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## **A. VISION AND INSTRUCTIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

### ***1. What is your school's vision for the youth who will matriculate from your school?***

The vision for the San Fernando Digital Arts Academy (SFDAA) and the San Fernando Biotech Health Academy (SFBHA) is to prepare students for academic success in high school, post-secondary education and professional careers, encourage students to be responsible and active participants in the community, and enable students to become life-long learners. Emphasis will be placed on student achievement and positive postsecondary outcomes by challenging students to develop problem-solving and interpersonal skills and linking rigorous college preparatory curriculum with technical coursework at two small schools that focus on different industry sectors: health-medical and media-arts. SFDAA and SFBHA will work to close the achievement gap by providing clear and high expectations for all students, a personalized and supportive learning environment, family-school-community and state-school-private sector partnerships, blended learning, and linked learning.

Students learn best when they are challenged by clear and high expectations and supported by a caring community. They are excited by education that is meaningful, relevant, and dynamic and motivated by learning that requires them to problem-solve and collaborate. Students learn best when they have an opportunity to form meaningful relationships with teachers, administrators, peers, and the surrounding community. They thrive in an environment where teachers, parents, and students work collectively to set goals and celebrate achievements.

Young people will want to make a difference in their families and communities and value experiences that empower them to do so. Learning will both reflect students' lives and expand their understanding to encompass a global perspective. The schools will provide opportunities for students to develop personal responsibility, self-manage their own learning, and practice democratic principles. The schools will celebrate authentic accomplishments as well as cultural and individual diversity in an environment of tolerance and respect.

To achieve and maintain academic success and excellence, SFDAA and SFBHA will maintain a commitment to their students. The schools believe that all students can learn, and all teachers will be expected to teach a high level curriculum. Teachers are key in developing integrated curriculum, lesson plans and classroom activities that contribute to student learning. The curriculum will be rigorous, challenging, and organized around major concepts that students are to know in depth, core academic subjects, and career technical education.

The highest aspirations that the two small schools will have for students will be full readiness for rigorous and challenging college track material. Students will also be well prepared for career tracks targeting media-arts and health-medical careers. They will embrace the following priorities for success:

1. Students will be prepared for success through a challenging academic component that meets the University of California's A-G requirements. The academic component will be taught through the lens of each school's career theme.
2. Students will learn through real-world experiences provided by work-based learning, and will be exposed to the real world of work throughout their academic years.
3. Students will benefit from coordinated out of school activities. Extra support before school, after school and on the weekends will be available for students.
4. Student success is connected to the care and support of families; when families are taken care of, students also thrive. Providing programs, resources, and services that build the capacity of family members and the family unit contribute to the stability of the family and student academic success.

### ***2. What is the vision of the school that will help achieve the vision of the successful future graduate described above?***

San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and San Fernando Biotech Health Academy (two Network Partner schools) will be centers of learning that academically challenge and empower students to graduate prepared for a full range of options after high school, while becoming active members of a global society.

Each small school will prepare students for academic success in high school, postsecondary education and professional careers through the implementation of (1) California Partnership Academies and Linked Learning; (2) Blended Learning; and (3) integration into the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood/Full-Service Community Schools model of whole family support.

Over the next three to five years, the two schools will follow the Partnership Academy model and Linked Learning reform movements and create a family-like atmosphere with student cohorts in two small schools. They will integrate academic and career technical education and establish viable business partnerships with career themes of health-medical and digital/media-arts. The schools will provide students supportive and positive learning environments in which every student will develop communication, technological, leadership and industry skills to foster self-confidence and personal growth. The schools will ensure that all students, even those not pursuing careers in medical and digital/media arts fields, will be well prepared for postsecondary education and careers.

The high schools will both develop Full-Service Community School models where students and parents have access to wraparound supportive services. Through the YPI Full-Service Community Schools strategy (already implemented at nine partnering schools in Los Angeles), the schools will provide a continuum of programs and services that span the life cycle from pre-natal to career.

The proposed models require strong commitments from staff and adults associated with the schools. Teachers will participate in rigorous professional development linked to improvements in student academic achievement. The instructional leadership team comprised of the principal and teachers will design the professional development calendar to provide professional development specifically geared to improving student academic achievement and preparation for college and careers.

The schools will use governance autonomy to create a culture of shared leadership by incorporating faculty input into decision-making and focusing on high expectations for student performance, particularly at SF Digital Arts Academy (which plans to apply to become a Pilot School in its second year of operation), where teachers will be members of the Governing School Council. Members of the school community will be empowered to make decisions to create a more collaborative school culture. The decision-making process will include the creation of collaborative teams intended to provide opportunities for teachers, students, families and community members to be involved in each school's life and leadership. Teams will include: governing board, leadership team, interdisciplinary academic teams, content-based team, full faculty, advisory board, student forum, and Parent Leadership.

Parents will be fully involved in the schools, and many will participate in services in and out of school through the Full-Service Community Schools program. At both schools, parents will serve on the school Leadership Council, while serving on the Governing School Council at the future Pilot School.

### ***3. Describe instructional philosophy connected to achieving vision of youth who will matriculate from school and overall vision. Why do you believe this is best approach?***

The San Fernando Digital Arts Academy (SFDAA) and the San Fernando Biotech Health Academy (SFBHA) embrace the instructional philosophy that all students can learn when they are provided with clear, high expectations and excellent instruction and support. Students learn better when the content is relevant to their lives and future, so the schools will each implement the California Partnership Academies and Linked Learning Models that integrate the academic core with career technical education. This integrated method of instruction both increases the relevance of what students learn and prepares them to graduate from high school college- and career-ready.

The schools will utilize separate career development themes for the integrated curricula, while establishing partnerships with employers, community stakeholders, and higher education institutions. This includes dual enrollment opportunities with area community colleges. The theme of each school will be a critical part of the curricula. The two career themes were chosen based on community feedback and an analysis of growing industries that will afford students myriad future opportunities. SF Digital Arts Academy grew out of the popular, but now-defunct SFHS media arts program led by YPI Planning Team member Marco Torres. In addition, parents at YPI's pilot middle school, San Fernando Institute for Applied Media expressed a desire for a high school option that will continue the digital arts theme. The

Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook 2012-13 indicates that the three fastest growing occupations are all in the health-medical field, as are the three highest paying occupations, which resulted in the choice of the biotech health theme for SFBHA. For the broader technology field of which digital arts are a part, considerable job growth is expected. The most recent Occupational Outlook Handbook states that “Computer Network, Systems, and Database Administrators positions are expected to grow much faster than average while adding 286,600 jobs to the overall U.S. economy in 2008-18.” Computer and information technology is one of the highest growth fields in California, with long term demand for trained employees. According to California Industry Projections 2008-2018 (California Labor Market Information), the Computer Systems Design and Related Services industry (part of the Professional and Business Services sector) will grow by 87,600 jobs statewide. This sector demonstrates the second highest growth and is the second largest state sector. Computer Systems Design will grow by 42.6%- the second highest rate in this sector.

SFDAA and SFBHA will establish career-themed pathways through utilization of standards that clarify knowledge, skills, and experience that students need to pursue their chosen profession through any required course of postsecondary, collegiate, and graduate training or apprenticeship. The schools will prepare students for careers through academic courses, and through cultivation of intangible assets like flexibility, problem-solving abilities, and interpersonal skills that will greatly benefit graduating students whether or not they choose to follow the selected career tracks. In the digital/media-arts school, students will learn skills and knowledge necessary for creating, refining, and exhibiting works of art through an academy that promotes teamwork, communication, creative thinking, and decision-making abilities—all traits needed to function in the competitive and media-rich 21<sup>st</sup> century. The health-medical school will utilize standards that teach what workers need to know and be able to do to contribute to the delivery of safe and effective health care. Each school will establish an educational and career pathway that builds on and continues the foundational standards with more complexity, rigor, and career specificity.

Instructional methodologies to be used include data driven instruction; teacher inquiry and research to guide curriculum development; backward design and multiple assessments; family participation and community involvement; constructivism; and problem-based learning. Teachers will participate in collaborative action-research in their classrooms to make informed decisions regarding assessment, curriculum, pedagogy, and student services. Teachers will plan units of study with departmental faculty using ‘backward design’ guidelines described in *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, 1998). Teachers will be given adequate time and professional development to develop common lesson plans and integrated curricula.

In order to succeed in the 21st century, students must cultivate technological skills, as well as habits of mind like thinking flexibly, applying past knowledge to new situations, and creating, imagining, and innovating. SFDAA and SFBHA will implement Blended Learning, a classroom structure that uses differentiated instruction to address multiple learning styles. This differentiation promotes the development of habits of mind, as students learn collaboratively and independently, in addition to utilizing digital content to develop 21st century technology skills.

Students are more likely to succeed when their families are stable and supportive. SFDAA and SFBHA will integrate into the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood and implement the Full-Service Community Schools model of whole family support. Through LA Promise Neighborhood and Full-Service Community Schools, students and their families will access a comprehensive cradle-through-college/career continuum of services designed to address any and all of their needs. As families become more stable and successful, students will thrive academically.

The YPI Planning Team for the schools believes that the Pilot School and Network Partner approaches are best for students and parents at San Fernando High School due to feedback and support of attending families, the effectiveness of YPI’s similar school approach in our current Public School Choice schools, and the strong research base of effectiveness. Please see Section C for a full discussion of the research base for YPI’s school turnaround strategies that developed out of the instructional philosophy, including the Full-Service Community Schools model, blended learning, linked learning and the Partnership Academy model that inform both small schools.

## **B. SCHOOL DATA PROFILE / ANALYSIS**

### ***1. Where is school? What does data/information collected/analyzed tell you about school?***

The data in this section was collected from the California Department of Education, the LAUSD San Fernando High School Report Card, Performance Meter, and School Experience Survey, and from student focus groups that YPI conducted in preparation for PSC 4.0 as part of the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood primary data collection effort for implementation services in the San Fernando Valley.

#### **Demographics**

Students at San Fernando High School (SFHS) are 97.1% Hispanic/Latino, 1% African American, .6% American Indian or Alaska Native, .3% Asian, .4% Filipino, .1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and .5% white. 99.8% of students are socioeconomically disadvantaged, and 99% participate in the free/reduced price meal program, demonstrating a need for support for low income families. 23% of students are English Learners, while 49% are reclassified as fluent English proficient. 11% of students are in the Gifted and Talented Education program. 13% are students with disabilities.

#### **API, PI, AYP**

SFHS' 2012 Growth API score is 677, and up from the 2011 Base API score of 657. Schoolwide growth targets were met in 2012. This includes meeting targets for numerically significant subgroups (Hispanic or Latino, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, Students With Disabilities) except English Learners, who will be targeted for academic support services in the two schools. SFHS did not make AYP, as it met only 10 of 18 criteria. SFHS is in PI Year 5 for the 2012-13 academic year. SFHS has demonstrated improvements in its API score since 2007, showing a commitment to academic growth. The new schools will continue this growth while focusing particular efforts on the English Learner subgroup.

#### **Academic Achievement: Schoolwide**

Academic achievement is low at San Fernando High School, and proficiency rates are especially low for English Learners and students with disabilities.

<b>Table 1: California Standards Test - % Proficient or Advanced</b>				
<b>Group / Subgroup</b>	<b>2011 (STAR Test Results)</b>	<b>2012 (STAR Test Results)</b>		<b>2012 LAUSD (Performance Meter)</b>
<i>English Language Arts</i>				
All students	29.0%	33.4%		44%
English Learners	4.0%	3.9%		
Students with Disabilities	3.0%	3.0%		
<i>Mathematics</i>				
All students	15.0%	14.7%		30%
English Learners	6.5%	4.2%		
Students with Disabilities	1.6%	4.5%		

The rate of students meeting grade level standards (Advanced/Proficient levels) drops in mathematics over the course of their time at the school.

<b>Table 2: California Standards Test - % Proficient or Advanced at SFHS</b>			
	<b>9th Grade</b>	<b>10th Grade</b>	<b>11th Grade</b>
Algebra I	11%	5%	4%
Geometry	24%	4%	3%
Algebra II	67%	24%	7%
Summative HS Mathematics	57%	28%	33%

Overall achievement in math, along with this downward trend in math proficiency, are major concerns that indicate an urgent need for better math instruction and increased learning support for math outside the classroom. The proposed curricula and instructions provided at the two new schools will directly address this gap, as discussed in Section C.

From 2009-10 to 2010-11 SFHS increased the proportion of students promoted from 9th to 10th grade from 45% to 52%; however that is still significantly lower than the LAUSD average of 65%. In the same period, the proportion of students promoted from 10th to 11th grade decreased from 59% to 57%; again, this is lower than the district average of 69%. The promotion rate will be addressed through innovations such as targeted academic tutoring, programs such as Success for All, whole family support services, and linked learning and blended learning services as described ahead.

The 2010-11 CAHSEE passing rate in 10th grade was 70%, up from a rate of 63% in 2009-10 and higher than the LAUSD 2010-11 rate of 66%. Graduation rates are consistently lower than district-wide rates and will be addressed through the services described above.

<b>Table 3: Four Year Graduation Rate</b>					
	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
SFHS	43%	48%	49%	51%	55%
LAUSD	45%	48%	52%	55%	62%

The cohort dropout rate for the 2010-11 class was 14.0%, well below the district-wide rate of 20.7%. Though SFHS demonstrates graduation and dropout rates better than the district, the goal is for all students to graduate, so this remains an area of concern to be addressed with the above programs.

#### Academic Achievement: By Subgroup

There are not enough SFHS non-Hispanic/Latino students for CDE to release subgroup data for other ethnicities. Almost all students (99.8%) are socioeconomically disadvantaged. Schoolwide data is representative of Hispanic/Latino students and socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

English Learners (ELs), who make up almost one-quarter of students, lag in academic achievement compared to English fluent peers (Table 1 above). EL progress toward being reclassified as fluent English proficient has gone down from 2009-10 to 2010-11, and falls below district-wide averages.

