of interest and expertise.
- The school’s partnerships, such as CSUN and LAEP along with content area experts will collaborate with the school’s leadership team to help design and provide targeted professional development for teachers and real-world community service projects for students.

i. **Management of Multiple Schools:** *For network partners, charter schools, and local district teams.* Discuss the role of the organization in providing professional development for schools/campuses across the portfolio.

Educational Service Center will continue to provide monthly professional development meetings for administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals and parents focused on data-driven instruction using the district’s protocol for analyzing assessments (e.g., CST, CELDT, Periodic Assessments, DIBELS). The principal leader, administrator of instruction and other Local and Central District specialists will provide feedback and support for the implementation of the PSC plan and Single Plan for Student Achievement. In addition, Sylmar Leadership Academy will collaborate with two comparable schools to facilitate collaboration between school teams around data-driven decisions to improve student achievement and grade-level articulation at school sites. (See Appendix B8-B10: Local District Professional Development Plans and Triad Implementation).

This support is not designed to supplant the school’s efforts in designing its own professional development or growth but to provide critical feedback as needed for this new school community. It has been the experience of Local District 2 that in spite of well written plans and committed staff, time and support is essential to the developing professional learning communities of our new schools.

- c. **Teacher Orientation:** Describe the orientation program for new and existing teachers. Discuss how this program will prepare teachers to deliver the proposed curriculum, utilize the instructional strategies, and differentiate instruction.

Per-pupil funding flexibility will allow for an orientation for teachers transitioning to Sylmar Leadership Academy from the three feeder schools. Additional time for professional development will be a priority for budgeting. The induction program for new and existing teachers will include the following:

Year 1

- An orientation to provide all teachers with pertinent information based on Sylmar Leadership Academy’s vision, mission and philosophy.

- Ongoing professional development on the three school-wide approaches to standards-based instruction with special emphasis on Data-based decisions and the development of student leadership.
- Ongoing professional development on setting working norms with different groups (e.g., The School Site Council, Community Partnerships, Mentors, Grade-level teams, Vertical Articulation Teams). **Upon the hiring of school staff, the vision, mission, philosophy and commitments will be developed that will guide the work and duties of staff** (Appendix B11-B12: Draft Commitment(s) to Work Agreement for Sylmar Leadership Academy)
- Ongoing professional development on the mentorship program, which will be fully implemented by the school's third year of operation.
- Support and time allotted to building a cohesive school culture where effort is valued and mutual respect for all stakeholders leads to an atmosphere of trust and high achievement.

Years 2-5

- Experienced teachers will support new teachers. The principal, in consultation with the School Leadership Team, will select supporting teachers from volunteers and National Board teachers at the site. The selection of supporting teachers will consider teacher experience in serving populations similar to the school, training experience, and knowledge of the four school-wide approaches to instruction. The supporting teacher will be trained on effective peer coaching in order to provide new teachers with the guidance of peer-to-peer collaboration during lesson planning, lesson design, and lesson delivery. Supporting teachers will observe their partner teacher at least 3-5 times during the school year to provide feedback and targeted assistance in the new teacher's area of need. Classroom observations will allow supporting teachers to collect specific data such as a student response tally, teacher-student interaction, and/or scripting of student questions and responses. Data collection will be based on previously agreed upon goals set with the new teacher.
- New teachers will also have the opportunity to observe exemplary teachers on the three school-wide approaches to standards-based instruction, differentiation, and classroom management. New teachers will meet with supporting teachers on a monthly basis to discuss classroom observations, feedback, student data results, student work samples, lesson planning, program implementation and personal professional development goal setting.

Experienced teachers will coach new teachers on the following six steps:

- I. Content: Standards, Lesson Objectives, and Success Criteria
- II. Information About Students: Academic, Language Proficiency, and Other Data
- III. Instructional Design and Strategies; Grouping of Students
- IV. Ensuring Cognitive Student Engagement
- V. Checking for Understanding
- VI. Teacher Reflection After the Lesson

- d. **PD Program Evaluation:** Describe how the PD program will be evaluated to assess its success and effectiveness on an ongoing basis. Discuss how the program may be modified to address areas of need that are identified.

The effectiveness of the PD program will be measured by regular systematic data analysis of student results, monitoring of student progress towards learning and behavior goals, and analysis of feedback and data from classroom observations. Teachers will reflect on teacher instructional practices based on

student performance in assessments and student work samples. The school's administration will conduct classroom visits to monitor and review implementation of key teaching and learning practices presented in the professional development sessions. Local district personnel will walk with the school team and participate in monitoring and providing critical feedback. Teachers and administrators will collaborate in designing classroom observation forms that will reflect the school's academic, learning and engagement goals. Utilization of documents from the Public School Review will be used to focus and provide a basis for the improvement of instruction. Further methods for monitoring and ensuring accountability will be used in addition to the visits, such as reviewing lesson plans, PD meeting summaries and grade-level or teacher-team meetings. The results of the classroom and program observations will be documented and provided to the teachers with the purpose of providing feedback regarding the effectiveness and degree of implementation of the PD program.

Additionally, at the end of each session, teachers will be given the opportunity to provide written feedback regarding the effectiveness of the training, to set goals in implementing new learning, and to reflect on the implications for their practice. Follow-up sessions with grade level and Department teams will be scheduled and organized to allow teachers to revisit training goals and classroom implementation design. The school leadership team will collect data on program implementation, analyze results, track progress towards the set goal, and design action steps to ensure complete and thorough implementation. PD plans and follow-up support will be revised based on teacher and student need. A professional development calendar will be distributed to all staff and revised as necessary. Topics, meeting schedules, and locations will be announced in the weekly staff bulletin. Agendas, participant sign-ins, and topic materials, including Power Points, will be maintained as a record of all school professional sessions.

B-3. Assessments and School-wide Data

a. Student Assessment Plan:

The school will use multiple forms of assessments to measure student progress in English language arts, English language development, mathematics, science, history/social science, health, physical education, and the arts that are aligned to the state standards.(See below for assessments). To establish a culture of continuous improvement, the students will be assessed throughout the school year to determine student needs, monitor progress and provide intervention to the students to assure mastery of the grade level standards. All stakeholders will be accountable for student learning.

