

1. Executive Summary

a. Assurances (i.-v.)

I. Not for Profit: NA

II. Student Enrollment: *Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars* (GLAYS) will enroll the requisite number of students in our attendance area including English Language Learners (ELLs), Standard English Learners (SELs), students with disabilities, and accelerated learners (See Appendix 1).

III. Student Composition: GLAYS will have ongoing review mechanisms in place to monitor and decrease transiency and ensure the student composition reflects community demographics (See Appendix 1).

IV. Fiscal Solvency: NA

V. Special Education: GLAYS will comply with all federal, state, and LAUSD policies and practices as they relate to special education (See Appendix 1).

b. Student Population

Over the past fourteen years, *Gratts Elementary* faculty and staff have gained experience educating socially, culturally, and linguistically diverse children in our community. Our present student population is made up of the following: 95% Latino, 4% African American, 1% Filipino, and 0.5% Asian, 0.1% American Indian or Alaskan Native, 0.1% Pacific Islander, and 0.3% White not Hispanic. Approximately 93% of students are economically disadvantaged and the transient population is 21%. Approximately 71% of students at *Gratts Elementary* are ELLs. Nine percent of students have disabilities and 1% is in the Gifted and Talented Program. A recent search of the Centralized Eligibility List shows a crucial need for an Early Education Center as demonstrated in the records of children 3 to 5 years old whose families live or work in the *Gratts Elementary* zip code and neighboring communities (zip codes: 90017, 90026, 90057, 90006, 90015, 90005, and 90057). Approximately 646 children living in the area have parents requesting full-time care and 234 parents working in the area requesting full-time childcare. Finally, there are 140 parents living or working in the area requesting part-time childcare.

c. Vision, Mission and Philosophy

Understanding Ourselves, the World, and How to Make Change

The *Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars*’ (GLAYS) **vision** is inspired by Evelyn Thurman Gratts, a determined community leader who was a pioneer in establishing the Head Start program in our area, striving to give all children an equal opportunity to learn and to have a bright future. Our vision is to transform all children from toddlers to young scholars and, eventually, to graduates of higher education. Students will come to understand the importance of social justice and being of service. They will be leaders and agents of change in their communities and the world. We will foster a child’s natural curiosity and enthusiasm for learning through inquiry, creativity, and application. Six universal units of inquiry will challenge and prepare students for the 21st century and guide our innovative, academic-based learning continuum from age 2 through 6th grade. In partnership with our community, we will promote a culture where higher education is no longer a hope, but an expectation.

The GLAYS' **mission** is to follow in the footsteps of Evelyn Thurman Gratts, a child advocate. Raised and educated in the community, Ms. Gratts worked toward building social justice for all children regardless of their national origin or ethnic heritage. Likewise, the teachers, staff, parents, and community members strive to be conscientious advocates for all children. Our mission, then, is to prepare and motivate students to be global, critical thinkers, socially just scholars, and citizens who share an expectation of pursuing higher education.

The GLAYS' **philosophy** begins with recognizing what the child knows and builds on his or her desire to learn and strive for excellence. We will empower students with knowledge and skills by means of rigorous, standards-based lessons and a student-centered, core curriculum. Students will approach the fundamentals of reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, and the arts through real life experiences as authors, mathematicians, scientists, historians, and artists. Teachers will follow a constructivist, inquiry-based approach and provide multiple opportunities to develop and master 21st century skills. Bilingualism, technology, and the arts will open gateways to global awareness and student achievement. In order to reach these goals, parents, teachers, students, staff, academic partners, and the community will form an alliance in the educational process and participate in shared decision-making. We will nourish and support the learning of the whole child and cultivate an academic, socially just climate that values the importance of higher education.

A Day in the Life

Emanuel Rubalcava, or Manny to his friends, woke up thinking, should he start his inquiry presentation with his poem or Power Point slideshow. He wasn't sure. Manny's dad hugs him goodbye before leaving for work and congratulates him again on getting a *Power Reader* certificate. As Manny helps his little sister, Lily, get ready for school he's excited because she's doing her very first presentation tomorrow. It didn't seem that long ago that he was in kindergarten doing his first presentation, but now that he is in 4th grade, they are much more challenging. As Manny locks the door to his family's small apartment, he hangs his key around his neck and he and Lily head down the hall, both dressed in freshly pressed school uniforms. On their way to the Primary Center at *Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars (GLAYS)*, they walk past makeshift shelters and street vendors. After they eat breakfast, Manny takes Lily to her classroom where Ms. Benitez greets them warmly. Lily hurries to the class library to find the book she wants Manny to read to her during *Lee conmigo*. He laughs when she returns with *The Salamander Room*, which was one of his favorites at her age.