<b>Table 4: English Learners' progress toward being reclassified as fluent English proficient</b>			
	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>LAUSD</b>
<b>Proficient on CA English Language Development Test</b>	35%	23%	24%
<b>Score basic or above on CST-ELA</b>	27%	22%	28%
<b>Pass English courses with a "C" or better</b>	44%	39%	44%

English Learners are dropping out at much higher rates than SFHS as a whole. The 2010-11 cohort dropout rate for ELs was 24.2%, significantly higher than the schoolwide dropout rate of 14% but lower than the district dropout rate for ELs of 32.4%. This data indicates a clear need for additional academic interventions and support for English Learners that will be provided.

Low academic achievement of students with disabilities (SWD) is equally concerning. In 2012 only 3% of SWD scored Proficient/Advanced on the CST ELA exam, and only 4.5% scored Advanced/Proficient on CST math. While the 2012 math proficiency rate for SWD is higher than in 2011 (1.6%), the proficiency rate in ELA remained the same (3%). YPI will use blended learning that includes differentiated instruction to support SWD and ELs in academic achievement as described in section C.

#### Postsecondary preparedness

SFHS students have high aspirations for their future. When YPI conducted focus groups with students in preparation for PSC 4.0 and Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood implementation, the students

demonstrated strong desires to graduate high school, attend college or university, and enter careers like engineering, nursing, architecture, and teaching. One student commented that it's "inspiring for [her] to go to a university and be the first one" in her family to do so. Results from the 2011 School Experience Survey also indicate that students have high postsecondary aspirations: 72% of students plan to complete at least a 2 year college degree, while 40% plan to complete a 4 year degree and 21% plan to complete a graduate degree. An additional 2% of students plan to attend vocational or technical school. SFHS students set ambitious future goals that they believe are supported by the education they receive at SFHS, but the school is not fulfilling its duty to prepare students for postsecondary education and careers. This will be a key part of the YPI academic preparation plan for the two proposed small schools.

Only 18% of 2010-11 graduates passed all A-G courses with a "C" or better, which is required for admission to UC or CSU, and only 21% of all other students are on track to complete A-G requirements with "C" or better. This reality contrasts with students' aspirations to attend college, though by the time students are seniors their aspirations are scaled back, likely because SFHS did not successfully prepare them for college admissions. When graduating seniors at SFHS were asked about plans, 21% plan to attend a 4 year college (compared to 40% of all students with this plan) and 42% plan to attend a 2 year college (compared to 11% of all students). Most colleges require students to take the SAT or ACT, but only 30% of SFHS students did so in 2010-11, a decrease from 34% in 2009-10. An SAT score of 1,500 is considered average for college admission and only 12.4% of SFHS students achieved a 1,500 or higher in 2010-11. This is drastically lower than percentages for LAUSD (24.1%), LA County (39.3%), and California (48.3%). According to the College Board, achieving a "C" or better in Advanced Placement courses improves students' eligibility for college, but only 9% of SFHS students are taking an AP course.

Focus group participants indicated that SFHS staff is supportive, but that due to the ratio of students to guidance counselors (which is 270:1), institutional support is limited. The rates of students enrolled in and passing A-G and AP courses, and taking and passing college entrance exams demonstrates that the school fails in ensuring students graduate college- and career-ready.

#### School Climate and Culture

The 2011 School Experience Survey indicates that students and parents mostly rate the school positively. 74% of students feel positive about the level of school support, 82% positively rate opportunities for learning in ELA and 77% for math, and 63% feel reasonably safe at school. 84% of parents agree/strongly agree that there are opportunities for involvement at SFHS, and 89% feel welcome at the school. The actual rates of parent involvement are not as high though; only 66% report high levels of home involvement in their child's education and 40% report high levels of school involvement (e.g. talking to teachers). Students in focus groups indicated that they want their parents to be more involved in their education (they should "know where you are and the progress you've made") and to encourage their academic pursuits however, they also noted that economic circumstances prevent parental involvement. A male student said, "my daddy works almost every day 12 hours and my mom, she's at home, but she has to take care of our little sister so when it comes to college fairs, they don't have the time to go with me."

Focus group participants were asked how school staff can support them. Students drew distinctions between magnet school teachers ("they really care") and teachers in the regular school, who are perceived as not caring ("I ask for help from the teacher and they respond with a sarcastic answer") and less competent ("a lot of teachers don't know what to do for the whole two hours," in reference to block scheduling). Small learning communities are perceived positively, because students know their peers better and teachers push students to do well. Students like opportunities for individual interactions with teachers ("small classes are better because we get more attention"). Coursework that is relevant and interesting is important, as one focus group participant noted that, "students give up on their studies because classes aren't interesting." SLC and magnet teachers' commitment to learning is a school strength.

Focus group participants noted that although SFHS has a bad reputation, "it's nothing like what they say" and that school "pride is what gets us through all that negative attention." Students acknowledged that SFHS needs improvements: "if we don't fix them, it's just going to be ongoing issues." Students are active in campus clubs and in the community, participating in the annual Cesar Chavez March and in groups like Pacoima Beautiful, Youth Speak, and the Science Club. SFHS has strong

collaborative partnerships with community-based organizations. During focus groups, students spoke very positively about organizations on campus, like Project GRAD ("they help the students know what to do and how to get to college"). SFHS has an excellent alumni network, including some of its current teachers, as well as State Senator Alex Padilla, LAUSD School Board Member Nury Martinez, and actor/comedian George Lopez.

Truancy rates at SFHS are extremely high at 84.71% in 2010-11, compared to the district (46.41%), county (36.14%), and state (29.76%). Student attendance rates are also a concern. In 2010-11 only 51% of students had a 96% or better attendance rate, so nearly half of SFHS students missed at least a week of school that year. These rates are a key reason why YPI and the Planning Team are working to implement a Full Service Community Schools model that actively involved students and parents both in and out of the school. Staff attendance rates are also a concern, as only 56% of staff had a 96% or higher attendance rate in 2010-11. This reflects a stronger need for teacher leadership and involvement, as well as expanded professional development that will be a part of the two schools as described ahead.

#### Analysis

The data above demonstrates that despite efforts to improve student achievement, San Fernando High School continues to struggle with persistent challenges. Focus group responses, academic achievement data and extremely high truancy rates suggest that students are not motivated to learn, nor interested in course content. Research on truancy and dropouts confirms that lack of motivation is common cause of absence or leaving school altogether. YPI's proposed Linked Learning model increases the relevancy of academic coursework by linking it to career technical education, and has been shown to increase students' motivation to learn.

Focus group responses and academic achievement data demonstrate need for increased support and professional development for teachers so they can improve instruction. This is reinforced by the SFHS School Experience Survey, where 39% of teachers disagree/strongly disagree that what they learn in school professional development addresses students' needs. Better support for teachers means improved professional development opportunities and a clear link to students' assessment data to help teachers tailor instruction and recommend students for additional interventions like afterschool tutoring. YPI's proposed blended learning and data-driven assessments and professional development will help address this deficit.

Focus group responses, parent responses on the School Survey, attendance and truancy data, and YPI's experience in operating schools with similar demographics indicate that many students lack adequate parent/guardian involvement in and educational support. YPI's proposed Full-Service Community School program will increase capacity of parents and family members, as well as provide opportunities for leadership and involvement in their children's education.

### ***2. Based on your analysis, please identify central and urgent issues/challenges hindering the school from improving student learning and achieving the vision of the successful future graduate and the school. What is supporting evidence that leads you to identify the items listed above as high priorities?***

There are three central and urgent challenges that YPI will address in order to achieve the vision of the successful future graduate outlined in Section A.1. (1) Classes are not relevant and students are unmotivated, (2) teachers do not receive sufficient support and professional development, and (3) students do not receive enough support at home.

#### Challenge 1: Classes are not relevant for students / Students are not motivated

Data and analysis above demonstrate that students are not interested in coursework and find few connections between academic content and real life, leading to low motivation to achieve. Research on truancy and high school dropouts confirm this. The report "Skipping to Nowhere" provides data on why LAUSD students are absent, based on interviews with students who report skipping school a few times a month or more. 61% of students report that they find school "boring and uninteresting, and the most chronic school skippers... find little connection between what they learn and what they want to be."

Research on high school dropouts confirms that disinterest in coursework is a major reason for dropping out. The report "The Silent Epidemic," based on focus groups or interviews with dropouts, found that 47% left school because "classes were not interesting" and students "reported being bored and



disengaged from high school." 69% of dropouts report that they "were not motivated or inspired to work hard." When asked how schools can support them to finish school, 81% of the dropouts "said there should be more opportunities for real-world learning and some in the focus groups called for more experiential learning. They said students need to see the connection between school and getting a good job."

This research indicates that closer connections between academic coursework and career technical education (CTE) will keep students motivated and engaged in their education, as these connections increase the real-world relevance of a high school education. An issue brief from the Association for Career & Technical Education aggregates research on CTE and reports that "high-risk students are eight to 10 times less likely to drop out in the 11th and 12th grades if they enroll in a career and technical program instead of a general program" and that students "had a decreased risk of dropping out of high school as they added CTE courses to their curriculum."

YPI's Linked Learning model will address challenge of the perceived irrelevancy of coursework by linking traditional academic coursework with CTE so students graduate college- and career-ready. YPI's LA CollegeReady model will increase motivation by helping students envision their future success. Staff will inform students about future college and career options and support them to achieve their goals by creating individual "road maps" with concrete steps students will take to become college- and career-ready. YPI anticipates that by making coursework relevant and motivating students, academic achievement in all areas will increase (please see section C.1. for evidence supporting this assertion).

#### Challenge 2: Teachers need better professional development and support to improve instruction

Though 61% of SFHS teachers report that what they learn in professional development (PD) addresses students' needs, academic achievement data suggests that teachers are not adequately implementing what they learn in PD meetings, that PD does not address students' needs, or some combination of the two. Given the low academic achievement of SFHS students and the central role of teachers, supporting teachers to improve instruction is a high priority.

Utilizing students' assessment data is critical for instruction. 81% of SFHS teachers report that they made decisions about instruction based on students' test data, but academic achievement suggests that teachers need more support in learning how to use data effectively.

YPI's Linked Learning and Blended Learning strategies outlined in section C.1. incorporate high quality professional development for teachers to implement the models with fidelity. Blended learning and other student assessment (see section D.1.) will be integrated into professional development to help teachers make data driven instructional decisions.

#### Challenge 3: Students do not receive enough support at home

YPI believes that students succeed when families are healthy, informed, and supportive, and evidence supports this. The National Center for Family & Community Connections with Schools (2002) synthesizes research on the effect parent involvement has on academic achievement, which includes higher test scores, higher grade point averages, better attendance, more classes passed/credits earned, and increased enrollment in challenging academic programs. The Harvard Family Research Project (2009) suggests "that family engagement promotes a range of benefits for students, including improved school readiness, higher student achievement...and increased likelihood of high school graduation." YPI's Full-Service Community School program will build capacity of parents to engage in children's education, through parenting workshops, college and career awareness, and leadership and advocacy education.

YPI has over a decade of experience providing education, technology, and training services in the San Fernando Valley where SFHS is located, and is familiar with barriers that prevent parents and family members from getting more involved in their children's education, such as language, poverty, and a lack of education. 2010 Census data indicates that 25% of households in the community around SFHS are linguistically isolated and that almost one-third of children live in poverty. 54.8% of adults over the age of 25 have obtained less than a high school diploma. YPI's Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood and Full-Service Community Schools program targeting five schools in the Northeast San Fernando Valley provides comprehensive wraparound services, including workforce training programs, ESL, and GED classes; these will support SFHS parents and families to more fully engage in their children's education.

YPI is confident that strategies below will address challenges to positively impact students.

### **C. SCHOOL TURNAROUND**

***1. Building on the priority areas identified above, what strategies must be employed to address each priority area? What do you expect will change as a result of implementing these? What is the underlying theory/research that supports why you believe the strategies, identified will dramatically improve student learning at your school?***

YPI proposes three primary strategies to address the challenges identified above: (1) California Partnership Academies and Linked Learning; (2) Blended Learning; and (3) integration into the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood/Full-Service Community Schools model of whole family support. These strategies will work in concert to improve academic achievement and postsecondary preparedness for students enrolled in the San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and the San Fernando Biotech Health Academy. While both small schools will utilize strategies, each school will have a distinct career theme built across the strategies. In addition, YPI will implement targeted academic interventions to increase student achievement and professional development for teachers to support improvements in instruction.

#### **Strategy 1: California Partnership Academies and Linked Learning**

The San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and the San Fernando Biotech Health Academy will follow the California Partnership Academy model and Linked Learning, which reform education by integrating career technical education (CTE) and support services. This will address the first challenge by making coursework more relevant and increasing students' motivation.

CA Partnership Academies (CPAs) are small learning communities within larger (and typically low-performing) high schools. The CPA model includes student cohorts that take core academic classes and at least one CTE class together; teacher teams linked to each cohort; and industry partnerships that provide student internships and work-based learning opportunities. CPAs are part of the linked learning reform movement, which promotes a similar model that includes: industry-themed pathways that integrate challenging academic, technical, and work-based learning components that and utilize project-based instruction and exposure to real-world experiences, as well as offering comprehensive support services.

SFDAA and SFBHA will both implement a hybrid model that combines CPA and linked learning elements. The hybrid model will feature: student and teacher cohorts, integrated academic core and career technical courses that follow industry-themed pathways and include project-based learning, industry partnerships for work-based learning, and comprehensive supportive services provided through the Full-Service Community School program (discussed in Strategy 3 below). The themes of each school will permeate the curricula to create the linked learning pathways of digital/media arts for SFDAA and health-medical for SFBHA. Details on each component of the linked learning instructional program include:

- a) **Standards-based curriculum.** SFDAA and SFBHA will provide a rigorous education for all students in line with the California State Standards. State and national, and eventually the Common Core, standards for core subject areas will provide a basic framework for instruction. Students will expand their knowledge, skills, and analysis through in-depth inquiry and exhibition projects.
- b) **Integrated core curriculum; integrated technical core.** The courses will meet the “A-G” eligibility requirements for admission to the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) systems and career technical education and be delivered through project-based learning to emphasize real-world context to provide relevance for students. The career curriculum will be based on industry standards. A sequence of related courses will reflect career technical education standards-based courses in health-medical and media-arts to provide students with career skills aligned to academic principles. These will fulfill academic core requirements. The James Irvine Foundation report, “Different Approaches to Dual Enrollment: Understanding Program Features and Their Implications,” demonstrates that dual enrollment programs can have significant benefits for underperforming students if integrated with a career focus (Edwards et al 2011). This integrated curricular approach of blending high school courses with support from local community colleges and businesses leads to greater engagement, accountability, skill-development, and learning for students in these programs. The researchers particularly recommend implementing this model “for youth who are low-income, struggling in high school, or part of a group that is underrepresented in higher education”. The researchers further note this method as one of the most effective ways of helping

disadvantaged youth access viable paths to college not only because it offers them direct exposure to college-level coursework, but because it builds confidence in students.