Summary Table of Academic Assessments

Type of Assessment (Selected Assessments)	Frequency of Use	Rationale for the Selection
Universal Screening (DIBELS)	Beginning of the year and as students check in during the year	Determine literacy attainment and readiness
Diagnostic (CORE)	Following student identification with the Universal Screening	Specify areas of literacy skill challenges; link to research-based instructional practices around these skills; serve as progress monitoring for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions
Formative (SBI ELA/Math Benchmark; Focus assessments-COREK-12; Math; Write from the beginning Writing Prompt, Math and ELA Periodic Assessments)	Every 6 weeks for four Times	Identify standards and skills students have not yet achieved and which the teacher needs to focus on or reteach
Summative (CELDT, CST, Unit tests)	End of unit/semester/year	Identify what students have learned; report student progress to parents; identify areas in need of instructional or programmatic improvement

The teachers will develop SMART Goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reflect the Mission and Timely) to improve student achievement and motivate all stakeholders to achieve the goals. The school will set specific goals for the following:

1. School wide and grade level essential standards from the CST
2. School wide API and AYP in ELA and math
3. Grade level and classroom essential standards from the periodic ELA/math assessments and school created standards-based assessments
4. Reclassification rate of students in grades 4 and 5
5. School wide attendance and reduction of behavioral incidents
6. IEP goals for Students with Disabilities

The SMART goals will be posted in prominent areas in the school and in classrooms. Students will self-monitor their progress on essential standard goals, which will be identified at the beginning of the year using CST data, every 8 weeks following the beginning of the school year, students will be assessed to determine the essential standards needed. Each teacher will create a SMART goal bulletin board to help students monitor their progress on essential standards. Students will share with their parents their self-monitoring progress and the SMART goal bulletin board on the essential standards during Student-Led Conferences. (See Part #8 Families and Community Engagement, Section b.)

b. Graduation Requirements: N/A

c. Data Collection and Monitoring:

Before the start of the school year, teachers will be given time to review incoming CST data from the three feeder schools and apply the Problem-Solving Process to identify which standards were the most challenging for incoming students (nemesis standards). Additionally, teachers at Sylmar Leadership Academy will make data-driven decisions during grade-level team meetings to monitor student achievement toward the school-wide Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) and Academic Performance Index (API) in English language arts, ELD and mathematics grade-level benchmarks in assessments, student attendance and behavior, and Individualized Education Program goals.

Sylmar Leadership Academy will fully utilize the Integrated Student Information System (ISIS) in school operations in accordance with the Los Angeles Unified School District Modified Consent Decree. This data system will be used in conjunction with others to inform the administration and parents of ongoing student needs and schoolwork/homework completion.

School will participate in the Los Angeles Unified School District Report Card program. Administrators will be responsible for disseminating satisfaction surveys to staff, teachers, parents and students for the School Report Card to measure their satisfaction with the school's academic policies and programs, culture, environment, and safety. Survey results will be shared with all stakeholder groups to assess how well the school is responding to the needs of students and families.

All stakeholders will agree to participate in research and evaluation projects conducted or sponsored by the Los Angeles Unified School District and the community school partnerships.

Sylmar leadership Academy will establish a Response to Intervention and Instruction (RtI²) Problem Solving Team that will include members representing the following stakeholders: teachers, administrators, coordinators, data specialists and counselors. The team will ensure that teachers receive timely access to their data and arrange opportunities to discuss the data in their PLCs. Teachers will receive previous and current CST, Periodic, CORE and CELDT scores. To maximize the effectiveness of instruction and intervention, students receiving Tier 2 services will be assessed every 2-3 weeks by the teacher; students received Tier 3 services will be assessed every 1-2 weeks to keep the intervention appropriate. Using the RtI² Problem Solving Process (identify the problem, analyze the problem, design and monitor the intervention, and evaluate the response to intervention) the team will review formative and summative assessment data (academic and/or behavioral) to inform instructional and professional development decisions. Working collaboratively, the team will collect data using the protocols embedded in the RtI² Problem Solving Process to create specific, observable, and measurable hypotheses in order to develop and implement targeted and viable interventions for students and/or professional development for teachers. Professional development for teachers will include collaboration around the data and targeted and viable strategies. The team will continually monitor the progress of interventions, using formative assessment data to drive the evaluation.

Utilizing the Problem Solving Process, the team will identify students that need Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention on an ongoing basis. Intervention will be provided for the at-risk students in the specific areas of need. The programming will be flexible with the goal of exiting them when they master the benchmark standards. The teachers will be provided professional development on how they can make adjustments to the curriculum to meet the needs of the students.

Management of Multiple Schools:

Educational Service Centers will continue to provide monthly professional development meetings for administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals and parents focused on data-driven instruction using the district's protocol for analyzing assessments (e.g. CST, CELDT, Periodic Assessments, DIBELS). The director, and other local service center specialists will provide feedback and support for the implementation of the PSC plan and Single Plan for Student Achievement. In addition, Sylmar Leadership Academy will collaborate with two comparable schools to facilitate collaboration between school teams around data-driven decisions to improve student achievement and grade-level articulation at school sites. (See Appendix B2-B5 for information on Triads and Local District Professional Development Plan 2011-2012). This organization and calibration of effort has led to significant improvements in student achievement in Local District 2 as a whole and in the feeder schools to Sylmar Leadership Academy.

This support is not designed to supplant the school's efforts in designing its own professional development or growth but to provide critical feedback as needed for this new school community. It has been the experience of Local District 2 that in spite of well written plans and committed staff, time and support has been essential to the developing learning communities of our new schools.

Category Two: School Culture, Climate, and Infrastructure

B-4. School Culture and Climate

a. Description of School Culture:

All stakeholders and community partners at Sylmar Leadership Academy will work collaboratively to create an environment conducive to high academic achievement for all students. They will provide a safe, caring, and respectful learning environment to ensure that students have equal access to the curriculum and achieve to their fullest potential. Teacher-student relationships will be developed and every student will have a mentor to enhance and personalize learning (*Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Strategies*, Marzano, 2003).

Leadership: “Hands Across the School” or “Mentorship Continued”

The teaching of leadership as nothing more than theory creates students who can neither effectively lead nor be lead. True leadership can only be fostered when there is an understanding that it comes through service to others. One could vary Thomas Edison’s quote about genius, “True leadership is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.” We can try to teach leadership; we can try to model leadership. But, it will only truly be fostered and nurtured in practice. **The Sylmar Leadership Academy seeks to transform this community by training its future leaders through mentoring and student-led community service.**

Although it is the goal of the Academy to have an adult mentor for every student, it is also imperative that the students begin to lead and develop a sense of community responsibility by mentoring and leading other students in service. We will develop a program where the secondary students will begin mentoring and leading students who are in the third grade. These student leaders will begin working with their team of elementary students when they are in sixth grade and continue working with those same students until they, the student leaders, culminate from middle school. By then, the elementary students will be moving into sixth grade having been mentored for three years and be ready to become student leaders to the next third grade class.

The student leaders will be advised by their adult mentors throughout the school year as they support, mentor, and collaborate with their team of elementary students. From its inception, the Sylmar Leadership Academy Design team discussed the community service component of the school plan. The student leadership structure will facilitate the planning and implementation of the student designed and led community service projects.

Middle schools need to both strengthen their academic core, and establish caring, supportive environments that value the young people they serve. Each middle school teacher will develop strong relationships with his or her students. **Students in grades 7th and 8th will work with their advisory teacher to accelerate the level of instruction and maximize every learning opportunity. Middle school students will also learn “Leadership in Practice” by interacting and guiding younger students in service projects that they co-construct with their adult mentors.** These projects will operationalize grade level standards in real world applications.