After *Lee conmigo*, Manny walks across the street to the Elementary campus. His teacher, Ms. Solis, is at the door greeting each student with a friendly smile. Manny puts his backpack away and remembers he is table leader this week. As he gathers the materials his group needs for the math lesson, he is still thinking about his big presentation tomorrow in front of his classmates, parents, and other guests. Then, the USC student teacher, Tamara, begins leading the class in chants relevant to *Working Together*, the current 4th grade interdisciplinary unit of inquiry, which aligns with the school-wide inquiry question: *How does working together make a difference?*

Next, Manny joins his mathematics cooperative group, which has been studying mathematical expressions. After reviewing integers, Ms. Solis reveals the problem of the day and the students begin their task. Manny, an ELD level 5, articulates and clarifies the question for his group. They follow the GLAYS established problem solving approach by using manipulatives, pictorial representations, numbers, and words. Each group presents their strategy and the whole class discusses their various approaches. Then, Manny and Javier play a math game designed to use the

skills and concepts taught in the lesson. Since Javier is in a wheelchair, Manny assists him in getting to the class game center. When finished, Manny takes out his math journal and reflects on his new learning.

At recess, Manny and his table group volunteer to collect contributions for the *Pennies for Peace* (PFP) drive; a non-profit organization that raises money for children in Afghanistan. Earlier in the year, when studying the unit of inquiry *Making a Difference*, Manny's group chose PFP as their charity to support. They thought it was cool to help kids in another country get books and school supplies. If he gets elected Class President in 6th grade, Manny hopes to get more students involved in local charities.

During the language arts period, Manny's class heads to the computer lab to prepare for the culminating project on their unit *Working Together*. Manny focused his research on ways in which community businesses contribute to the education of students at GLAYS. He is starting to feel nervous, but calms down during his presentation preview with Ms. Solis. She looks over his checklist, reviews the presentation protocol, and reminds him to clarify how his research relates to the inquiry theme. He reviews his Power Point presentation with his research team members and they provide feedback based on the class-generated rubric. Manny uses their comments to refine his project for the presentation and for evaluation by a GLAYS' panel of teachers.

At lunch, Manny talks about the soccer match organized by the *LA's BEST* program. Then, he heads to the library where the teacher librarian, Mr. Lee, welcomes him and listens to his presentation feedback. Mr. Lee suggests additional resources to enhance Manny's project before tomorrow's big day. He also reminds Manny he is welcome to come by in the morning before school if he has any further questions.

Manny always looks forward to the afternoon because he loves science. Right now his class is learning about food webs and the interdependence of organisms in the environment. It's his group's turn to water and observe the plants in the *GLAYS Community Garden*. Manny enjoys spending time there, especially on Fridays when his mom volunteers. Ms. Solis reminds everyone to consider and discuss this week's student generated inquiry question: *What effects do plants have on food webs?* Using his science notebook, Manny lists the insects he observes on the plants. Suddenly, he has an epiphany! He sees a link between what he's learning in science and language arts. Ms. Solis asks him to share his discovery during the reflection part of the lesson. Manny explains to the class how consumers and producers depend on each other in a food web just as humans depend on one another to create a community. The children agree and *Think-Pair-Share* about their own discoveries and connections from the day.

Once Ms. Solis is finished making announcements, Manny checks his *AVID* daily planner to make sure he recorded his homework assignments. He chooses a book on gardening to take home from the classroom library and admires Ms. Solis' bulletin board honoring College Pride Week. She is always sharing memories of her Alma Mater, UCLA, and he loves seeing all the pictures and memorabilia. Ever since their field trip to UCLA's campus last year, he knew it was the place for him. Manny was thrilled to think that one day he would be a Bruin!

After saying goodbye to Ms. Solis, Manny makes his way to his afterschool art elective. Ms. Khauo, a third grade teacher, has been guiding the students in creating a mural with watercolors to exhibit during the *Inner-City Arts* Gallery Night. Manny is learning to express himself through art and has

saved up enough money to buy a paintbrush and watercolor set to use at home. He is painting a portrait of his mom for Mother's Day using colors that remind him of her.

After his elective, Manny attends the *LA's BEST* program. He glances over at the kindergarten table to see his sister Lily working with a group of classmates on a map of the community. They plan to share it tomorrow for their presentation on their current unit of inquiry *Neighborhood (How does working together make a difference?)*. Manny joins his grade level peers to complete his homework, aware that *LA's BEST* staff is available to assist him. He finishes his afternoon snack just as his soccer teammates call him over to review tonight's game plan. The team congregates on the field and Mr. Salgado, a fifth grade teacher, blows a whistle to start the game.