- c) Work-based learning. Work based learning opportunities will begin with mentoring (11<sup>th</sup> grade) and job shadowing and evolve into internships, apprenticeships, fellowships, part-time or full-time employment (12<sup>th</sup> grade and beyond). These opportunities will allow for the development of integrated skills applicable to the classroom and the workplace. Work-based or integrated learning promotes both learning and access to future educational and career opportunities according to the findings of a study conducted by WestEd and The James Irvine Foundation (Darche, S., Nayar, N., & Bracco, K. 2009). “[T]hemed programs enable schools to organize teaching and learning in ways that are inherently interesting to students, promote depth of knowledge across disciplines, and support strategic engagement of industry” (Grubb and Oakes, 2007). YPI’s experience operating San Fernando Institute for Applied Media and Sylmar Biotech Health Academy has resulted in strong partnerships that will be replicated at SFDA and SFBHA. For example, at the Sylmar Biotech Health Academy, YPI is developing a medical careers pipeline with UCLA, and partnerships with Mission Community Hospital, Providence Health & Services, HavenHealth, and Bella Vida Hospice Services that will benefit the San Fernando Biotech Health Academy.
- d) Career Technical Education. The programs of study at both SFDA and SFBHA involve a multiyear sequence of courses that integrates core academic knowledge with technical and occupational knowledge to provide students with a pathway to postsecondary education and careers. In a randomized trial, with six replicated studies running concurrently, researchers looked at the results of using Career and Technical Education (CTE) interventions in helping students with math performance. The experimental group did better on the ACCUPLACER exam (one of three used conjunctively to measure math performance) than the control group did. The researchers report that “Across six replications and all three posttests, 14 of the 18 differences showed the experimental classes scoring higher—a significant pattern of differences” (Stone, J. R., Alfeld, C., Pearson, D. Lewis, M. V. 2005).
- e) Interdisciplinary, project based learning. Students will understand how subjects relate to each other while achieving proficiency in core subjects. Teachers engage students by organizing curricula around central ideas, building on students’ prior knowledge, and connecting learning to students’ lives. According to a study by the America Connects Consortium, project based learning can lead to greater motivation on the part of students traditionally resistant to learning, and provide opportunities for interdisciplinary learning.
- f) Alignment and articulation. The school’s curriculum will align with UC and CSU A-G requirements, industry standards and career technical education and be articulated with postsecondary and vocational courses.
- g) Culturally-Relevant Instruction. Multicultural literature and cultural references will be integrated into the instructional experience to increase relevance of school in students’ lives. Background and culture of all students will be respected and valued. Both schools will embrace Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE) in educating students. Defined as adjusting how we teach to the needs and experiences of students, it uses the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of students to make learning encounters relevant and effective. Research affirms that culture, teaching, and learning are interconnected and that school achievement increases to extent that teaching employs the cultural referents of the students to whom it is directed (Gay, 2000).

There is ample evidence that YPI’s hybrid CPA and linked learning model will address the challenges and increase academic achievement. “A Profile of the California Partnership Academies 2009-2010,” (Career Academy Support Network at the University of California, Berkeley) a review of test scores, attendance, and graduation rates shows that 95% of seniors attending California Partnership Academies (CPAs) go on to graduate, compared with 85% of students statewide. The study found that 57% of CPA graduates fulfilled courses required for admission to UC or CSU systems, compared to 36% of graduates statewide. The report shows that even though 50% of CPA students enter the program as “at-risk students,” they perform better than students at other California high schools.

From a report compiled by the California Partnership Academies, a March 2007 study conducted by ConnectEd and the Career Academy Support Network at U.C. Berkeley found that students participating in programs modeled on Linked Learning, like partnership academies, were more likely to: pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) as sophomores, complete A-G requirements, and graduate from high school. CPA students passed the CAHSEE at a rate of 84% in ELA, compared to 76% of students in the general population statewide. In math, CPA students passed at a rate of 80% compared to the statewide rate of 74%. Moreover, the researchers found evidence to suggest that participation in these academically-centered, career-themed programs can “help narrow the achievement gap—with Black and Hispanic/Latino student CAHSEE pass rates surpassing those of similar students in other schools.” It found that 71% of Black students in Academies passed the math portion of the CAHSEE, compared with only 55% of all Black high school students in California. This study demonstrated that CPA students are more likely to complete the 15 A-G requirements: 50% of graduating seniors in Academies had completed the A-G requirements, while the statewide rate is 35% for graduating seniors. About 96% of CPA seniors graduate high school, compared to 87% of seniors statewide. Disaggregated data shows that “Hispanic/Latino and Black Academy students graduated respectively at rates 12 and 15 percentage points higher than the general student population.” The researchers concluded by positing the adoption of Linked Learning pathways as a promising and effective means of bridging the achievement gap between disadvantaged or struggling students. Similar to San Fernando High School, the student demographics of the studied group include those who exhibited at least three of the following four characteristics: having disadvantaged economic status, irregular attendance, low motivation, or low achievement levels.

The CA Partnership Academies model and linked learning will support continual improvements in academic achievement so that students graduate college- and career-ready from San Fernando Digital Arts Pilot School and San Fernando Biotech Health Academy.

#### Strategy 2: Blended Learning

Blended learning is the basis for the classroom structure for both SF Digital Arts and SF Biotech Health. It integrates technology and digital content with traditional teacher-led instruction. Blended learning has four key elements: small group instruction, integration of digital content, differentiation, and frequent and efficient data-driven instruction. During each class students rotate through different types of learning, including direct instruction with the teacher, self-paced digital content, and small group collaborative learning. Unique features in each component of the rotation are designed to address different styles of learning to accommodate all students (differentiation). The rotational structure increases personalized interactions between teachers as students, because direct instruction targets one small group of students within the classroom, while the other students engage in collaborative work or self-paced digital content. In a blended learning classroom, effective instructional time is maximized, which leads to better student outcomes and higher teacher satisfaction. Blended learning is exciting because students have daily opportunities for personalized learning and teachers have the opportunities, time, and resources to differentiate small group instruction.

One of the keys of successful blended learning implementations is to not look at it as putting computers in the classroom or just adding technology; instead it is about marrying good instructional processes with technology. Digital content is carefully reviewed and selected to complement direct instruction. It includes built-in regular assessments that are both used by the teacher to target instruction, and used to guide the next module of digital content. Students can self pace, so learning is accelerated.

Through digital content, students get extra practice when they need it, and can move ahead of their class when they have mastered concepts. In addition, because teachers can look at data on a frequent basis, they can quickly identify when a student is struggling and intervene. In a traditional classroom, the teacher might not know until a student takes, and fails, a test that the student is struggling. Digital assessments help teachers engage in data-driven instruction with real-time information on each student's level of achievement. This also allows teachers to tailor direct instruction for small groups of students, which is reinforced by self-paced digital content. The differentiation inherent in blended learning will support all students to achieve, but will be especially valuable for English Learners and students with disabilities, the

two subgroups at the school identified as high priorities. Differentiation accommodates multiple learning styles to help each student master content and skills they need.

Learning is further reinforced during small group collaboration, where students engage in project-based learning in groups of four. Small group learning develops students' habits of mind and teaches skills like teamwork, communication, and leadership. It also promotes peer teaching and learning as students help each other with group projects.

In addition the innovative classroom rotation, the blended learning program also includes:

- a) Technology Integration. By implementing technology with the curriculum, the schools will ensure that students learn computer skills while pursuing academic and professional goals. In his report, "Does It Compute?" Educational Testing Services researcher Harold Wenglinsky found that if computers were used for drill or practice, they typically had a negative effect on student achievement. If used with real-world applications student achievement increased.
- b) Developing a "habits of mind" disposition will help students solve problems. Blended learning's differentiation demands that students develop multiple skills (listening to the teacher, reading digital content, teaching other students in small groups) that promote development of "habits of mind." They include: persistence; thinking and communicating with clarity and precision; managing impulsivity; gathering data through all senses; listening with understanding and empathy; creating, innovating; thinking flexibly; responding with wonderment and awe; metacognition; taking responsible risks; striving for accuracy; finding humor; questioning and posing problems; thinking interdependently; applying past knowledge to new situations; and, remaining open to continuous learning.
- c) The Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces (ALEKS) program is a Web-based assessment tool and learning system that uses artificial intelligence to adapt to the skill level of the individual through an adaptive questioning process (used during the self-paced digital content component of the blended learning rotation). ALEKS assesses what a student knows and is not familiar with in a given course or subject and then instructs on the topics s/he is most prepared to learn. Its adaptive learning system has been shown to be consistently accurate, and tailored to the specific learning needs and pacing of each individual student participant. ALEKS will be used in mathematics classes, and similar adaptive learning digital curricula will be used in other blended learning classes.
- d) Success for All (SFA) will work to improve performance in English language arts. SFA integrates reading, writing, and oral language development programs. It is a school-wide reform model aligned with the small group rotation of blended learning; SFA restructures classroom instruction to include daily 90-minute reading blocks where students are grouped by reading ability. SFA supplements instruction with intervention: certified teachers serve daily as tutors to struggling readers reading at below grade-level. SFA includes comprehensive training for participating schools. Based on studies of nearly 4000 students spanning more than 70 elementary schools across the U.S., SFA demonstrated a "medium to large" positive effect on alphabetic, comprehension, and general reading achievement. Moreover, based on cumulative research done by over 30 different institutions over the past two decades, SFA has demonstrated success in increasing reading achievement, especially in cutting the achievement gap between African American, Hispanic, and White students. SFA has also been shown to better prepare teachers to support the needs of English Learners.

An example of a blended learning classroom may include: (1) teacher direct instruction on the history of World War I; (2) small group collaboration to create propaganda posters (which integrates history with ELA, as students practice persuasive writing); and (3) self-paced digital content where students analyze news clips. For students in group 3, digital assessments of news analysis determine whether they can move on to a new topic or if they need additional review.

Blended learning is relatively new, but early results demonstrate effectiveness at increasing academic achievement. After one year of implementation at an Alliance charter high school, blended learning helped increase ninth graders' proficiency in math by 35% and in ELA by 10%. Year-end results of blended learning at KIPP Empower Academy are also impressive. 96% of students scored Proficient/Advanced in reading, which represented a 49% gain of Advanced students from the beginning of the year and a 39% gain of Proficient students. Only 4% of students were reading a Basic or Below Basic level.

Education Elements, a national pioneer of developing and implementing blended learning in classrooms, also reports that students are more motivated in a blended classroom, because the content is more engaging, they are learning in ways they learn at home (on computers, online, in groups), and the content moves at a more natural pace, removing some of the frustrations of being behind or held back. Students take more ownership of their learning because they can track their progress, which again is motivating and impacts achievement. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, because the role of the teacher changes and the teacher has the time and resources to differentiate instruction, students get more targeted support and achievement goes up as a result.

### Strategy 3: Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood and Full Service Community Schools

San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and San Fernando Biotech Health Academy will be integrated into YPI's Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood (LAPN) through a Full-Service Community Schools model. LAPN creates a seamless cradle-through-college/career continuum of solutions with excellent schools. Promise Neighborhoods is one of President Obama's signature anti-poverty programs through the U.S. Department of Education and YPI was awarded a planning grant targeting high poverty neighborhoods and schools in Hollywood and Pacoima. San Fernando Digital Arts and Biotech Health are LAPN target schools, along with 13 other public and charter schools. The LAPN model is based closely on YPI's two Full-Service Community School (FSCS) programs targeting nine public schools in Pico Union and Northeast San Fernando Valley. In 2012, Academic Performance Index (API) scores from these schools demonstrated an average 23.9 point increase over the previous year. YPI is the only agency in the nation to have two currently funded FSCS programs from the U.S. Department of Education.

LAPN will supplement the instructional strategies discussed above with comprehensive support services provided through a FSCS program, led by a full-time, on-site Coordinator. FSCS brings together academic support, arts and humanities enrichment, physical education and health, violence and gang prevention, leadership and civic engagement, and college and career awareness activities for students. FSCS also serves families and community members with parenting classes, health education, financial literacy, leadership and advocacy training, and broadband access and training. A key part of YPI's vision for the Digital Arts Academy and Biotech Health Academy is that students cannot succeed academically and prepare for college if their family situations are unstable, so the FSCS program will work with families to identify and address critical needs. In cases where YPI's FSCS staff do not provide a direct service, staff are well-versed in community resources and will utilize YPI's extensive partnership network in the San Fernando Valley to provide appropriate referrals for students and family members.

Students at the Digital Arts Academy and the Biotech Health Academy will share most FSCS services, with the exception of academic support. Academic support, such as before- and after-school tutoring and supplemental instruction, will be coordinated and aligned with each school's classroom instruction. Through LAPN, the Digital Arts Academy and Biotech Health Academy will each have a full-time Academic Coach, who is a fully credentialed teacher, and four part-time Tutors, who are college students or graduates who have completed YPI's Tutor Training Program. The FSCS Coordinator will work closely with the Academic Coach and Tutors assigned to each school to ensure that classroom learning and academic support services are aligned. Each Tutor will work with 40 students (20 per semester) for at least 30 hours per student, with a focus increasing achievement in math, one of the priority areas for improvement.

FSCS services for students will help address areas of concern that are important factors in student success, though not directly tied to academics, such as increasing physical activity to improve health or providing arts and humanities enrichment.