To promote a positive behavioral and social environment, teachers will co-construct a clear set of classroom rules and social expectations with students. Classroom behavioral expectations will be explicitly taught (*Skills Streaming*). Students will be empowered to take responsibility for their own

actions and to be an integral part of maintaining a safe, positive and inviting learning environment. These actions as well as others as contained in the Building Effective Schools Together Program (BEST: Sprague and Golly) will be implemented. This positive behavior support system has been adopted by over 30 schools in Local District 2 and is the precursor to the current LAUSD Discipline Foundation Policy.

Quarterly and as needed, an assembly will be held at Sylmar Leadership Academy with each grade level to review the school's positive behavior plan and every student will sign a behavioral pledge. Parents will sign the behavioral pledge at Back to School Night. Classroom environments will reflect the diversity of students with the use of pictures, literature, and realia. The arrangement of the desks will be grouped for students to work together, share materials, and help each other.

Once a week, teachers will teach the violence preventive curriculum, *Second Step*, and lessons on the *Six Pillars of Character* to increase students' social-emotional competence. Students will be engaged in a variety of activities to practice what they learn in the lessons. Students will share at weekly morning assemblies or at advisories how to problem solve **and participate in community projects to enhance the school and community relationships**. In addition, students will receive "Caught Being Good" tickets for modeling exemplary behavior that will be raffled for a prize at the weekly assemblies. Students with the most "Caught Being Good" tickets will be recognized on the Wall of Fame and at the awards assemblies. **Parents and community members will be invited to the awards assemblies.**

The school will have three assemblies a year to recognize students for academic and behavioral progress, academic excellence, attendance, leadership and citizenship. Attendance will also be recognized monthly to emphasize the importance of staying in school. When the school receives the CST scores, students that are proficient and advanced in English language arts and/or math will be recognized with a certificate and have their name and picture on the Wall of Fame.

Students will wear school uniforms to promote school unity, safety and improve academic achievement. The use of uniforms will help students avoid negative interactions that might be caused by controversial t-shirts and other clothing. Students will be expected to wear appropriate attire to optimize learning. There will be explicit connections and instruction in professional and career readiness.

Management of Multiple Schools:

Local District 2 recognizes, understands and is dedicated to addressing the needs of the students that will be attending Sylmar Leadership Academy. The District has had success over 5 years in serving students with similar demographics. Most recently, Local District 2 has had the highest yearly gain in CST scores of all eight local districts. Many of the practices and strategies included in this PSC plan for the Sylmar Leadership Academy are derived from the Local District 2 Common Practices.

The Educational Service Center will continue to provide monthly professional development meetings for administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals and parents focused on data-driven instruction using the instructional protocols for analyzing assessments (e.g., CST, CELDT, Periodic Assessments, DIBELS). The director and other instructional specialists will provide feedback and support for the implementation of the PSC plan and Single Plan for Student Achievement. In addition, the leadership team for Sylmar Academy will outreach other comparable elementary and middle schools to use the structure of Elmore's

Instructional Rounds, to facilitate collaboration and calibration between school teams around data-driven decisions to improve student achievement and grade-level articulation at school sites.

The above are evidence based strategies have been successful in delivering improved student outcomes at the relieved schools. The Educational Service Center with Sylmar Leadership Academy will support the work of teachers and staff in improving instruction for students over the life of the school.

- b. Student Support and Success:** Describe exactly what student success will mean at your school. What will you do to ensure students are successful?
- c. Social and Emotional Needs:** Describe the programs, resources, and services (internal and external) that the school will provide in order to meet the social and emotional needs of the students you serve. Explain how individual students will be identified and monitored on an ongoing basis. Describe how the effectiveness of these programs will be measured.
- d. College and Career Readiness:** Describe the specific programs that the school will provide to expose students to college and career opportunities as well as support them to be successful in whichever pathway they choose.

Sylmar Leadership Academy will prepare students to be successful in their future. Socially, **the work that students will accomplish with the community will strengthen their analytic and communication skills, broaden their sense of civic duty, help them establish connections, and enhance their leadership skills.** (See Appendix B13-B14: Service Community Background and Projects)

All staff at Sylmar Leadership Academy will take the initiative to communicate with all students. **Students will receive support from all staff and will recognize that although all staff are not teachers, each person has something that we can learn.** This respect for all adults at school will be reciprocated by a similar stance towards our students. They will have a connection to all stakeholders, not only their teacher(s) that year. Having students connected in a PLE/House and for the upper grade students, the advisory period, will give adults and children a chance to bond over time. Students will form a close bond with their advisory teachers and will engage in test chats and goal-setting that will provide a basis for the dialogue and relationship formation that will be pivotal to each student. (See Appendix B15-B16: Grade 4 Student/Teacher Goal Setting). Students have regular contacts with teachers and others to volunteer for school service and leadership. School based supports will be monitored regularly to make sure that students are recognized, and their needs are met.

Students will participate in a variety of college-preparedness and career-ready activities throughout the year. They will have opportunities to visit colleges to experience the college culture. A second field trip will allow students with their parents to visit a different college campus. The school partnerships, with community colleges such as Cal State Northridge, Mission Community College and Valley Community College will provide speakers for parents, students and staff about how to motivate students to go to college. The school will embrace the theme “College-Prepared and Career-Ready” by decorating the rooms, hallways, and offices with different college and career attire. The school will have career week and invite staff from its partnerships and others from the community to present to students. In addition, students will be able to attend an AVID advisory and some of those programmatic practices will be utilized in other classes.

- e. **School Calendar/Schedule:** Describe the school calendar and daily schedule. Discuss how students and faculty will be grouped for instruction, the target class sizes and teacher-student loads, and how the proposed schedule promotes student achievement. Attach a copy of the school year calendar as well as the daily schedule for both faculty and students (see Appendix K and L for samples). If you are a traditional, pilot, ESBMM, or network partner team seeking scheduling autonomy, describe how the school will use the autonomy.

Sylmar Leadership Academy will be on a traditional calendar of 180 days. (See Appendix # B17: Early Start Calendar 2012-2013) Teachers will design their daily schedules in PLCs to meet the needs of all the students. (See Appendix B-18 for example of Bell Schedule) The school will provide 55,100 minutes of instruction to all the students and additional time to students at-risk. (See part 2 *Curriculum and Instruction* section a. for time allotted for core subjects and extra support) To provide additional time to students at-risk, intervention teachers and teacher assistants will be purchased to lower the teacher-to-student ratio. The school will structure the calendar to implement banking of instructional minutes throughout the school year to provide teachers with time to work on data-driven decisions. The bell schedule for regular, minimum, shortened, and PD banked days provides for the regular number of instructional minutes in all subject areas in K-5 grades.