Their aunt Irene picks up Manny and Lily after another fun and productive day. They head over to the Early Education Center to pick up their three-year old cousin, Ernie, who is playing with his friend Anthony in the dramatic play area. As their aunt pushes Ernie in his stroller, Manny and Lily take turns telling her about the day's highlights. When they enter their building, Manny takes out his key to unlock the door. "Okay Lily," he says, "Mom will be home soon, let's clean up and get to work on our presentations. We both have a big day tomorrow!"

d. Education Plan

The educational plan is anchored in a global perspective that speaks to equity, diversity, bilingualism and social justice. By using our current campus and incorporating the new Early Education and Primary Center, we will establish four small learning communities: Early Education, Primary, Elementary, and Transition to Middle School. These four communities will unite GLAYS as one seamless learning continuum. The instructional methods incorporate inquiry, creativity, and application. These methods, proven effective with our student population (English Language Learners, Standard English Learners, students with disabilities, and accelerated learners), will provide them with the tools necessary to access the standards-based core curriculum. Students will engage in rigorous and academic discourse, supporting our goal of creating young scholars. We will implement research-based instructional strategies adopted from the works of Walqui (2001) and Marzano (2000). Our professional development plan is directly aligned with the school's vision and mission of using inquiry as a process of learning. All stakeholders are part of our learning community, using collaboration, teambuilding, and leadership skills to prepare our students for higher education. The plan will use varied, integrated assessments that capture each student's learning in a more relevant and comprehensive manner. Summative assessments include unit and quarterly tests, criteria and rubrics, models, performance evaluations, portfolios, and standardized tests. In addition, there will be alternative summative assessments that will monitor student attainment of our core beliefs. Formative assessments such as surveys, anecdotal records, and reading inventories will be used to give feedback on student progress toward the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes. Our performance goal is for every child to attain and exceed grade level standards.

e. Community Impact and Involvement

GLAYS has first-hand knowledge of the community needs and is committed to innovative education reform. The *Gratts Elementary* staff has served the Westlake area for 14 years. Thirty-five percent of staff members grew up in this community, 20% currently live here, and 20% have worked here since *Gratts Elementary* opened. The Community Engagement Plan consists of several components that develop a sense of community and engage parents in their child's education. The

plan consists of six synchronized components: Community Partnership Outreach, Direct and Immediate Social-Emotional Support and Crisis Intervention, Family Assistance, Shared Decision Making, Home-School Connection, and Classroom Support. These components provide access to health and human services, adult education for parents and community members, and additional support for student learning. The *Annual Parent Colloquium* serves as a catalyst in educating parents and giving them resources and tools to become advocates for their children. Parents, encouraged to be partners in their child's education, will become learners and teachers through workshops and active participation in academy events throughout the school year.

f. Leadership/Governance

Our vision of creating a learning continuum guided by inquiry, creativity, social justice, and an expectation of higher education addresses the challenges facing our community today. We believe those who live and work in the GLAYS community have a voice in making school-related decisions. The Pilot model creates a shared-decision making governance to ensure all stakeholders are represented in the school's vision, mission, and educational plan. In establishing leadership roles for school improvement, the key principles adopted will include a system-wide approach to improve instruction through data driven decisions, professional development based on research, support and monitoring of collaborative instructional decision-making, and sustained reform.

We will select a leadership team of dynamic and innovative instructional leaders who share our vision of transforming education for students. The leadership team will commit to building a learning continuum environment for students ages 2 through 6th grade that affords them an opportunity to learn and to foster inquiry, critical thinking, social justice, global awareness, and leadership skills.

This governance structure allows for effective communication, purposeful planning, fair evaluation and accountability among all stakeholders – administrators, teachers, parents, students, classified staff, community members and partners. The governance structure is comprised of the Governance Board, Instructional Leadership Team, Intervention Team, CEAC and ELAC Councils, Operations Team, Academy Affiliates, Student Leadership Council, and Parent Community Alliance. Each group will communicate with each other and with the governance board via monthly meetings (per agenda) and as needed to ensure all members are working on common goals.

g. Fiscal Plan

The financial management plan will align with GLAYS' mission, vision, educational program, and staffing plan. School wide goals and student academic achievement will help to target the school's financial resources. We will review data, identify areas of need, and make budget decisions based on student needs, thereby more effectively serving all students, including students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, ELLs, and SELs. We will develop and review the school's budget on a monthly basis with maximum input by the Governance Board and advisory councils. Monies generated through fundraising will be used for programs and services for the student body.