Full-Service Community Schools have an established research base of moderate evidence of effectiveness for academic support for low-income and at-risk youth. Axelroth (2009) describes case studies of eight community high schools whose results include an increase of school attendance rates, a significant percentage of graduates being accepted into college, higher graduation rates, and increased benchmarks in both reading and math; all of these are SFDA and SFBHA priority areas for improvement. Whalen (2002) reviews results of a three-year evaluation of the Full-Service Schools Initiative (FSSI) in Chicago and reveals that rates of attendance and truancy of FSSI schools were better

than the rates at Chicago Public Schools, and school academic performance was much improved, equaling or exceeding comparison schools.

#### Targeted Interventions

In addition to linked learning, blended learning, and Full-Service Community Schools, San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and San Fernando Biotech Health Academy will offer targeted interventions for struggling students:

- a) Supplementary math programs like Voyager will be available for students to use in the classroom and at home and will have particular benefits for English Learners. Students performing at FBB/BB levels will benefit from the instruction that is direct, systematic, and sequenced to build on concepts. The program adheres to the schools' curricula and bases measurements on those standards. Moreover, the program incorporates the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' (NCTM) Curriculum Focal Points, and aligns content to grade-level expectations as set forth by the NCTM Content Standards. Voyager blends curriculum-based and teacher-led instruction with student-centered technology to accelerate students struggling in math toward reaching grade-level goals. Based on Voyager's "National Vmath Student Performance Initial/Final Assessment Effect Size: 2006-7" report, students showed between a .75 and 1.3 annual gain in math performance, signifying "tremendous improvement from the beginning to the end of the year on their pre- and post-test scores." At one of their partnering sites, students showed two years' growth "from a 5.2 grade level equivalent to 7.4" in one year's time based on the STAR math assessment.
- b) Khan Academy is aligned with blended learning's self-paced digital content, and will be available in school and at home to provide learning opportunities and remediation for students. Khan Academy is a free online-learning community that provides over 2,600 micro lectures via video tutorials on YouTube that span academic topics (such as mathematics, history, chemistry, astronomy, biology, and physics). This system utilizes an exercise system that generates practice problems for students based on skill level and performance. It creates tests, grades assignments, highlights challenges of individual students, and encourages students who are doing well to help struggling classmates. This allows parents, teachers, and educators to see any student in detail via real-time class reports. Teachers can use this to better target interventions and plan more challenging lessons. This tool has a customized self-paced learning tool that offers students a dynamic system for getting targeted help.
- c) Specially Designated Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) Strategies, the approach to teach academic courses to English learner (EL) students in English, will include integrating multicultural, interdisciplinary activities like media into every lesson. ELs will have plenty of SSR (or self-selected reading) and pleasure reading time to develop literacy and comprehension. Teachers will be advised to use facial and bodily expressions, limit lecture time, engage students in cooperative learning, and have lots of visuals and graphic organizers that reinforce both written and spoken words. Graphic and interdisciplinary learning, when coupled, have shown positive effects on ELs.

#### Professional Development

Professional development (PD) at San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and San Fernando Biotech Health Academy will increase teacher and principal effectiveness to improve student academic achievement. Professional development will engage the principal and teachers in ongoing collaborative reflective practice, analysis of relevant real-time student performance data, and thoughtful discussion about best practices in instruction. Student assessment results will be used to drive PD (e.g. student assessments will be used to identify weaknesses and PD time and resources will be used to address them).

Teachers will participate in a two-week summer institute, followed by five full days of in-service professional development days during the school year. The school's schedule will provide at least weekly collaboration time to analyze student work and data, assessment design, instructional planning, curricular integration, program coordination, and individualized attention to student needs. Weekly staff development opportunities will be structured into the bell schedule on Tuesdays. Teachers will be provided a common planning period to meet regularly to plan the program activities and curriculum, coordinate with business representatives, meet with parents, and discuss student progress. Teams

including both academic and technical teachers will collaborate to plan and implement integrated project-based units throughout the year. All PD will be aligned to the mission and goals of each Academy.

SFDAA and SFBHA will use Robert Marzano's *Art and Science of Teaching* to promote the academic success of all learners. Teachers will strive to for an effective classroom pedagogy comprised of: (1) research-based instructional strategies; (2) management strategies that promote collaborative partnerships and a community of learning; and (3) classroom curriculum design strategies. They will ensure that students clearly understand what they are learning and why they are learning it as well as track and assess their progress toward clearly articulated learning goals. Teachers will work to establish effective teaching and learning to move students toward conceptual understanding and independent transfer/application of key knowledge and skills.

SFDAA and SFBHA will use Marzano's iObservation, an active online instructional improvement system that integrates longitudinal data from classroom walkthroughs, teacher evaluations, and teacher observations and identifies effective professional development opportunities to address weaknesses. iObservation includes three segments (routine events, enacted on the spot, and interacting with knowledge) that each have design questions that support effective teaching. These questions range from student behavior, teacher management support, organizing students for learning, using scales/ranges, communicating individual and group goals, and helping student with new knowledge strategies and their outcomes.

SFDAA and SFBHA will seek technical assistance from the Los Angeles Small Schools Center (LASSC), the first regional Linked Learning Center supported by ConnectEd and the Irvine Foundation. LASSC has experience working with LAUSD schools to develop linked learning pathways, and offers training and technical assistance on small school design, learner-centered schools, developing an effective advisory program for students, and project-based learning. SFDAA and SFBHA will also seek professional development opportunities through ConnectEd: The California Center for College and Career, a statewide linked learning authority. ConnectEd offers PD on developing linked learning curricula and pathway development, as well as ConnectEd Studios, an online platform for students and teachers with integrated curriculum units, multimedia resources, and project planning tools.

SFDAA and SFBHA will also seek technical assistance from Education Elements, a pioneer in blended learning that has helped with implementation at other Los Angeles-area schools. Education Elements customizes professional development to address the needs of the school and teachers. By design, the PD provides opportunities for differentiated instruction based on the unique needs of participants and incorporates different learning modalities. The training allows participants to experience blended learning in action. The sessions simulate a classroom rotation model where participants rotate among 3 stations: direct instruction, online learning and small group collaboration.

SF Biotech Health Academy teachers will utilize free teacher training opportunities and research-based curricular programs on health science content based on current biomedical research through the University of Texas Health Science Center's Teacher Enrichment Initiative. The school will also apply to the Amgen-Bruce Wallace Biotechnology Lab Program, a free educational outreach program that combines intensive professional development training for teachers with state-of-the-art resources and materials that enable teachers to implement the biotech curriculum in their classroom. In addition to the curriculum and supplies, the Lab provides three-week loans of research-grade lab equipment so students can experience an authentic laboratory experience in their classroom.

SF Digital Arts Academy will continue to work with Planning Team member Marco Torres, who has provided professional development to YPI's San Fernando Institute of Applied Media and was instrumental in developing and overseeing a previous media arts program at San Fernando High School when he was Education Technology Director and Media Coach. Mr. Torres has been honored as CA Teacher of the Year in recognition of his innovative use of technology to empower minority students. He is also a professional filmmaker and photographer whose digital storytelling skills add value to his curriculum. SFDAA will explore professional development opportunities through the International Digital Media and Arts Association (iDMAA), and will send teachers to its annual conference.



***2. Describe the culture and climate central to turning around your school that aligns with the instructional philosophy above. Why do you believe it is one that will turn around your school? What research supports actions you plan to take and changes you expect to see?***

The academic climate at both San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and San Fernando Biotech Health Academy will be characterized by clear, high expectations for all students, a personalized and supportive learning environment, and a focus on college- and career-readiness. Emphasis will be placed on student achievement and positive postsecondary outcomes by challenging students to develop problem-solving and interpersonal skills and linking rigorous college preparatory curricula with technical coursework focused on digital arts or biotech health. Both schools will reinforce the vision, mission and instructional program discussed above through a focus on excellence and the goal to develop a culture that practices a commitment to excellence, integrity and responsibility in everyday work. Hard work, creativity and innovation will be the norm and established through continuous quality improvement, engagement of parents and families as partners in the education of each child, an environment that fosters trust, commitment to excellence and responsibility, personal and institutional integrity, and avoids conflicts of interest and appearances of impropriety. YPI's schools will be characterized by a culture of high expectations and support. The schools will be respectful of and attuned to the diversity of students' interests, strengths, and ways of learning. Learning activities will be designed to challenge students and use a variety of methods to teach and assess learning.

SF Digital Arts and SF Biotech Health will both utilize the small learning community approach to educate students, the same structure as the California Partnership Academies discussed earlier. A small learning community allows for development of close and personal student-adult connections, particularly between teachers and the students in their daily advisory period. Teachers will become more engaged and involved in the lives of their students, and students will consistently receive praise, encouragement, and assistance each day along with personal support for dealing with challenges. Teachers will motivate students and connect learning with their interests to keep students actively engaged. Students will be provided with opportunities to set goals, make decisions and reflect on their learning.

There is a significant body of research touting the benefits of small learning communities. From the ERIC Educational Reports, the academic benefits of small schools include test scores of students that are consistently higher than those in larger schools (McComb 2000; Jacobson, February 28, 2001). Administrators of small schools are better able to reform their curricula and teaching strategies, and small group instruction and interdisciplinary methods allow greater contact between student and teacher because teachers tend to be more aware of student performance, thus increasing student accountability.

Research shows that students in a smaller school setting experience a greater sense of belonging that is fostered by the more caring interpersonal relationships in these smaller learning environments (Capps 1999). The research suggests that small-school settings enhance students' self-perceptions, both socially and academically, and faculty at small schools are also more aware and involved, which promotes positive student attitudes (McPartland). Student school involvement and engagement are also key attributes of small learning communities. Research shows that on measures of attendance and school safety and discipline, "small schools have higher rates of attendance than large schools" (Gewertz 2001).

A college-going and career culture will be fostered on a daily basis through the career themes of each school and postsecondary education programs. College and career awareness will be embedded in every school day at SF Digital Arts and SF Biotech Health. Students will see why they need to learn what they are learning and be reminded of the dreams their parents have for them and which they have for themselves. Learning will be rigorous and meet college entrance requirements. Students will reach high levels of English and math, generally four years of each, in addition to completing substantial coursework in science, social studies, and in their respective industry themes of digital arts for pilot school students or biotech health for network partner school students. Graduates of both schools will be qualified to attend college and encouraged to do so. Students will go on field trips to universities and be continuously exposed to various careers and institutions including trade schools. The goal is to expose students to and prepare them for various educational and career pathways.

School culture will also be characterized by parent and community involvement, an integral aspect to school culture. The Full-Service Community School program at SF Digital Arts and SF Biotech Health will invite parents and community members on campus to support and engage students and to further their own learning and knowledge. There is moderate to strong evidence of effectiveness that parental involvement in the education of their children has a positive effect on academic achievement. Nye et al (2006) conducted a meta-analysis of parental involvement and its effects on student academic achievement across achievement domains. Under the random effects model, the overall achievement effect of parent involvement was  $d=0.45$ . The authors concluded that there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between parent involvement and student achievement. The Harvard Family Research Project (2009) suggests “that family engagement promotes a range of benefits for students, including improved school readiness, higher student achievement...and increased likelihood of high school graduation.” Henderson and Berla (1994) reviewed 66 studies concerning parental involvement linked to student achievement and concluded that when parents are involved in the education of their children, academic achievement increases. Keith, et. al. (1993) examined data from 21,814 students and parents from the National Education Longitudinal Study and concluded that parental involvement has a strong effect on the academic performance of eighth graders in all subjects, but with especially strong results in math and social studies. A parenting education study (Hara & Burke 1998) analyzed an inner-city parent involvement program in Chicago, Illinois and revealed that students are not the only ones who benefit from parent involvement. Active participation by parents in their child’s education results in increased interest in and desire for educational and learning opportunities for themselves. The Hara and Burke study also found that “social capital—the relationships and interactions among people—also increases when school-home partnerships are formed.” Similarly, a Harvard Graduate School of Education study (Henderson and Mapp 2002) discovered that students with involved parents are more likely to earn higher grades and test scores; achieve grade promotion, and graduate and go on to post-secondary education. A study of 81 high-poverty Title I schools by Westat and Policy Studies Associates (2001) found that three practices of teacher outreach lead to a 40-50% faster gain in reading and math. Those teacher outreach practices included meeting families face-to-face; providing materials for home instruction; and regular parent communication. This evidence makes it clear that parental and community involvement at the San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and San Fernando Biotech Health Academy will be of great benefit to the students and is an essential part of each school’s culture.

The school will also use the community to enhance and contextualize classroom learning. Students will participate in community activities from field trips to long-term volunteer work. Through service learning activities, students will see themselves as vital contributors to their own community. They will connect classroom learning with real life projects to enhance their understanding and motivation. They will learn to be active participants in community life.

### ***3. How will you engage your school community, faculty, staff, students, and parents so that they understand and effectively implement elements of the instructional philosophy and turnaround plan?***

San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and San Fernando Biotech Health Academy will engage the whole school community, including students, faculty, staff, and parents, in implementing the transformation plan as discussed in detail below.

#### ***a. Given your community context, what needs to be true for your colleagues, students, and parents to join you in the transformation of our school?***

In order for parents, teachers, and students to be authentic collaborators in the transformation plans for SF Digital Arts and SF Biotech Health, the community context must be taken into account to make sure activities and materials are linguistically appropriate, culturally competent, and inclusive. The school community must be knowledgeable about challenges and how the transformation plans will address the challenges to increase academic achievement and prepare students for college and careers. Educating the school community about the transformation plan will increase all stakeholders' engagement in implementing the plan.

YPI's Full-Service Community Schools model that emphasizes extensive outreach and services to students and families as part of the Promise Neighborhood initiative will provide strong support for this engagement. Services provided will include case management, supportive services, and linkages between the school and home. The ultimate goal is establishment of personal relationships with each family enrolled in the two schools to leverage their support and assistance with the implementation of the instructional philosophy and turnaround plan.