WAIVER REQUESTED: LIS #5: Sylmar Leadership Academy is requesting a waiver for flexibility in terms of local instructional schedules, including modified daily instructional days/minutes, the school's schedule of activities and events, and special schedules such as those designed to accommodate additional prep time for elementary teachers (all of the above being subject to District-mandated annual number of school days and minimum annual minutes of instruction and calendar requirements, and contractual pay in the case of additional required hours of regular daily instruction). At the core of the instructional framework for Sylmar Leadership Academy is the use of **Data-based Decision Making** that enhances and supports a **Personalized Learning Environment** in order to create conditions that lead to improved teaching and learning. Studies suggest, that "school site-based initiatives did not post positive school results in part because they over emphasize changing school governance structures without also prompting substantial direct investment in improving teaching and learning" (David, 1989; Malden, Ogawa, & Kranz, 1990a, 1990b; Peterson, 1991; Wohlsetter & Odden, 1992). In other words, autonomies are only effective in improving schools commensurate to the extent that they help to create the conditions for improved teaching and learning. Pivotal to this is **systemic implementation of structured time with-in the school day** for staff to study and make sense of a variety of data, reflect on professional practice and engage in on-going professional development. Staff will routinely engage with data and other evidence to identify struggling students and alter the mix of programs and practices within the school to align with student need. **Weekly reverse minimum days (late start) are essential so that teachers can meet, plan, reflect and engage in a continual cycle of improvement in the mornings while they are most productive.** (As an aside, studies show that many adolescents do better in school with late start times).

Additionally, the research on autonomy and school improvement indicates that teachers and school leaders must be provided the supports in order to build the capacity for improving teaching and learning. **An initial period of capacity building through training and professional development for teachers and school leaders should take place before the school year and be on-going throughout the year.** Successful autonomous schools have used the concept of an "incubator" as a capacity building support. The focus was not just on high quality teaching and learning, but how to ensure that new learning was

implemented. (*Autonomy and School Improvement: Honig and Rainey p.17*). The Local Service Area is essential in helping build capacity.

- f. **Policies:** Describe and/or attach the school's policies as they relate to retention, graduation, and student behavior. Indicate whether you plan to follow LAUSD policies for some or all of these areas.

Sylmar Leadership Academy will follow all of LAUSD's Policies for retention, graduation, and student behavior. We will take direction from and implement the LAUSD Discipline Foundation Policy which has established a framework for developing, refining and implementing a culture of discipline conducive to learning. School wide positive behavior support is based on research that indicates that the most effective discipline systems use **proactive strategies designed to prevent discipline problems**. In addition, students will be directly taught positive and replacement behaviors through the use of the Skill Streaming Model. (See Appendix B-19-B-32: Discipline Foundation Policy)

In terms of graduation of Middle School Culmination activities, Sylmar Leadership Academy will be consistent with LAUSD Bulletin-3815.0 Middle School Culmination Activity and Certificate of Completion. This policy supports middle school students in meeting A-G requirements and passing of the CAHSEE. It delineates the requirements for students to receive a District Approved Certificate of completion. **By clearly stating these expectations, students are more likely to meet these requirements.**

This bulletin also contains the Individual Culmination Plan (ICP) that students at Sylmar Leadership Academy will complete and work on with parents and the assigned adult mentor. This mentor will interact and give support to the student from sixth to eighth grades. At the school level, this bulletin provides an overview of suggested steps/programs that will provide support to these students. It also gives options for those students that in spite of all interventions and support, do not meet the requirements for culmination or the certificate of completion. (See Appendix B33-B-40: BUL-3815.0 Middle School Culmination Activity and Certificate of Completion)

Retention in the current grade for students is an action that is not taken lightly. At this time, LAUSD is revising the district policy for standards based promotion that Sylmar Leadership Academy will follow. Research has shown time and time again that repeating a grade does not lead to student success or self confidence. For this reason, we as a staff and school community will focus on strong instruction and will use differentiated interventions and frequent progress monitoring to support students mastering grade level standards. Parents will receive consistent communications and assistance in how to help their students at home. Student Study Teams and COST will provide resources and ideas to further support struggling students.

B-5. Parent and Community Engagement

a. Background:

The school community of Sylmar Leadership Academy is situated in the San Fernando Valley in the city of Sylmar. Part of now known as Local District 2, the new school will draw from the current school communities of Herrick ES, Sylmar ES, Hubbard ES and Olive Vista Middle School. Sylmar Leadership Academy will have a maximum capacity of 1,047 but will probably begin with a student population of approximately 900, pre- kindergarten through seventh grade. Eighth grade will not be included for the first year of operation so as to maintain the continuity of instruction at their current middle school. Based on the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau data, 66% of the residents of Sylmar are Hispanic with 61% speaking a language other than English in their home. According to reporting,

approximately 39% of the residents did not graduate from high school, and approximately 15% have college degrees.

Regarding income, the information from the 2000 Census bureau indicates that the median household income of Sylmar residents was \$36,245, which falls in the 10th percentile in comparison to other San Fernando Valley neighborhoods, with 24% of Sylmar residents living below the poverty line.

The crime rate in the city of Sylmar is higher than most of the San Fernando Valley, with a LALife Crime Index of 22. That is approximately 30% higher than the Los Angeles County average.

The violent crime statistics from the L.A. Foothill station for 2010 show that the vast preponderance of violent crime incidents are robbery (1,667) and aggravated assault (562) versus homicide and rape. It is only robbery that is above the county average.

At community meetings, in groups and personally, parents expressed their hopes that this new school would be a safe, nurturing and enriching place for their children and would lead them to a college education and a secure career. However, their overwhelming concern was for the education of their children in the elementary and middle school years. **The quality of the current school experience was paramount to them.** Some ideas from parents and community members are: a school garden, leadership, entrepreneurship, student mentor programs, valet parking program, community service projects for students, chlorine filters for the water fountains, no graffiti, cultural events and more.

In summary, parents value school and education and know that the daily experience of school is important to keep their children from becoming another drop out statistic. They see the concept of student leadership as a way to have their child feel connected to school as a partner in the school's success and a way to develop resiliency. Additionally, parents express the need to take an active part as leaders in their school and to be consulted and connected to the school by multiple avenues of communication.

Design team members led sessions with parents and were able to share their own hopes, dreams and expertise with them. The majority of the team lives or has worked in Sylmar or San Fernando for a significant amount of years. Two members of the Design Team have children that will attend the Sylmar Leadership Academy and so, have provided another dimension to community meetings and subsequent discussions regarding this plan.

Other general themes emerged in parent and community engagement meetings which were conducted to identify educational needs. Some of the needs were:

- Quality education for every student as a priority
- Establishment of a safe, collaborative, friendly, and engaging school
- A location in the school where parents can go to while their children are at school
- Activities and workshops about how parents can help their children at home
- After school and vacation educational activities and events
- Parent education classes with topics such as computer literacy, grade level academic standards, Adult English a Second Language classes (ESL), volunteer programs at school, GED classes and training how to be involved in the school's decision making process.

b. Strategies:

LD 2 understands the needs of students that will be attending Sylmar Leadership Academy and has had success in serving students with similar demographics. District personnel will be engaged in supporting

the daily instructional and operational needs of the school. **In addition to the overall “Organizing for Success” model designed by Local District 2 under Superintendent Alma Peña Sanchez, the Design Team brings a multitude of experiences that provide instructional expertise, operational know-how and belief in the fundamental value of student leadership and connectedness.** The Design Team believes that this plan is an opportunity to be involved in a significant way in the lives of children as articulated in the Sylmar Leadership Academy Vision, Mission and Core Beliefs. Further, the span model is a vehicle for many academic and social benefits for the students of Sylmar.