2. Curriculum and Instruction

Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars (GLAYS), welcomes all students, regardless of language, socio-economic status, or learning abilities, to practice and exercise 21st century skills. GLAYS will set the foundation to build a culture where higher education is an expectation. The innovative framework of the school will meet the needs of its community. By using our current campus and incorporating the new Early Education and Primary Center, we will establish four small learning communities—Early Education, Primary, Elementary, and Transition to Middle School—which will unite as one seamless learning continuum. The curriculum and instructional plan at GLAYS incorporates a set of core beliefs derived from research-based pedagogies. Inquiry-based instruction, creativity, and social justice will drive the curriculum goals and instructional strategies. These pedagogies include a constructivist approach focused on inquiry and problem solving framed around Piaget’s Theory of Cognitive Development. Differentiated instruction will provide the balance between direct instruction and student guided learning. Our college-conscious culture will develop further in grades 4 through 6 as students prepare for a successful transition to middle school by completing the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program.

2a. Curriculum Map and Summary

The curriculum for *Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars* (GLAYS) aligns directly with our school vision and mission of using inquiry, creativity and social justice to prepare students for higher education. GLAYS will build on the child’s desire to learn. An open framework brings to life curricula that stimulate a child’s competency and curiosity. It promotes positive relationships, sets up meaningful challenges, and supports transitions and alignment across the learning continuum from ages two through 6th grade. The basic foundation of our curriculum will be built around the International Baccalaureate’s Primary Years Programme (PYP) model (2005). That is, six units of inquiry will drive our exploration and study guided by a series of universal questions dealing with ideas of local and global significance. California content standards will anchor each unit of study through inquiry-based instruction. The synergy of high standards and curiosity will motivate and create multiple opportunities to practice 21st century skills.

A primary mission of our innovative learning continuum is to guide students in developing the technology skills and traits of *scholars* as life long learners, global thinkers, researchers, specialists, and supporters of the arts. Students will value *inquiry* as a way to seek truth, information, and knowledge by questioning, investigating, and reflecting. They will appreciate *creativity* as the ability to produce something new, using imaginative and artistic skills. They will understand that *social justice* is based on the concepts of human rights and equality for all people without prejudice. Thus, our scholars will have the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind to prepare them for *higher education* and attend state universities, liberal arts colleges, vocational schools, institutes of technology, and community colleges. They will be leaders of social justice and agents of change in their community.

We will provide real life experiences to enhance a child’s understanding through the integration of subjects via inquiry projects in small groups and individual study. The strategy lessons of such inquiry projects will focus on skill development and direct instruction. Students will approach the fundamentals of reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, and the arts as authors, mathematicians, scientists, historians, and artists. They will engage in rigorous units of study based on the PYP model that require an understanding of the concepts, content, skills, and strategies

inherent in individual subjects. Six universal questions will connect each grade level to its developmentally appropriate interdisciplinary unit of inquiry.

Table 1

Interdisciplinary Units of Inquiry Framework

<i>Grade</i>	<i>How do our personal experiences define who we are?</i>	<i>How does history influence our world?</i>	<i>How do we express ourselves?</i>	<i>How does working together make a difference?</i>	<i>What can we learn from nature?</i>	<i>How does our learning prepare us to be critical thinkers?</i>
	<i>An inquiry into personal experiences and how they help us grow and change.</i>	<i>An inquiry into our communities and how history has shaped them.</i>	<i>An inquiry into the way we discover, express, and reflect upon ideas.</i>	<i>An inquiry into how collaboration can impact change.</i>	<i>An inquiry into the complexities of the natural world.</i>	<i>An inquiry into our learning and how reflection can move us forward.</i>
Early Education & Pre-Kinder	All About Me	My World	I Can Draw!	My Best Friend	My Favorite Animal	What I Know
K	Families and Friends	Transportation	Food and Animals	Neighborhood	Weather, Plants, and Amazing Creatures	I Know A Lot!
1	All About Us	Our Families, Our Neighbors	Have Fun!	Let's Team Up	Nature Watch	Adventures
2	Friends and Family	Community Heroes	Let's Create	Better Together	Growing and Changing	The World Around Us
3	Let's Learn	Neighborhoods and Communities	Express Yourself	Our Teams	Those Amazing Animals	Storytelling
4	Growing Up	Making a Difference	The Power of Words	Working Together	Habitats	Problem Solving
5	Taking a Stand	The American West	Using Your Wits	Team Up to Survive	Investigations	Changes
6	Our Stories	Ancient Civilizations	A Question of Values	Achieving Dreams	Our Incredible Earth	Rescue 9-1-1

Our Interdisciplinary Units of Inquiry create a vehicle by which students at all grade levels can interact and share the commonalities in their learning. One way students will be aware of these connections will be a communal bulletin board that displays evidence of the learning continuum as each universal inquiry is addressed. Work samples from each grade level will provide a window into our aligned, thematic approach. Parents, community members, and guests will find this updated bulletin board informative and reaffirming of our vision (See Appendix 2).