YPI will build on LAUSD Public School Choice workshops that have educated parents and community members about the PSC process, understanding school data, and plans for school improvement. Services will build upon the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood focus groups, workgroups, and community outreach that have taken place in the NE San Fernando Valley. Ongoing community engagement activities will continue to increase parents', students', and community members' knowledge and understanding of school choice, in addition to building capacity related to specific school turnaround plans for the San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and San Fernando Biotech Health Academy, including linked learning and the California Partnership Academy model, blended learning, and the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood initiative and Full-Service Community School model.

Continual outreach for teachers and school staff will be provided through regular professional development and school leadership roles, such as on the local school site council and eventually the Governing School Board and other leadership teams discussed above. Parents will also take a leadership role in governing, and will maintain a strong participation role through quarterly community meetings that take place after school and provide an ongoing assessment of progress toward meeting goals and objectives established for the two new schools.

According to 2010 U.S. Census data, approximately 90% of the community around SFHS are Latino, and roughly 50% are foreign born. 25% of households are linguistically isolated, of which 30% are monolingual Spanish-speaking families. As such, all community workshops and printed materials will be in English and Spanish. Meetings and events will be offered at times sensitive to the needs of working parents, so that all parents have an opportunity to participate in their child's education. For parents whose schedules preclude their attendance, follow up materials will be made available in print and online (again, in both English and Spanish).

Students must also be educated about school transformation plans so they can take an active role in school improvement. Workshops for parents and community members will be open to students. Workshops will begin with an educational component (for example, an overview of blended learning models) and then participants will engage in breakout groups for discussion and to give feedback on what they heard during the educational presentation. Parents and students will be invited to join separate groups to encourage participation by all attendees. In addition to verbal feedback that will be captured by a YPI notetaker, participants will have the option to provide written feedback. This feedback will be used to continually improve school turnaround plans, which will serve to increase parent, student, and community member buy-in for the plans.

The San Fernando Digital Arts Academy already has the support of a core group of teachers, who are part of the Planning Team (please see Section F). YPI will invite other SFHS teachers and staff to orientations on the school turnaround plans for both the SF Digital Arts Academy and SF Biotech Health Academy (network partner). The orientations will be an opportunity for teachers and staff to learn more about instructional reforms and school culture and to get involved in the schools. Similarly to the parent/ student/ community member workshops, YPI will elicit teacher and staff feedback to increase buy-in.

***b. Given your community context, how are you going to share, communicate, and generate interest and excitement about your plan for turning around your school?***

Once the school community is educated about school challenges and the SF Digital Arts and SF Biotech Health turnaround plans, YPI and school staff will deepen community engagement by tailoring activities to each stakeholder group (students, parents, teachers, and staff).

SF Digital Arts Academy and SF Biotech Health Academy will hold a Grand Opening Celebration prior to the start of the school year to generate excitement and to start orienting students to

the new school culture and instructional plans. The new Principals will welcome students on campus and will provide school overviews. Teachers will address students, and community-based organizations will have tables in a Resource Fair. There will be music, educational games, and physical activities to promote a fun atmosphere that gets students excited for the school year. Students will be able to meet their classmates and teachers, as well as sign up for sports, clubs, and other extracurricular activities.

SF Digital Arts Academy and SF Biotech Health Academy will work with YPI to engage parents and family members to allow for them to become facilitators of learning. Parents will become the driving force in instilling school expectations, a positive work ethic, and self worth. With the inclusion of parents the school will bring in a vast array of cultures and skill sets. The school will convene a monthly Parent Advisory Board for parents to receive information, share information, and give feedback to the school personnel, as well as plan activities that address school issues and concerns. The Parent Advisory Board designs activities that increase effective parent involvement in the education of their children at school and in the community. For example, some of the activities focus on helping parents understand how to: create a home environment that encourages learning; express high expectations for their children; help their children form a vision for their own future; and communicate successfully with school officials. In addition to the Parent Advisory Boards, both schools will urge parents to attend at least two parent workshops during the school year, and strongly encourage them to volunteer at the school. There will be a specific goal of a minimum of 30 parent volunteer hours each school year.

Teachers and staff at the schools will be members of the local site council, where they will be an integral part of school leadership and decision-making processes. In both schools, the professional culture will be characterized by a community of learners. The schools will nurture collaboration and a community of practice among staff to connect with the school mission, vision and goals and focus on improving student outcomes. The collective staff will also serve as a model for students for what it means to be a life-long learner. The schools will be committed to supporting staff and teachers by providing ongoing opportunities for professional growth and development. Creating a community of learners will require attention to team-building, setting norms for collaborative work, and inclusion of teachers in important educational decisions. Teachers and administrators will continually seek to develop themselves as professional educators and human beings. Peer relationships will include coaching, mentoring support and opportunities for professional development and frequent informal discussions on educational issues. Problems and weaknesses will be openly recognized, and there will be a candid search for improvements. The values of serving students, professional development, and self-renewal will be central to the culture. Promoting and supporting this professional culture that values teachers and staff will generate excitement about the two schools.

## **D. IMPLEMENTATION**

### ***1. How will you monitor the implementation of your proposed turnaround efforts?***

Both SF Digital Arts Academy and SF Biotech Health Academy will benefit from integration into the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood, as this data-driven initiative includes a sophisticated longitudinal data system called Efforts-to-Outcomes (ETO). ETO will aggregate each student's academic assessments, attendance, enrollment in extracurricular programs, and service utilization (e.g. tutoring, case management) and produce real-time customized reports for teachers, administrators, parents and students so that all stakeholders have a full understanding of students' progress, areas for improvement, and steps for academic and personal growth. ETO has a built-in Early Warning System that tracks academic progress and identifies students whose grades or test scores drop below a specific level. These students will receive academic interventions like before- or afterschool tutoring. The Early Warning System incorporates LAUSD's framework for risk of dropping out (developed in the Diploma Plus intervention program) to monitor and intervene with at-risk students. ETO will be instrumental in measuring and reporting individual and school-level progress on leading indicators so that teachers and other staff are aware of any trouble areas and can quickly respond. ETO will track the academic indicators in Table 5, as well as the process-oriented indicators discussed below.

<b>Table 5: Academic Outcomes &amp; Assessments</b>			
<b>LEARNING</b>	<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT METHODS</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT</b>
<b>English/ Language Arts</b>	<p>On quarterly assessments, at least 75 % of students will demonstrate proficiency on grade- level content standards, with emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• grade-level appropriate reading with comprehension</li> <li>• speaking with clarity and meaning</li> <li>• thorough and analytical response to historically and culturally significant works of literature</li> <li>• clear and effective oral expression</li> <li>• clear and well structured persuasive writing</li> </ul> <p>95% of students will demonstrate growth and improvement from one quarterly assessment to the next.</p>	<p>State Mandated Tests Portfolios of written work Teacher developed and textbook assignments and assessments Oral presentations Faculty-developed rubrics Classroom Projects Semester Capstone projects Presentation of Learning year-end projects Senior Project Benchmark assessments (4Sight, Gates MacGinitie, NWEA Maps) Summative assessments (Study Island)</p>	<p>Annually Quarterly  Daily  Quarterly Ongoing  Ongoing Each semester  Annually  Senior Year Quarterly  Every 3-6 weeks</p>
<b>Mathematics</b>	<p>On quarterly assessments, at least 75 % of students will demonstrate proficiency on grade-level content standards, with emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understanding of formal logical reasoning</li> <li>• application of logical reasoning analytic and symbolic processing arithmetic and algebraic manipulation and</li> </ul>	<p>State Mandated Tests Portfolios of mathematical work evaluated with school- and classroom developed rubrics, NWEA MAPS Teacher developed and textbook assignments and assessments Classroom Projects</p>	<p>Annually Quarterly  Daily</p>

	<p>construction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number sense</li> <li>• skills in measurement and geometry data analysis, probability, and statistics</li> <li>• algebraic thinking</li> </ul> <p>95% of students will demonstrate growth and improvement from one quarter assessment to the next.</p>	<p>Semester Capstone projects</p> <p>Presentation of Learning year-end projects</p> <p>ALEKS assessments, Study Island assessments</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Each semester</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Every 3-6 weeks</p>
<b>History/ Social Science</b>	<p>On quarterly assessments, at least 75 % of students will demonstrate proficiency on grade- level content standards, with emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge of important events and ideas in Historical &amp; Social Analysis; World History, Culture, and Geography: The Modern World; US History &amp; Geography: Continuity and Change in the Twentieth Century; and Principles of American Democracy and Economics</li> <li>• intellectual reasoning</li> <li>• research skills</li> <li>• chronological and spatial thinking understanding of different points of historical and social sciences analysis</li> <li>• historical interpretation</li> </ul> <p>95% of students will demonstrate growth and improvement from one quarterly assessment to the next</p>	<p>State Mandated Tests</p> <p>Portfolios of work evaluated with school- and classroom-developed rubrics</p> <p>Teacher-created and textbook assignments and evaluations</p> <p>Classroom Projects</p> <p>Semester Capstone projects</p> <p>Presentation of Learning year-end projects</p> <p>Senior Project</p> <p>Data Director (or equivalent)</p> <p>standards-based assessments</p> <p>Study Island assessments</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Quarterly</p> <p>Daily</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Each semester</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Senior Year Quarterly</p> <p>Every 3-6 weeks</p>
<b>Science/ Health medical</b>	<p>On quarterly assessments, at least 75 % of students will demonstrate proficiency on grade- level content standards, with emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• proficiency in the fundamental concepts and terms of various branches of science, including Earth Science, Biology &amp; Life Sciences, Physics, and Chemistry</li> <li>• skills in investigation</li> <li>• skills in experimentation</li> </ul> <p>95% of students will demonstrate growth and improvement from one</p>	<p>State Mandated Tests</p> <p>Portfolios of work evaluated with school- and classroom-developed rubrics</p> <p>Teacher-created and textbook assignments and evaluations</p> <p>Classroom Projects</p> <p>Semester Capstone projects</p> <p>Presentation of Learning year-end projects</p> <p>Senior Project</p> <p>Data Director (or</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Quarterly</p> <p>Daily</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Each semester</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Senior Year Quarterly</p>

	quarterly assessment to the next.	equivalent) standards-based assessments Study Island, ALEKS assessments	Every 3-6 week
<b>Spanish Language Arts/ Heritage Language</b>	Students will demonstrate mastery of CA Foreign Language Standards	Portfolios of work evaluated with school- and classroom-developed rubrics Teacher-created and textbook assignments and evaluations Classroom Projects Semester Capstone projects Presentation of Learning year-end projects	Quarterly  Daily  Ongoing Each semester  Annually
<b>Technology/ Media Arts</b>	Students will demonstrate mastery of National Technology Standards and CA Media Arts Standards	Portfolios of work evaluated with school- and classroom-developed rubrics Teacher-created and textbook assignments and evaluations Classroom Projects Semester Capstone projects Presentation of Learning year-end projects	Quarterly  Daily  Ongoing Each semester  Annually

**Table 6: Process-Oriented Indicators**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Metric</b>
Students report learning is relevant to their futures	80% of students agree/strongly agree on annual student survey that what they're learning is relevant to their future
SFDAA and SFBHA create a college-going culture	100% of students complete a college "road map" with necessary steps to get to college (e.g. pass A-G sequence)
Teachers are trained to implement linked learning and blended learning	100% of teachers complete PD trainings
Parents/family members are engaged at SFDAA and SFBHA	90% of students have a parent/family member at school orientation and parent-teacher conference; 75% of students have a parent/family member participate in a Full-Service Community School activity.

***2. What are the most significant barriers you foresee to successfully implementing the strategies, practices, programs, policies, etc. identified for turning around your school?***

Transitioning part of San Fernando High School from a traditional school to two small schools, the San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and the San Fernando Biotech Health Academy, will be a challenge, as any changes to the status quo inevitably are. YPI's experience with opening and operating new small schools through previous rounds of Public School Choice will be invaluable in addressing this challenge. YPI currently operates pilot middle school San Fernando Institute for Applied Media and network partner high school Sylmar Biotech Health Academy, and anticipates facing similar transition challenges to those experienced with the two other schools. YPI has successfully created collaborative leadership teams focused on improving students' academic performance, which are a key part of a successful transition, so YPI will replicate the policies and practices that had a positive impact on creating effective collaborative leadership, and use lessons learned to avoid pitfalls. For example, the principal's style of leadership proved to be critical in the development of the leadership team, so YPI will seek to hire principals who exhibit qualities that facilitate collaborative decision-making, such as flexibility and active listening skills. In developing effective collaborative leadership teams at SF Digital Arts and SF Biotech Health, YPI will need to invest significant staff resources to recruit, interview, and hire appropriate team members. Support from LAUSD will be required to mediate issues that may arise, such as the division of classrooms and other space on campus.

YPI has experience implementing linked learning and Full-Service Community Schools, but the implementation of blended learning at SF Digital Arts and SF Biotech Health is new for the organization. There are a few challenges associated with blended learning. It will be challenging to effectively integrate self-paced digital content with traditional instruction, as teachers will be required to learn a new set of skills. Teachers will also be expected to engage in thorough data-driven instruction. Effective use of data in the classroom is very uneven between schools and classrooms currently, so this may be new for some teachers. YPI will address these challenges with professional development on blended learning, beginning with a summer institute prior to the start of the academic year, and continuing with regular training throughout the school year. Training and technical assistance from blended learning specialists, like Education Elements, would be an excellent resource for the two schools.

An additional barrier to successfully implementing the transformation plan outlined above will be funding. In addition to the professional development needed to implement blended learning, funding for technology (hardware and software) will also be required. Funding is needed to develop linked learning pathways. Funding for Full-Service Community School staff and program supplies will also be needed. YPI has already submitted a Promise Neighborhood implementation application to the U.S. Department of Education in September 2012 that, if successful, will help cover the majority of these costs.

YPI's Development Department has an excellent track record of obtaining funding for the schools we operate, including the two Public School Choice schools operated by our agency. For example, YPI raised \$1.4 million in the first 14 months alone for programs and services at San Fernando Institute for Applied Media Pilot School. YPI only just began operations at Sylmar Biotech Health Academy in August 2012, but has already received funding from Verizon and Pacific Gas & Electric Company for the school. Both PSC schools and the SFHS small schools are part of the pending Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood implementation grant for extensive Full-Service Community Schools services.