The following graph indicates the level of involvement, expertise and experience of the Design Team:

	Yrs in Education	Years in LAUSD	Years as Admin	Involved in PSC 1.0	Elem. Experience	MS Experience	Bil. Cred. Or BCLAD	Work in Parent Ed.	
1.	15	15			Yes		Yes	Yes	
2.	15	11				Yes		Yes	
3.	26	26	15	Yes		Yes		Yes	
4.	10	9			Yes	Yes		Yes	
5.	27	26		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
6.	27	26				Yes		Yes	
7.	16	13				Yes	Yes	Yes	
8.	15	14			Yes	Yes		Yes	
9.	23	12		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
10.	20	17			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
11.	12	12				Yes		Yes	
12.	18	18			Yes		Yes	Yes	
13.	15	15			Yes		Yes	Yes	
14.	38	38	28	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
15.	15	15				Yes	Yes	Yes	
16.	13	13	2			Yes		Yes	
17.	23	23	9		Yes			Yes	
18.	37	37	25	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Totals	355	340	79	5	12	12	10	18	

1. Fransisco Andrade: Teacher at Harding ES, Sylmar
2. Tay Aston: Teacher at Mount Gleason and Sylmar Resident
3. Manuel Diaz: Principal leader, Secondary, Local District 2
4. Mary Ann Dortch: Teacher at Olive Vista MS
5. Claire Feldman: RtI Expert and EL Coordinator, Local District 2
6. Leonard Goldberg: Teacher at Olive Vista MS, UTLA Chapter Chair
7. Joel Herrera: Teacher at Morningside ES
8. Karen Marx: Teacher at Hubbard ES
9. Diana Martinez: Teacher at Vista Del Valle Dual Language Academy
10. Mercy Momary: Title III Access to Core Coach, Olive Vista MS
11. Melissa Ornelas: Intervention Coordinator at Mt. Gleason

12. Lilly Osorio: Teacher at Hubbard ES, Sylmar
13. Nelly Rodriguez: Teacher at Hubbard ES, UTLA Cluster Leader
14. Alma Peña Sanchez: Superintendent, Local District 2
15. Laura Santa Cruz: Teacher, Olive Vista MS
16. DeAnna Steidl: Teacher at Olive Vista MS
17. Suellen Helm Torres: Principal, Hubbard ES
18. Mercedes Velazquez: Principal Leader (Sylmar ES, Hubbard ES), Local District 2

a. Key Community Partnerships:

Community members will be included in the ongoing success of the school by their participation in the Community Outreach Team and their involvement in the community school. Under the *Community School* model, ongoing communication will take place with the partnership organizations. Quarterly meetings will be held to conduct data analysis to measure the progress of workshop, training and program implementation. In addition, an analysis of all community outreach activities will be conducted to monitor the increase of parental and community participation in classes, workshops and events. Partners will also be involved in goal setting for training and workshop attendance on a quarterly basis. The partnerships will further the mission and vision of the school by sponsoring a real-world, inquiry-based community service projects designed by students at each grade level. The specific roles of the following partners

- Tia Chucha's Cultural Center, Sylmar
- Project GRAD: College Awareness and Speakers
- Cal State Northridge: Faculty support in the area of development of structures/relationships to develop student efficacy
- Carpenter ES: A partnership will be established with a "sister" school Carpenter Elementary, in Studio City, to provide a key relationship with students from a different demographic. This partnership will also spearhead the implementation of Singapore Math, which Carpenter is currently using to supplement EnVision math.

The role of key community partnerships throughout the first five years of the school are:

- Year 1:** The partnerships will create a core team of individuals who will work with the school in sponsoring a grade level in a community service project. In addition, partnership organizations will work with the Community Outreach Team to develop a community and parent needs assessment which will guide the design and implementation of workshops, trainings and services for all stakeholders. Partnerships will provide services and trainings according to the commitment pledge with the school.
- Year 2:** The partnership organizations will continue to sponsor the same cohort of students in a new grade level in creating an inquiry and project-based community service project. Partnership organizations will work with the Community Outreach Team to engage more businesses and organizations to sponsor school events. Partnerships will provide services and trainings based on needs assessment and according to the commitment pledge with the school.
- Year 3-5:** The partnerships will continue to sponsor the same cohort of students in an inquiry and project-based community service project. Partnerships will provide services and trainings based on needs assessment and according to the commitment pledge with the school.

Annual evaluation and data analysis of the efficacy of the partnerships will be conducted by the Community Outreach Team.

The due diligence conducted in the selection of the partnerships include:

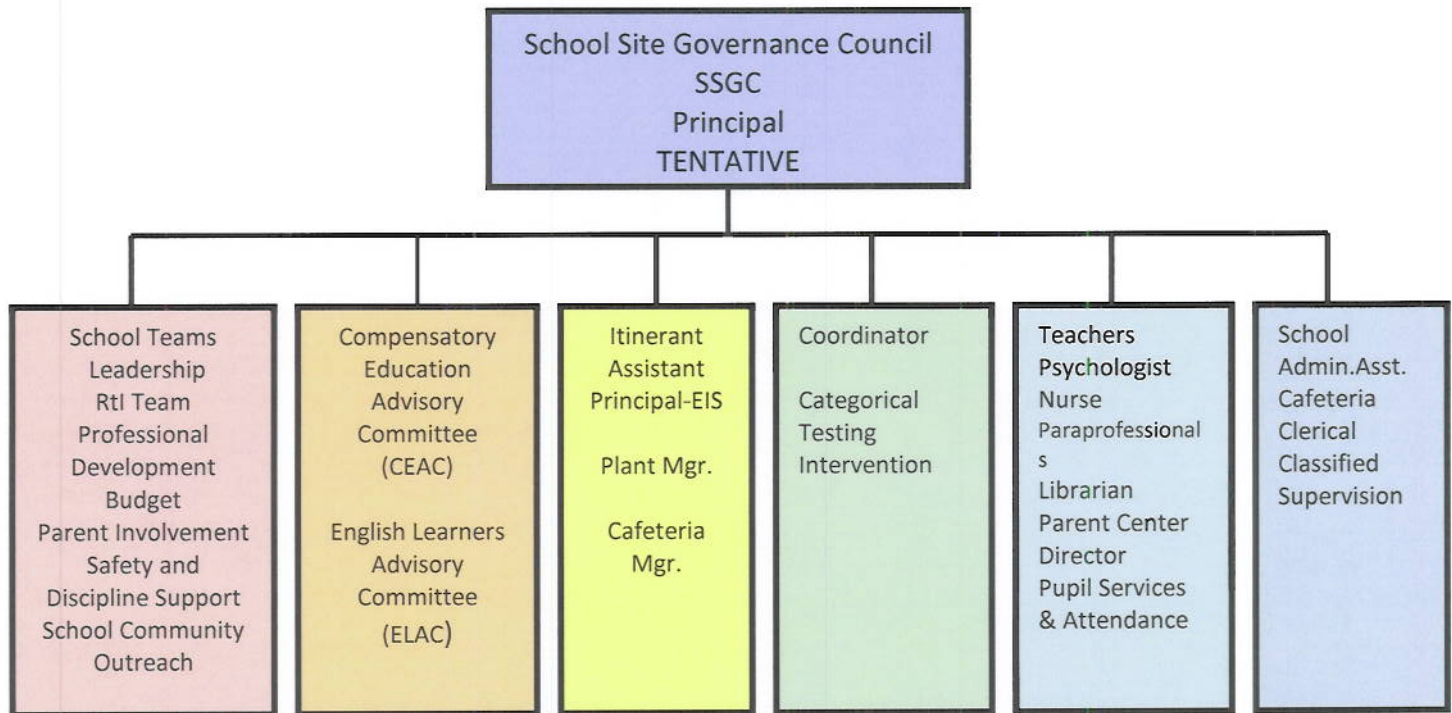
1. Background check of each organization ensuring that each partnership has at least 3 years experience in adult and youth programs
2. Extensive research of the demographic and academic student data from area schools (middle and high schools) in order to identify programs and services needed by the community
3. Meetings and panel discussions about the proposed services offered by the partner organizations
4. Thorough review of proposals from potential partner organizations

It has been the experiences of those of us involved in preceding Public School Choice plans that many hands are offered at the beginning stages of the process. However, planned partnerships do not always continue past the first year of operation. It is for this reason that a few partnerships have been identified and written into this plan. It is the intention of Sylmar Leadership Academy to cultivate and expend effort in first maintaining and expanding identified partnerships.

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

B-6. School Governance and Oversight: NOT APPLICABLE

Even though the Governance section is no longer required, the following schematic represents our thinking in terms of personnel and teams that together will make the school work smoothly.



B-7. School Leadership

a. Principal Selection:

The superintendent with the input of a school hiring committee or Personnel Selection Committee, will select a highly qualified instructional leader as the principal of Sylmar Leadership Academy. The principal will be the instructional leader and responsible for promoting the success of all students and their learning to achieve the outcomes as outlined in the school's vision and mission. The candidate will go through a rigorous selection process and will have to match the following characteristics and qualifications:

1. *Knowledge of Instructional Practices:* Extensive knowledge and training on standards-based instruction, inquiry and project-based learning, technology, and research-based practices for elementary and middle school.
2. *Leadership:* Leads in a positive manner, demonstrates integrity, sense of purpose and fosters teamwork and positive morale. Implements the educational plan and support the vision and mission of the school. Supervises and monitors the implementation and delivery of the intended curriculum; a visionary who is on the cutting edge of educational reform and fluent with current educational theory, practices and research.
3. *Collaboration:* Responds and engages with families, partnerships, and community members to mobilize resources in further developing the community school.

4. *Problem-solving*: Demonstrates ingenuity and/or creativity in solving problems or working towards results. Must have received extensive training on the RtI2 model.
5. *Follow-up and responsiveness*: Responds, initiates, changes or sets new priorities, and communicate the same to all involved; to ensure all tasks and projects are seen through to completion.
6. *Extra-organizational sensitivity*: Perceives the impact and the implications of decisions on various ethnic groups; understanding of and sensitivity to various cultural and ethnic groups. Able to work with all students representative of the various sub-groups at the school such as At-Risk students, Students With Disabilities, Socio-Economically Disadvantaged, English Learners, Standard English Learners and GATE.
7. *Communication*: Express ideas clearly and communicate verbally and in written context in an effective manner. Encourage continuous improvement of the delivery of instruction through ongoing feedback to all teachers and staff.
8. *Decision-making*: Uses reasonable judgment on an issue under consideration resulting in a positive conclusion or solution. All decisions will be based on the analysis of student data to maintain a focus on improving student achievement.
9. *Fairness-objectivity*: Directs and manages in a manner that is uninfluenced by emotion, assumption, or personal opinion.
10. *Judgment*: Develops alternative courses of action and makes decision which reflects factual information; are based on logical assumptions; and take organization resources into consideration.
11. *Commitment/Longevity*: Commits to stay at Sylmar Leadership Academy for no less than six years.

The principal at Sylmar Leadership Academy will model for all staff the welcoming behavior that encourages parent participation and the reality that everyone matters. An “open door” policy beginning with the office and extending to classrooms will reflect a school-wide appreciation of active parent participation. The principal will foster trust and gather input from parents through formal and informal processes, including a monthly “Coffee with the Principal” meeting followed by late afternoon or early evening meetings to accommodate working parents. (See Appendix B40 for Principal’s Job Description)

b. Leadership Team:

Sylmar Leadership Academy will need out of the classroom support beyond the principal. A school of close to a thousand students needs additional staff to provide a safe and productive learning environment. These positions will work with the principal to operationalize the PSC Plan:

Categorical Program Coordinator: this eight hour position will provide direct and indirect services to students. Maintaining accurate records and assisting the principal to monitor and support the instructional program for all students including EL’s, SEL’s, Students with Disabilities and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged youth. Additionally, the coordinator will serve as part of the RtI/Data team assisting in the alignment of all school actions with the needs of the students based on data.

Assistant Principal/Elementary Instructional Specialist: This position will have the responsibilities of conducting, monitoring and overseeing all aspects of the Special education program. Assisting teachers and the Student Study team in the development of Tier 1, 2 and 3 interventions, scheduling and developing Individual Education Plans, communicating with parents will be a large part of the responsibility of this half time administrator. The AP/EIS will also provide communication with Support Unit North.

Counselor/ Bridge Coordinator K-12 Counseling/Coordinating Services

The counselor will hold a valid Pupil Personnel Services credential with an authorization in school counseling. Participate in various multidisciplinary teams such as Student Success Team (SST), Coordination of Services Team (COST) and the Resource Coordinating Team (RCT), to identify necessary support services for students. Provide individual and group counseling and guidance for students in the academic, personal/social, and career domains; connects students with appropriate resources. Consult with the administrative staff and pupil support on student referrals for supplementary counseling, psychological evaluation and case conferences. Assist with the development of transition programs to support successful student matriculation between grades and school levels. Monitor and manage student progress for targeted students. Assist in the collection and analysis of data relative to attendance, behavior and achievement and communicates/interprets the assessment results to students, parents and teachers. Assists in the preparation of information for entry on student cumulative records; analyzes data relevant to student needs. Provide professional development and parent education workshops. Develop programs to address student attitudes, understanding of self and others, peer relationships, goal-setting, conflict resolution, career awareness, college preparation and post-secondary planning.