YPI has already secured funding for services at the SFHS schools. This includes operation of the San Fernando Valley Youth Work Source Center (\$1 million annually) which specifically target services to students at the school. YPI is a partner with the City of Los Angeles in the US Department of Labor funded LA Reconnections Career Academy to help out-of-school youth return to school and at-risk students remain in school. This specifically target San Fernando High School students (as one of six locations throughout the city) and will provide \$1.45 million over three years to serve youth with education, career, and supportive services. YPI's Development Department will continue to submit public (federal, state, and local) and private funding proposals to directly support education and training services at SF Digital Arts and SF Biotech Health in support of the instructional model described in this proposal.



## **E. ALTERNATIVE GOVERNANCE MODELS AND AUTONOMIES**

### ***1. What alternative governance model have you chosen? What is your rationale for selecting this governance model? Why do you believe this model will best support the successful implementation of your proposed plan?***

YPI will open the two small schools in the Network Partner model. YPI and the Planning Team plan to work with LAUSD to transform the San Fernando Digital Arts Academy (SFDAA) into a Pilot School in the second year of operation, while the San Fernando Biotech Health Academy will remain a Network Partner school. SFDAA will apply for Pilot status because the school's vision aligns strongly with the vision embraced by the Pilot school movement, and is a strong model for student academic achievement. Equity and diversity are embedded in all practices at SFDAA. Teaching and learning as described in this proposal are purposeful, challenging, and have value beyond school. Assessment demonstrates the competence of students in multiple ways, while students and teachers know each other well through an Instructional model that targets face to face interaction. SFDAA nurtures and models democratic values through the structure and organization of the school governance as described below.

Congruent with the pilot schools vision, SFDAA decisions will be made with teachers and parents as leaderships and as close to the learner as possible. Collaborative practices implemented will improve teaching and learning as documented by academic gains at the other Pilot School implemented by teachers working with YPI, the San Fernando Institute for Applied Media (SFiam).

SFiam will also be a feeder school so that students can continue instructional success achieved at the middle school level to high school and maintain this success through graduation and into college and careers. YPI has operated the San Fernando Institute for Applied Media Pilot School since August 2010. During the past two years under joint YPI/teacher leadership, SFiam has increased its API score by 75 points (55 points in 2011-12 alone) and now stands at 704. This is 10 points higher than the 2012 API score of San Fernando Middle School, which underwent transformation in PSC 1.0 on the same campus. Students graduating from SFiam need a local pilot high school that continues the digital/multimedia career theme and offers a high quality academic program. This pilot school pipeline is required to continue these students' track record of success through high school graduation and college and careers.

The Planning Team and teachers embrace pilot school autonomy and accountability to create learning conditions based on data and research that will change and improve the school's educational structure and procedure. They will be engaged in the life and decisions of the school to ensure continuous improvement in teaching and learning and emphasize leadership, professional collaboration and governance that support student achievement.

The San Fernando Digital Arts Academy Pilot School will use governance autonomy to create a culture of shared leadership by incorporating faculty input into decision-making and focusing on high expectations for student performance. Teachers will develop a clear and agreed upon Elect to Work Agreement, and members of the school community will be empowered to make decisions to create a more collaborative school culture. The decision making process will include the creation of collaborative teams (see below) intended to provide opportunities for teachers, students, families and community members to be engaged and involved in various aspects of the school's life and leadership. Teams will include: governing school council, leadership team, interdisciplinary academic teams, content-based team, full faculty, advisory board, student forum, and the parent leadership council.

The Governing School Council will set and maintain the school's vision; select, supervise, and evaluate the principal (with final approval from the superintendent); and approve the budget. Four faculty members will be on the governing board to ensure that teachers are represented and have a voice in school leadership. The Planning Team will assist with the initial and continual plan and design of the school. Interdisciplinary academic teams will develop instructional practices to improve teaching and learning; coordinate and develop curriculum; use protocols for discussion and peer observation; and, make proposals for school-wide changes based on their work. Additional teams and committees, including an instructional leadership team (described below), will be created in accordance with the school's vision and mission to enhance the school community and increase student academic achievement.

As a Pilot School, SFDAA will govern itself and ensure that faculty, school community partners, and parents have autonomy to determine the school's scheduling, calendar, staffing, professional development, budget, and governance. SFDAA will model distributive leadership and several groups will contribute to shared decision-making.

The primary purpose of the Governing School Council will be to maintain the mission of SFDAA. The board will include the Principal, four (4) teachers, four (4) YPI staff, two parents/community representatives, and one student for a total of twelve members. The board will oversee school progress, hiring, Principal evaluation, the budget, school policies, and the elect-to-work agreement. The governing board will meet monthly. Members will be selected annually by a vote of the entire school community, including YPI, teachers, and parents.

The Leadership Team will collect and use data to coordinate operational and instructional decision-making at SFDAA. It will be comprised of the principal and teachers. They will meet every two weeks to communicate about school issues, analyze data and make recommendations for improvement. Interdisciplinary Academic Teams will meet bimonthly to share content knowledge and strategies, design curriculum and share instructional practices that support the school's interdisciplinary approach. The Teams will make recommendations to the Leadership Team for school-wide changes in curriculum and instruction based on this collaboration.

Content-based teams will meet weekly to develop curriculum coherence within each core content area. They will research and identify best practices and support content area pedagogy schoolwide. The Content-based teams will make recommendations to the Leadership Team for school-wide changes in curriculum and instruction based on their collaborative work.

The full faculty will meet once per month. Full faculty meetings will provide shared leadership and decision making groups to communicate collaborative work with the full staff and create a space for the entire faculty to make decisions on whole-school-related issues.

The Advisory Board will report to the principal and support school administration and leadership. It will consist of faculty, community representatives, business leaders, family representatives, and students who will meet once every two months. They will provide guidance and direction and inform and connect SFDAA to outside resources.

The Student Forum will meet every week with an Advisor to develop and plan student activities. Two Student Representatives from the Forum will be Governing Board members.

A Parent Council will meet in collaboration with Families in Schools and YPI to create and implement parent leadership, parent involvement and parent education at SFDAA.

## ***2. What autonomies do you anticipate you will need to effectively implement the plan elements? What is your rationale for requesting these autonomies?***

Please see the Waiver Checklist. The Planning Team requests autonomies for both schools for: methods of improving pedagogy; assessment; budget control, teacher assignments; curriculum; scheduling; professional development; and mutual consent requirement. Upon applying for pilot status for SFDAA in the second year of operation, the school will include an elect to work agreement.

Methods of improving pedagogy include all of the elements described below.

Assessment- The schools requests waivers for use of local interim assessments. Improvements in student performance are central to the school mission. The schools will collect student data that describe the student body within the schools (e.g. grade level, gender, race/ethnicity) and relationship to the high school, as well as student performance on a variety of outcome measures. Multiple academic measures will include indicators of performance (e.g., attendance, retention, credits, grade point averages, state test scores, graduation rates, college going rates). Technical learning will be assessed through measures that include knowledge of health-medical and media-arts field terminology, technical concepts, and ability to apply English, math, and other academic skills to real world projects. The schools will analyze the data and report them accurately and fairly to provide any evidence of impact.

Budget Control – The schools request waivers for Budget control to ensure effective organizational planning by approving long-range goals and annual objectives, monitoring the general policies, and overseeing that school resources are managed effectively.

Teacher Assignments - YPI selected the Network Partner model for autonomy and accountability. It supports the school missions, visions, structures and programmatic elements. The schools request waivers to address the section of the collective bargaining agreement that deals with an elect to work agreement, thin contract and staffing. This waiver for an elect to work agreement, staffing, and thin contract will allow the schools to achieve mission to prepare students for academic success in high school, post-secondary education and professional careers, encourage students to be responsible and active participants in the community, and enable students to become life-long learners. Teacher Assignments include High Qualified Teachers in core subjects. Teachers will have an appropriate credential in their subject matter based on NCLB requirements for highly qualified teachers. In addition, regular planning and professional development time will allow teachers to improve their practice.

Curriculum- YPI will provide core academic curriculum that is evidence-based, culturally relevant, meet learning needs of students and address California state standards. The schools request waivers as per locally-determined curriculum. The schools will provide a clear connection between use of curriculum/instruction autonomy and vision/mission of the school, as well as the needs identified in the data summary analysis in Section B. The instructional team will be given flexibility, but also provided with clear expectations, in how they plan and deliver instruction. Emphasis will be on development of multiple instructional strategies to improve student outcomes, especially in efforts to improve outcomes for English Language Learners.

Scheduling- Local Instructional Schedules/Strategies Waiver Request as School Calendar and schedule (Block Schedule) are organized to maximize student learning and common planning time for staff. Autonomy will be used to create school calendars and schedules that are organized to maximize student learning and staff common planning time and allow for flexible periods that include long blocks of instructional time to meet student learning needs. This time will also support integrated curriculum and work-based learning opportunities.

Professional Development- The schools will use PD autonomy to provide professional development that incorporates teacher-driven and teacher-supported components. Student and staff performance will drive professional development for teachers and the principals at the schools. The goal is to increase teacher and principal effectiveness to increase student academic achievement outcomes. Professional development will engage the principals and teachers in ongoing collaborative reflective practice, analysis of current relevant real –time student performance data, and thoughtful discussion about best practices in instruction. Student assessment results will be used to drive PD (e.g. standardized test scores will be used to identify weaknesses and PD time and resources will be used to address them). Professional Development Autonomy dedicating resources for professional development in topics that include project-based learning; 3) and, maximizing learning by directing budget resources to lowering class size and student loads. Autonomy will help ensure that per pupil state and district funds are spent on programs, resources, and services that will benefit students and families.

Mutual consent requirement for employees- this waiver will allow the schools to achieve their mission to prepare students for academic success in high school, post-secondary education and professional careers, encourage students to be responsible and active participants in the community, and enable students to become life-long learners. The waivers will contribute to the success of the schools' instructional program to link rigorous college preparatory curriculum with technical coursework through the industry-themed digital arts and biotech/health focus. These waivers will allow innovation and success in delivering relevant and effective curriculum, instruction, and professional development strategies that contribute to the academic success of students.

## **F. SCHOOL PLANNING TEAM**

The YPI Planning Team is well-positioned to operate the two small schools. LAUSD selected YPI through the first round of PSC to operate the San Fernando Institute for Applied Media (SFiam) (formerly part of San Fernando Middle School), and in the third round to operate the Sylmar Biotech Health Academy (part of Sylmar High School). YPI leverages this experience operating two PSC schools with additional experience operating two charter schools in Los Angeles. As well, the YPI planning team operates numerous education programs that will support services and offer strong experience in serving area youth. These include YPI's Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood, and two Full-Service Community Schools program at nine area schools that will be a model for services. YPI and partners also provide targeted outreach to in and out of school high school age youth in partnership with LAUSD in a YPI City of Los Angeles Youth WorkSource Center and a \$12 million U.S. Department of Education Workforce Innovation Fund program led by the City of Los Angeles in partnership with LAUSD and YPI that works directly at San Fernando High School and six other schools throughout the City of Los Angeles. The program re-enrolls out of school youth in school and places them in education and employment.

### ***1. Who are the members of your planning team?***

The School Planning Team key members include parents and other community leaders that volunteered time on School Transformation Workgroups conducted as part of Public School Choice and other initiatives targeting schools in the NE San Fernando Valley. Each member is selected for expertise with at least one component of successful community schools in Los Angeles.

Members of the planning team were identified through a fair, equitable, transparent process that reflected willingness to work, their stake in the school community, and commitment to change using elements in this narrative. The Team includes faculty, staff, parents, students and community members. A strong source of participation for Planning Team members at SFHS has been the Promise Neighborhood outreach, and the services of the SFHS community on the Workgroups, as part of PN implementation and LAUSD Public School Choice. This includes direct parental involvement on plan writing/development as discussed below. Members of the Planning Team attended the majority of the meetings. They worked as members of the team to create the overall plan; and each played a significant role in writing or supporting the writing of specific sections of the plan. Evidence supporting the roles played by members of the Planning team is held by YPI, and includes evidence of workgroups, focus groups, surveys, sign-in sheets (for planning, design, and review meetings completed by teachers, staff, and parents).

Dixon Slingerland is the Executive Director of YPI, a position he has held since 1996, and is the leader of the Planning Team. Dixon was selected as Planning Team Leader due to his wide experience providing education services for the past sixteen years, as well as leading four public schools in Los Angeles. He leads over 1,200 staff at 125 program sites providing services for low-income communities and families in poverty. Under his leadership, YPI has grown from having an annual budget of less than \$1 million to a \$35 million annual budget. He is the Board President for YPI Charter Schools, including Bert Corona Charter School and Monsenor Oscar Romero Charter School. He received a Bachelor's degree in American Studies from Stanford University. He oversaw and created the vision and specific plan elements working with the Planning Team and overseeing all components.

Iris Zuniga is the YPI Chief Operating Officer. She received a Master's degree in Public Administration from California State University at Northridge and Bachelor's degree in Sociology and Chicano Studies from the University of California at Los Angeles. She previously worked as YPI's Chief of Staff and Director of Youth Services and served as the District Representative for then State Senator Richard Alarcon when she created the Valley Education Collaborative; implemented the "Got College!" program; and carried out a SAT enrollment campaign. She handled the day to day administration of the planning process, and coordinated participation efforts with teacher members.

Yvette King-Berg is the Executive Director of YPI Schools. An accomplished professional with a diverse background in academic administration, secondary, elementary, and early education, she is pursuing a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Fielding Graduate University. She has an Administrative Services Credential and a Master's degree and a Professional Clear Teaching Credential.

Ms. King-Berg was previously Vice President of School Development and Advocacy-Southern California for the California Charter Schools Association. She has also worked as a K-12 classroom teacher. She leads the educational planning and curriculum writing and directly oversaw the creation and integration of all instructional elements that make up this plan.