The other half of the position will be involved in the implementation of the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) to assist with the closing of the achievement gap for students with disabilities. Provide support and direction related to the integration of special and general education at the school site. Provide professional development for special education and general education teachers on effective strategies, accommodations and/or modifications and in the use of evidence-based interventions for ELA and math. Collaborate with staff, students and families to implement effective positive behavior strategies and alternatives to suspension. Provide parent trainings on strategies that foster learning at home.

Intervention/ Problem Solving Data Coach will:

- Work to develop and implement the problem-solving process (PSP) and Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI²)
- Collect, manage, analyze, and disaggregate data to monitor student progress and school-wide goals and use data to make instructional and behavioral decisions
- Collaborate with students, teachers and parents in the development, implementation, and review of personalized learning plans
- Collaborate with classroom teachers to identify and provide appropriate intervention services
- Deliver multi-tiered instruction and intervention services to students in grades K-8.
- Prepare and deliver intervention professional development to teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents
- Meet regularly and consistently with teachers to discuss students' progress in various intervention programs
- Participate in all Student Success Team and Positive Behavior Support meetings

Parent Center Director: The Parent Center Director will assist the principal with the work of Site Governance and will maintain ongoing communication between parents and community. A calendar of parent education and training opportunities will be developed that will relate directly to the vision, mission and educational plan of the school, provide background for parents on the value of student leadership and collaborative learning, the role of technology both in school and in homes, the value of project and inquiry-based learning, and the problem-solving process. The on-going parent education process will develop appreciation of higher order learning outcomes as a critical 21st Century skill set

The above mentioned positions with input from the principal, teachers, and decision making councils will work together to analyze multiple data sources and resources and make decisions based on the best information in harmony student needs and the mission and vision of the plan.

WAIVER REQUEST LIS #10: Sylmar Leadership Academy requests the autonomy of a site based process for selecting teachers as coordinators, grade level or department chairs. The **Personnel Selection Committee** (standing committee) will be made up of the principal, teacher representatives, classified representative and parent representative (selected by their stakeholder groups) and will select the people for the aforementioned positions by an evaluation of experience, documents review (recommendations and resumes) and interviews conducted. Procedures will be respectful and confidential. In the event that any candidate contests the Personnel Committee's decision, an **Appeal Team** (convened as needed) will be convened, made up of the director, parent, teacher and classified representative, to review the case and the decision. Their subsequent decision will be final.

This waiver is based on the premise implicit in the Public School Choice process that personnel and other decisions are best made by the people closest to the students, who know their needs and make decisions based on data and collaboration of all stakeholders.

B-8. Staff Recruitment and Evaluation¹

Staffing Model.

Sylmar Leadership Academy will be organized into PLE's or Houses. Kindergarten classes will spend that year aligning individual student needs with instruction so that students entering first grade will be grouped into a house (group of teachers 1st through 8th grade) where they will work with a stable group of teachers throughout their stay at Sylmar Leadership Academy.

**The staffing plan for Sylmar leadership academy will be as follows:

Academic Positions	Non-academic Positions
1 Principal 28 Register carrying teachers 2 Resource Specialist teachers 2 Special Education teachers 1 Categorical Program Advisor 1 Counselor/ Bridge Coordinator 4 Special Education Assistants 1 Technology Instructional Aide 1 Librarian 1 Nurse 1 PSA Counselor	1 School Administrative Assistant (SAA) 2 Office Assistants 2 Supervision Aides 1 Plant Manager 2 Grounds Workers 1 Cafeteria Manager 2 Cafeteria workers

Sylmar Leadership Academy will take the practice of vertical articulation and expand it to permeate the instructional structure of the school while still maintaining its mission and vision. The goal is to influence the outcome of the students upon culmination from 8th grade, and to nurture an environment that develops a sense of belonging for the students, staff, parents, and the community at large.

¹ Note that staffing plans must be aligned with District and union agreements regarding staffing, recruitment, and performance reviews.

WAIVER REQUEST LIS #11: Sylmar Leadership Academy is requesting the autonomy to utilize a local process for determining assignments of teachers to grade levels, departments, subjects, and classes. This is essential to the implementation of the plan because of the “school within a school” concept that is built into the school organization. Teachers will be grouped in houses as a part of the personalized learning environments and students will stay with the same cohort or team of teachers from first through eighth grades. Kindergarten teachers will be separate as a foundational grade level that necessitates a focus on early childhood development. The Kindergarten Department will work closely with first grade teachers, state preschool teachers and parents to prepare incoming students with the strong foundational skills and attitude that will prepare them for the rigors of first grade. In order to do this successfully, Kindergarten teachers must have the time, **over time**, to work together to engage in job embedded learning as part of their routine work practice.

This autonomy will provide for the ongoing articulation of teachers over time and allow for more effective differentiation/acceleration of the curriculum. The selection of grade levels by seniority does not allow time for other grade levels and departments to become a true community of practice, knowing grade level standards well, and implementing them together in the subjects that they are responsible for teaching. Again, teachers must have the time, **over time**, to work together to engage in job embedded learning as part of their routine work practice. Also, the constant movement of teachers to different grade levels is inconsistent with the goal of providing consistency for families and students.

Teachers and administrators will collaboratively identify a procedure to determine the assignments of teachers to grade levels, departments, subjects, and classes.

a. Recruitment and Selection of Teachers.

Note: In the first year of implementation of the PSC Plan, the Design Team will address the school staff of the relieved schools, share and inform them as to the vision, mission and philosophy of Sylmar Leadership Academy. Since those schools will displace teachers commensurate to the number of students moving to Sylmar Leadership Academy, every effort will be made to communicate the expectations and accountabilities of the PSC Plan so that staff may make an informed choice as to application. This will be done as soon as the operation of the school is awarded.

The teacher candidate will be interviewed by the Leadership Team and will go through a rigorous selection process. Each candidate must meet the following criteria:

1. *Effective Instructor:* Teachers will be selected based on their unique qualities and experience in conducting standards-based lessons in all subject areas.
2. *Evidence of Collaboration:* Teachers will need to display their ability to work collaboratively with all stakeholders as a PLC to advance their skills, knowledge, and capacity as educators. Teachers must also demonstrate previous experience of working collaboratively with other teachers in a team-teaching environment for subject areas such as Science, History-Social Science, ELD and the Performing Arts.
3. *Evidence of providing Differentiation of Instruction:* Candidates must present sample lesson plans, professional portfolio and student work samples that indicates the effective use of differentiation of instruction for English learners, students with disabilities, GATE and at-risk students.
4. *Demonstration Lesson:* Candidates will be observed conducting a lesson in a classroom and must provide evidence of research-based instructional strategies and culturally relevant and responsive strategies during the lesson.

5. *Highly Qualified*: Candidates must hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing credential, certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold by state law. Out of state candidates will be required to meet the California credential standards within the time allocated by the State of California and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
6. *Community involvement*: The candidate must display ability to work effectively with parents, staff and partnerships in support of the Community school and the Community Resource Center.