Ruben Dueñas is the Chief Operations Officer for Bert Corona and Monseñor Oscar Romero Charter Schools. He previously served as the Principal of Bert Corona Charter School for four years. He received his multiple subject teaching credential from CSULA and a Master's Degree and credential in Educational Administration from California State University Dominguez Hills. He was an Assistant Principal and Required Learning Administrator for Belvedere Middle School in East Los Angeles. He supported Ms. King-Berg with the educational writing and instructional review for the school plans.

Los Angeles Unified School District teachers and administrators on the Planning Team that contributed to plan development/proposal writing and narrative review include Veronica Marek, Olivia Robledo, Angie Garcia, and Maria Reza. Marco Torres is a Technology Consultant that has worked for the past two years with SFiAM and SFHS to provide support for educational technology services and programs in the school plans. Teachers have worked to establish the vision for the school, notably through implementation efforts at YPI's SFiAM Pilot School and ongoing technology efforts at SFHS. They assisted in the development of instructional methodology and technology integration, reviewed all plan elements, and worked with YPI staff to ensure that the plan meets educational and community needs.

Stan Saunders has served as the YPI Director of Development since 2002. He has written grant proposals for local, state, federal, and private funding that have raised over \$140 million in education, workforce development, and technology programs, and will lead efforts to develop expanded funding sources for educational programming at the schools. He holds a BA from the University of California, Santa Barbara and a MA from the University of California, Riverside. He and Heather Fukunaga (YPI Development Associate) have had primary responsibility for writing the school plan while coordinating with the entire Team to establish one voice and integrating all required instructional elements.

Parent involvement on the Planning Team and in creation of the schools is discussed below.

## ***2. In what ways did you engage parents in the development of your plan?***

Over the past two years, YPI and partners have conducted extraordinary outreach to parents, students, and other community members at San Fernando High School. As part of the Promise Neighborhood planning process targeting school and community transformation in Northeast San Fernando Valley, YPI engaged SFHS parents in primary data collection to ensure their opinions and ideas are integral parts of the school transformation plan. Parents of students attending SFHS established a leadership role by completing 108 surveys (16.2% of surveys collected). YPI facilitated four focus groups with SFHS students and families that discussed avenues of reform and change. YPI staff also led two asset mapping walks around SFHS with students and parents, which were an opportunity to identify areas of need (e.g. safety concerns) and community strengths. YPI conducted interviews with SFHS staff, including one with the Principal. YPI used this data to develop the school turnaround model, and developed a complete SFHS School Plan for Public School Choice that YPI also incorporated into our Promise Neighborhood implementation proposal to the U.S. Department of Education in 2012.

Parents participated in the plan writing by contributing specific ideas for implementation in the meetings and workshops described above. Once a draft plan was prepared, YPI held a parent check-in meeting and incorporated their feedback into the final draft. Parents were enthusiastic about the school choice options the two new schools will provide, as well as the differentiation in blended learning. YPI will incorporate additional parent suggestions during implementation, including school uniforms, a schedule where teachers switch classrooms instead of students, and teacher-led workshops on curricular content so parents know what their children are learning.

## Public School Choice 4.0 Waiver/Autonomy Checklist

**School Site:** San Fernando High School

**Proposed School/Design Team Name:** San Fernando Digital Arts Academy and San Fernando Biotech Health Academy / Youth Policy Institute

**Proposed Governance Model** (mark all that apply):

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional             | <input type="checkbox"/> Pilot                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Expanded School Based Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Initiative School | <input type="checkbox"/> Affiliated Charter              | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Assistance Partner     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Network Partner | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full Network Partner |   |

**Waiver/Autonomy Requests**

Mark all the autonomies requested in your plan and provide a page reference to where the rationale for the request can be found in the narrative of the application.

**x Methods of improving pedagogy.** Rationale on page(s): 26-27

*School-determined methods to improve pedagogy and student achievement, such as articulation between grade levels and departments, intervention strategies and intervention/special support programs (such as parent contacts, homework clinics, directed focus of services to assist struggling students and after-school reading rooms or math coaching on a rotating basis).*

**x Curriculum.** Rationale on page(s): 27

*Locally determined curriculum (subject to State and District minimum curriculum standards); local instructional standards, objectives, and special emphases (supplementing District standards).*

**x Assessments.** Rationale on page(s): 26

*Local interim benchmark assessments, tests and pacing plans, aligned with and equivalent to District requirements (e.g., GATE, Algebra Placement), and complying with any State and Federal requirements.*

**x Scheduling.** Rationale on page(s): 27

*Local instructional schedules and strategies, 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).*

☐ **Internal organization.** Rationale on page(s): \_\_\_\_\_

*School's internal organization plan, such as division into academies, small learning communities, houses etc. within the assigned student population.*

**x Professional development.** Rationale on page(s): 27

*Local professional development plans aligned with the School's Instructional Plan/Single Plan for Student Achievement, except as to training relating to legal/compliance mandates.*

x **Budgeting control.** Rationale on page(s): 27

*General fund budget control, pursuant to the District's evolving site-based funding system, which currently provides local discretion but neutralizes the impact of differences such as those among certificated staff salaries, and subject to the other applicable related district requirements such as those governing "guided purchases."*

x **Mutual consent requirement for employees.** Rationale on page(s): 27

*A requirement for "mutual consent" by school and applying employee with respect to the filling of UTLA-represented, site-based openings at the school, meaning no District-mandated priority placements, but school must still comply with return rights or other placement rights to the school that are created by legal mandates or by the District-UTLA Agreement.*

x **Teacher assignments.** Rationale on page(s): 27

*Local process/methods for determining assignment of teachers to grade levels, departments, subjects and classes (e.g., looping, team-teaching, ungraded instruction, multi-age classrooms).*

☐ **Staff appointments (e.g., department chairs).** Rationale on page(s): \_\_\_\_\_

*Local process/methods for selecting teachers as grade level or department chairs, coordinators, deans, instructional coaches, etc.*

☐ **Discipline & codes of conduct.** Rationale on page(s): \_\_\_\_\_

*School's student discipline guidelines and code of student conduct, aligned with the District-wide standards and rules governing student conduct, suspensions, expulsions and transfers.*

☐ **Health and safety.** Rationale on page(s): \_\_\_\_\_

*School's health/safety matters, aligned with District-wide health/safety mandates.*

☐ **Additional Waivers:** (list waivers requested) \_\_\_\_\_

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*Applicants selecting "Additional Waivers" must provide a rationale for the request(s) by completing the Waiver-Side Letter Request Form (Appendix D). These additional waivers are subject to separate consideration and approval from the District and UTLA before becoming effective.*



## Striking API Gains for YPI Schools

October 2012

### Increase of 55 Points in API for SFIAM

The San Fernando Institute for Applied Media (SFIAM) achieved an increase of 55 points in the Academic Performance Index (API) in 2012. SFIAM is a teacher-led pilot school and a model of in-district reform for LAUSD. In the two years since YPI and teachers began operating SFIAM on the campus of San Fernando Middle School as part of LAUSD's Public School Choice Initiative, the API has increased by 75 points to 704.

### Tops in Los Angeles for English Learner Gains

YPI's Monsenor Oscar Romero Charter Middle School achieved the highest English Learner growth of any school in Los Angeles with an astounding API gain of 147 points for our English Learner population. English Learners are 74% of the school's total enrollment. In the last two years Monsenor Romero's English Learner API has grown by 202 points, and the overall school API has increased by 68 points.

### YPI Schools Average API Gain of 27 Points

YPI Schools saw an average 27 point gain in API scores in 2012. YPI is the only agency in Los Angeles operating both charter schools and in-district schools like the pilot school SFIAM and the new Sylmar Biotech Health Academy. Over the last two years YPI Schools have seen an average API increase of 60 points.

### Full-Service Community Schools Show 24 Point Gain

Congratulations to the nine schools in our Full-Service Community Schools program that saw an average gain in API of 24 points! YPI is funded by the U.S. Department of Education with two Full-Service Community Schools grants that target nine LAUSD and charter schools in Pico Union and the Northeast San Fernando Valley. The Full-Service Community Schools program boosts academic achievement by offering a comprehensive array of services for students and parents.

#### Quick Links

[About Us](#)

[YPI  
Locations](#)

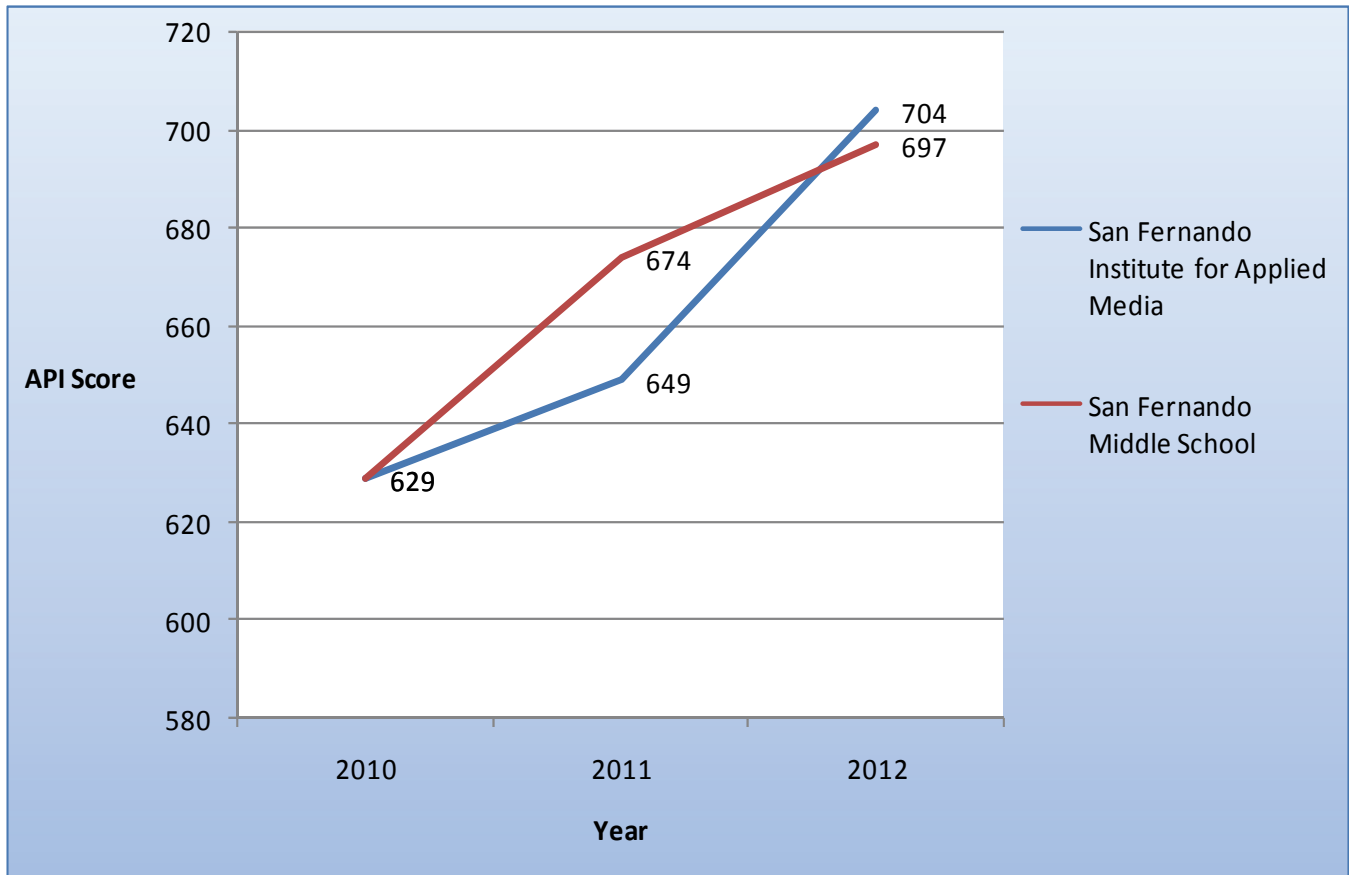
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Dixon  
Slingerland](#)





## API Scores: YPI's San Fernando Institute for Applied Media and San Fernando Middle School



Through Public School Choice, YPI began operating San Fernando Institute for Applied Media (SFiam) for the 2010-11 academic year on the campus of San Fernando Middle School. After two years, YPI has helped SFiam increase its API score by 75 points. In only the last year SFiam increased its API score by 55 points and surpassed San Fernando Middle School's API score.

# Full-Service Community Schools

## Full-Service Community Schools Overview

The Full-Service Community Schools Program provides wraparound education and community services to assist youth and families attending four schools in the Pico-Union/Westlake community of Los Angeles and five schools in the San Fernando Valley. YPI received one of only ten grants awarded in the U.S. Department of Education's first round of Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) grants. YPI's FSCS integrates multiple services into a unified program that includes AmeriCorps tutoring, the Carol M. White Physical Education Program, and the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood. Details on all of these programs are below.



### Program Goals and Objectives

The goal of Full-Service Community Schools is to improve student academic achievement and well-being by offering comprehensive and high-quality services. The following are the program's main objectives:

- Support with the improvement of student academic achievement
- Support with improving student attendance and reduce tardiness
- Support with reductions of misbehavior write-ups and suspensions
- Increase student well-being in a range of health indices
- Improve school campus safety
- Increase parent involvement in their children's education.

### Services Provided

- Mentoring and Youth Development Programs
- AmeriCorps Remedial Education and Academic Enrichment Services
- Parenting Education and Parent Leadership Development
- Community Service and Service Learning
- Programs for students who have been Truant, Suspended or Expelled.
- Professional development for teachers to integrate community school resources
- Carol M. White Physical Education Program



### Partnering Community-Based Agencies Include:

- LAUSD
- Friends of the Family
- Aztecs Rising
- Meet Each Need With Dignity (MEND)
- Phoenix House
- Northeast Valley Health Corporation
- Unusual Suspects
- World Vision
- El Nido Family Centers

**The nine schools supported by YPI's Full-Service Community Schools program increased their API scores by an average of 24 points in 2011-12.**

## AmeriCorps



AmeriCorps places members in Los Angeles County and San Fernando Valley elementary and middle schools. As AmeriCorps members, they have the responsibility of creating and implementing a tutoring system, in collaboration with on-site staff and YPI Staff, to provide 30 hours of intensive Literacy tutoring to a minimum of 20 students at their assigned site. As a part of a National Service Program, members also participate in an intensive volunteer movement by participating and engaging others in community service activities to provide 3,200 volunteer hours.