The anticipated experience level of the teaching staff will be 45% with 3-10 years teaching experience, and 55% with 10 years or more teaching experience.

WAIVER REQUEST LIS #9: Sylmar Leadership Academy requests the requirement of “Mutual Consent” by the school and prospective employee with respect to the filling of UTLA-represented, site based openings. No mandated priority placements will occur but Sylmar Leadership Academy will comply with return rights or other placements to the school that are required by legal mandates or by the LAUSD/UTLA Agreement.

This autonomy is vital to our plan because of the high level of time and effort that will be expected of all colleagues and the understanding that leadership will be shared by all. The standards and expectations for teachers at Sylmar Leadership Academy, as presented in the PSC Plan will thus be clear and agreed upon by all.

b. Performance Reviews:

Performance reviews at Sylmar Leadership Academy will be focused on improving the effectiveness of the teacher or administrator in order to improve instruction. **They will involve the reflective cycle involving a dialogue between the evaluator and the teacher utilizing the LAUSD Teaching and Learning Framework and student data as a guide.** The dialogue will be followed by an observation based on the teacher’s planned lesson. Reflection from the teacher and feedback from the administrator will be part of the post conference. During the post conference, student work products and data from the observation will be studied in terms of the learning outcomes. A discussion and sharing of grade level/individual classroom progress and work in leadership/service projects will be a topic for the post conference.

All teachers, administrators and staff will contribute to the school community by fulfilling the Commitment to Work Agreement and by striving to improve learning outcomes and the learning environment of their students. This said, the Design Team and Local District 2 acknowledge the effort and gift of time that teachers and school personnel put in with students, parents and community.

B-9. Sharing a Campus

- a. N/A

C. Internal Management

N/A

This section is applicable to internal and Network Partner teams only. Briefly highlight the areas in which autonomies are necessary for the implementation of your Instructional Plan and proposed budget development process.

C-1. Waivers. Identify what, if any, waivers from LAUSD Collective Bargaining Agreements are needed to support and ensure the successful implementation of the school. Complete and attach the Waivers Request form to request waivers needed in the 2012-2013 school year. N/A

C-2. Budget Development:

WAIVER REQUEST LIS #8: Sylmar Leadership Academy requests the autonomy of the Per Pupil Funding Model. This would include general fund budget control which currently provides local discretion but neutralizes the impact of such differences such as those among certificated staff salaries and subject to the other applicable related District requirements such as those governing guided practices.

This autonomy is necessary so that fiscal resources can be directed at the needs of the students based on data. This will assure that decisions are made by those who know and are closest to the students.

Sylmar Leadership Academy has requested the flexibility of Per Pupil Budgeting in order to determine the best use of the available funds. **An analysis of the school's data will be the starting place.** This will start with the principal, leadership team and staff but must include a Parent's Needs Assessment by the School Site Governing Council with input from CEAC and ELAC. A list of priorities will be established and expenditures will be made and included in the Single Plan for Student Achievement. These expenditures will be directly linked to student academic needs and improving instruction. The SSGC will monitor and oversee the expenditures and the SPSA.

Year One Priorities:

- Funding of critical support positions including Categorical Program Coordinator, Counselor/Bridge Coordinator and Intervention/ Problem Solving Data Coach
- Paraprofessionals
- Funding to support parent and community outreach
- Funding for additional Health and Human services personnel.
- Field Trips to surrounding colleges and universities to promote college awareness for students

Year Two and Three Priorities:

- Continued funding of critical support positions including Categorical Program Coordinator, Counselor/Bridge Coordinator and Intervention/ Problem Solving Data Coach
- Enhancing technology: I Pads for all teachers and a classroom computer dock for each set of classrooms.
- Continued funding for additional Health and Human services personnel.
- Funding to support parent and community outreach
- Professional development for Critical Friends Training
- Field Trips to surrounding colleges and universities for students with parents
- Enhancing technology to include computer access for parents in the Parents Center

- Laboratory science materials to enhance the teaching of elementary through middle school science.

The above priorities will be discussed and approved collaboratively. Other decisions based on the data may be added.

D. Operational Management

D-1. Portfolio Development.

a. **Portfolio Growth.** N/A

b. **Operations:** N/A

c. **Portfolio Evaluation.**

Local District 2 currently operates a large portfolio of schools serving the larger part of the North Eastern San Fernando Valley. In this portfolio are 14 Early Education centers, 61 elementary schools, 12 middle schools, 11 high schools, 7 continuation schools and a special education center. Although we serve many schools, a smaller network approach is achieved by systems and structures that are in place. LD2 schools are organized in principal leader groups; principal leaders and instructional resource personnel such as RtI/ELD experts provide individualized support to schools and school staffs in instructional and operational issues. Some of the key areas for improvement in the Local District have been identified by a close analysis of school, local district data and Performance Meter trends. These include quality first instruction that leads to 80% or more of students mastering grade level standards, improving the performance of third graders especially in the area of literacy, closing the achievement gap for all subgroups, algebra proficiency rate and attendance. A systematic way of addressing these common needs at local district schools makes for a community of practice where common problems are addressed network- wide.

There are also other needs that are not as observable in the data but are critical when considering student success, well being and happiness. Some of these are motivation and engagement, feeling and actually being an important part of your school/ student led school functioning and activities, healthy eating, exercise, access to health and human services as needed and many more. These needs are being addressed by the personnel in our schools and community who are working diligently to support students personally, socially as well as academically.

It is our strong belief that Sylmar Leadership Academy will directly and vigorously address the needs of our community by providing a strong academic foundation based on state standards, utilizing effective practices in a supportive environment and developing leadership and service in each and every child. The longevity of the teaching and administrative team will provide a safe environment in which students can be intellectually challenged and relationships will blossom. Everyone will “know your name.”

Local District 2 is currently addressing these needs by:

- Working to establish a system to operationalize the cycle of action and reflection for schools in the target area. Goals and action steps are identified and all facets of the school community participate and are knowledgeable about them in all areas of the performance meter and Local District Academic Goals. Every Local District 2 school at every level posts these goals on a data board in their schools.
- Grouping of schools for strategic support: Tiering, RtI cohort Groups
- Assuring that ELD/ESL is taught daily for targeted students, that teachers are aware and monitor the progress of each EL on the Path to Reclassification and working with schools to make sure that this is happening.

- Marking the third grade literacy rate and identifying focus students from this grade level for literacy support. This includes identifying and progress monitoring intervention for at risk students in preceding grade levels.
- Identifying and calibrating observations in all algebra classes by school and local district staff. Collaboratively identifying effective practice and giving feedback to teachers regarding implementation in their classrooms is also being systemically supported.

These strategic actions address network-wide needs that have been identified from the analysis of multiple data sources. They by no means represent the full spectrum of Local District 2's efforts to improve learning for all students.

D-2. Organizational Responsibilities and Goals.

- a. Core Functions: N/A**
- b. Leadership: N/A**