### Program Highlights

- YPI AmeriCorps had a 100% retention rate for AmeriCorps members and met 100% of program goals.
- NCLR granted YPI an additional \$30,000 for year 2 because of year 1 successes.

## Carol M. White Physical Education Program



The Carol M. White Physical Education (PEP) grant provides resources to expand and enhance physical education programs and fitness enrichment activities to combat the growing incidence of childhood obesity in Los Angeles. In collaboration with school and community partners, the program has worked on numerous efforts in order to increase the physical activity levels and healthy food intake of 5,500 students at nine target schools. All program activities support four goals:

1. Increase students' physical fitness and well-being, social and emotional development, healthy eating habits, and ability to engage in a life-long healthy lifestyle.
2. Provide a comprehensive health and well-being program at all schools serving high-risk students.
3. Increase teacher and staff capacity to implement a systematic and comprehensive health and well-being program for all students.
4. Increase parent/guardian knowledge of the Carol M. White PEP, nutrition and enrichment programs and promote parent-child conversations about fitness, nutrition, stress and goal setting.

### Program Highlights

- From January to June, the percentage of students engaged in 60 minutes of daily physical activity increased by 104%
- From January to June, the percentage of students meeting the USDA dietary recommendations of 3 or more servings of vegetables and 2 or more servings of fruit per day increased by 107%.

## Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood



The Youth Policy Institute (YPI) was awarded a one-year Promise Neighborhoods planning grant from the federal government to help transform the schools and communities of Pacoima and Hollywood. The Promise Neighborhoods program is President Obama's signature anti-poverty initiative and will bring cradle-to-college-and-career services to low-income communities.

During the planning year, LAPN conducted a needs assessment of the two target communities, including door-to-door surveys, focus groups with youth and adults, and asset mapping around target schools. The needs assessment was used to create an implementation plan with a comprehensive continuum of solutions that will improve educational outcomes and promote the healthy development of our children and families.

### Program Highlights

- LAPN provided 300 backpacks to students in Hollywood and Pacoima to kick off the 2011-12 school year.
- College Panel Tour: a panel of 4-5 college students visited 11 schools to talk to youth about the importance of attending college and what college life is like; youth filled out "I'm Going to College" pledge cards and signed the College Panel Tour banner.
- Students from Hollywood and Pacoima had the opportunity to go on one of five college field trips during the summer, including to UCLA, UC Santa Barbara, and UC San Diego.
- LAPN collected over 1,700 surveys from youth and community members during the needs assessment.

### Program Locations:

Camino Nuevo Charter Academy  
Esperanza Elementary School  
Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars  
Kingsley Elementary School  
Pacoima Charter School  
Bert Corona Charter School  
James Jordan Middle School  
John Liechty Middle School  
Maclay Middle School  
Monseñor Oscar Romero Charter School  
San Fernando Institute for Applied Media  
Sun Valley Middle School  
Vaughn Next Century Learning Center

### Contact

**Website:** <http://www.ypiusa.org>

#### Email

Full-Service Community Schools: [FSCS@ypiusa.org](mailto:FSCS@ypiusa.org)

Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood: [LAPN@ypiusa.org](mailto:LAPN@ypiusa.org)

Americorps: [agil@ypiusa.org](mailto:agil@ypiusa.org)

Carol White: [aaguirre@ypiusa.org](mailto:aaguirre@ypiusa.org)

#### Phone

(213) 688-2802 or (818) 899-5550

# Public School Choice Plan for San Fernando High School

## Blended Learning Classroom Example

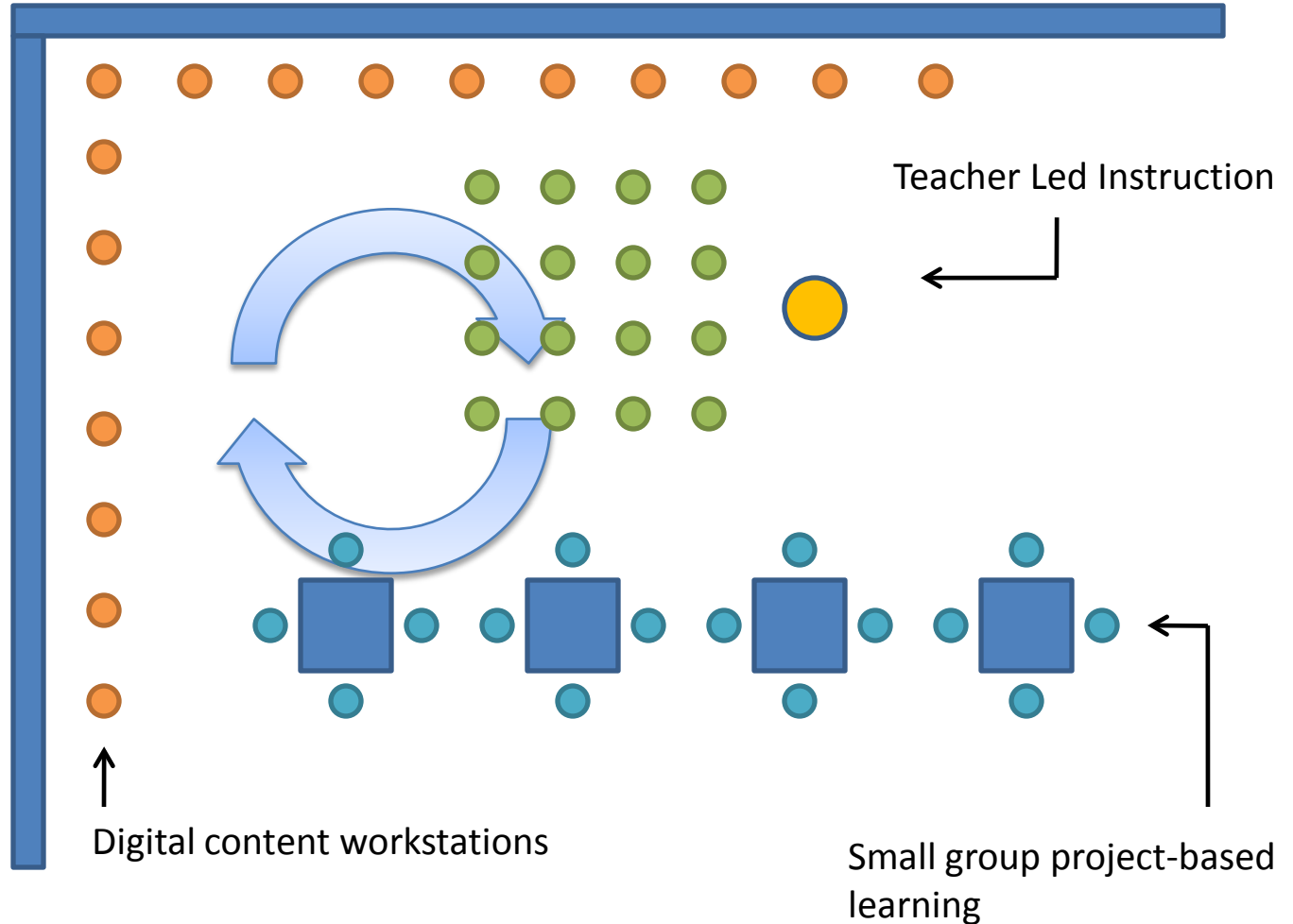
Students rotate in their groups through each type of learning.

● Group 1:  
students engage in self-paced digital content

● Group 2:  
Teacher-led direct instruction

● Group 3:  
collaborative project-based learning

● Teacher



# With Vision and Determination, YPI's Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood Charts Its Own Path



By Patrick Lester, *Building Neighborhoods* blog

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While tightening national, state and local budgets are posing significant challenges for much of the country, at least one local Promise Neighborhood grantee seems undeterred.

Combining its long-held vision with an aggressive approach to fundraising, the Youth Policy Institute (YPI) is charting its own path in Los Angeles, sustaining a growth trajectory seldom matched in the nonprofit community in good times or bad.

In so doing, this new UNCA member may become a model for others, making a virtue of necessity by accomplishing transformative change with the resources at hand.

## Two Neighborhoods: Pacoima and Hollywood

One of the more interesting choices made by YPI during the lead up to its Promise Neighborhoods application was the decision to focus not on one Los Angeles neighborhood, but two: Pacoima and Hollywood. Of the two, Pacoima was the easier choice because of YPI's long-standing presence there. Moreover, poverty and economic distress have been a fact of life in this San Fernando Valley neighborhood for more than 50 years. Today "most businesses in the area consist of pawn shops, liquor stores, check cashing outlets, storefront churches, and automobile repair shops," according to its Promise Neighborhood proposal. The neighborhood's population of 32,000 is largely Hispanic (92%) and about a quarter of its families live in poverty.

In also choosing to include Hollywood, however, YPI took a chance. Nationally, Hollywood is seen as the home of the entertainment industry, a chosen destination for many Americans. But the reality is far different. With more than 36,000 people living on the streets annually in Los Angeles County Service Planning Area 4 (which includes Hollywood), including many homeless youth who are runaways and vulnerable to exploitation, poverty rates in the target neighborhood are actually higher than

in Pacoima. "Prostitution, drug dealing, tourist robbery, and pan handling are all easy (and criminal) alternatives to gainful employment in Hollywood," according to the proposal.

This need was one reason to include Hollywood. Another was that it was a good place to scale up the existing efforts in Pacoima. The target neighborhood is comparable in size (37,382). It also allowed the project to take advantage of a new YPI-operated FamilySource Center with \$1 million in annual city funding — one of 16 that comprise a signature citywide anti-poverty initiative focused on academic achievement and increasing family income.

## The Saturation Model

That work is actually just the latest manifestation of YPI's ongoing commitment to neighborhood-level work, one that predates its Promise Neighborhood application by many years. In 2004, when its Executive Director, Dixon Slingerland, saw a *New York Times Magazine* cover story on the Harlem Children's Zone, he already knew that this was what YPI was all about. "That was what we were building toward," he said.

At the time, YPI was already developing what it calls a "Saturation Model" — a comprehensive community-based strategy that includes afterschool programs, mentoring, parent engagement, case management, college preparation, tutoring, and family support services, all of which have shown strong evidence of effectiveness. The strategy has already substantially increased academic achievement at a large elementary school in Pacoima that was converted into a charter school in 2003, and YPI's own charter and pilot schools.

When then-Senator Obama announced in 2007 that as President he would support the creation of 20 Promise Neighborhoods, Slingerland was determined that YPI would become one of the 20. "Really, we spent three years thinking about Promise Neighborhoods, getting

ready for Promise Neighborhoods, talking about Promise Neighborhoods,” he said.

The long lead-time helped. So too did several other factors. One was YPI’s significant internal capacity. Today, YPI has an annual budget of \$35 million and more than 1,200 staff at 125 program sites in L.A. This capacity is the result of an aggressive grant seeking strategy that has resulted in 50 percent growth each year for the past 6 years.

It has also landed more than \$11 million in related federal grants just since September. Those grants include \$2.25 million from the Department of Education’s Carol White Physical Education Program, \$750,000 from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) for 15 Los Angeles high schools, \$5.6 million from the Department of Commerce for 80 computer centers, and the second of two Full-Service Community Schools grants from the US Dept. of Education (\$2.5 million).

YPI also substantially benefited from its long-standing work with schools. It currently partners in various ways with more than 70 schools throughout the city. It also runs three schools of its own, including two charter schools and a pilot school, and plans to open more charters and Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) network partner schools in 2011, targeting Hollywood and Pacoima.

“YPI is one of our really great partners,” said Monica Garcia, president of the board of the LAUSD. “Its work in the Promise Neighborhood will take advantage of our public school choice process, where outside agencies and teacher teams are applying to operate and turn around schools and give parents a real choice between traditional, charter, pilot, and network partner schools.”

A final factor in the project’s success was the support of a large number of committed partner organizations. This was further leveraged by support from an innovative local collaborative of foundations, schools, and city and county officials called the Los Angeles County Neighborhood Revitalization Workgroup. This collaborative effort also supported the city’s other successful Promise Neighborhoods application submitted by Proyecto Pastoral.

With all of these resources at hand, does the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood have it covered? Not yet. While the project has enough on hand to “touch” 65% of the

two neighborhoods’ populations, according to Iris Zuniga, YPI’s Chief of Staff, “it’s just a start,” she said. More is needed.

Unfortunately, while the state of California is helping with some of the funding – principally for afterschool services – it has not actively engaged with the project and is not likely to, given the state budgetary situation. That means more will be needed from the federal level.

“There isn’t any new money,” Slingerland acknowledged, “but there are ways to get creative with existing resources. Particularly given the question marks about Promise Neighborhoods funding, we need to redirect other funding streams if this is going to work.”

### **“We All Need to Pull This Together”**

Like the other grantees, the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood is now well into its planning year. So far, things are going smoothly. Meetings are being held with the principals of neighborhood schools. All of the working groups have met. Two general meetings have already been held for all of the project partners. “At that first partner meeting, with 50 people in the room, everyone was so pumped,” said Slingerland. “There was not a single negative or challenging comment.”

It was all the more remarkable, according to Karina Favela, the project director, because “Geoffrey Canada said there’s always going to be resistance. If you’re bringing in something new, there is going to be resistance.” Indeed, like every project, the Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood ran into some of this.

But they also saw the big picture. “The message was that we all need to pull this together,” said Zuniga. “How do we get that national spotlight and make sure our neighborhoods get that attention? How do we tell our story?”

The answer? “We all realized that it’s not about your organization or mine, but what it means for the community.” That does not happen very often, she said, but it did this time, and not by accident. Her experience was telling.

“For me, this is personal. I attended a lot of the schools on that transformation list. I grew up in this community ... it’s not just another initiative.”