Seventy-one percent of students are English Language Learners (ELLs). In order to meet these students' needs, we will use inquiry-based instruction to develop oral language skills while maximizing opportunities to make sense of language and content (Walqui, 2001). Students are encouraged to explain, infer, analyze, synthesize, compare and contrast, and persuade (Dutro & Moran, 2003). Research also shows inquiry-based instruction is an opportunity to engage ELLs in

authentic and active learning in the social context of the classroom. Our six units of inquiry are designed to bring authenticity, relevance, and meaningful connections to students' lives. These themes, in conjunction with the state-adopted programs, will provide a solid foundation for the fundamental knowledge and skills our students need to become global, critical thinkers. The units of inquiry will integrate technology and the arts to enrich the quality of learning while promoting curiosity and creativity.

The Teacher Librarian will support students' understanding and application of the inquiry process. He or she will instruct students in how to navigate the Internet, use the Centralized Library Automation System (CLAS), and select appropriate resources for inquiry projects and recreational reading. In collaboration with the classroom teacher, the teacher librarian will use the *Interdisciplinary Units of Inquiry Framework* to plan lessons and provide resources appropriate to each unit of study (See Table 1).

Instructional pedagogies, supported with research-based evidence, and build on what students already know. Based on the findings of Marzano's research (2002), the needs of our student population will be met by using the cross-curricular strategies of non-linguistic representations; cooperative learning; setting objectives; providing feedback; generating and testing hypotheses; identifying questions and cues, and advance organizers (See Section 2e). GLAYS will create writing, science, math, and other learning workshops where students practice and apply their learning and the teacher becomes the facilitator. These models build on Piaget's cognitive development theory, Vygotsky's constructivist theory, and Flavell's theory of metacognition.

The educational plan at GLAYS features a student-centered curriculum that supports learning by monitoring student progress. Formative and summative assessments such as portfolios, retelling, and standardized tests allow teachers to make informed decisions for continued growth and student learning (See Section 4). Identifying performance levels and learning needs will give teachers a base for sharing and reflecting on common strengths and challenges. At GLAYS Summer Institute and through ongoing professional development, teachers will collaborate to perfect key strategies such as cooperative groups and differentiated teacher practices. By working together, they share the responsibility of every child's continued success and pride in learning.

At GLAYS, instruction is responsive and consistently scaffolds students' learning with differentiated instructional techniques. Using Vygotsky's *Zone of Proximal Development*, teachers approach the fundamentals of curricular areas by preparing for different instructional levels. A structure of fluid, flexible tiers will help to place each student at his or her defined level of instruction. California Content standards tell us what to teach, but understanding our students' needs guides us in how to teach. The educational plan incorporates several core methods to provide a basis for differentiated instruction. Through the resources of our workshop models, small group instruction, technology, research-based strategies, and the arts, we will meet the needs and enhance the strengths of all students (See Section 2e).

Clearly, the educational plan at GLAYS incorporates a variety of strategies to support students who need intervention as well as those who are accelerated learners. Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) will be a model to provide additional support based on academic or behavioral needs (See Section 2c). For students identified as gifted, highly gifted, and/or who demonstrate superior academic achievement GLAYS, as a School for Advance Studies (SAS), will provide opportunities to develop high levels of inquiry, creativity, and innovation (See Section 2d).

The adopted programs at GLAYS provide a structure complete with the skill sets necessary to meet the California Content standards at every grade level. To build upon this foundation, instruction concentrates on vertically articulated units of inquiry that incorporate many approaches and strategies to meet the students' needs. Small groups provide the opportunity for teachers to differentiate instruction. Cooperative learning groups give students a way to build academic language. Owoki and Goodman (2002) document the act of children's talk as an important aspect of the process of linguistic and conceptual growth. The use of inquiry, creativity, and student-centered instruction will expand our students' perspectives and ability to access the core curriculum. (See Section 2d and 2e).

2b.Track Record of Proposed Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos

The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos forms the basis of a fully integrated program for the Early Education Center at GLAYS. It helps teachers and paraprofessionals build relationships with children by providing them the resources necessary to create meaningful daily routines and experiences that respond to children's strengths and interests. Based on the research of Maslow, which suggests people's basic needs must be met before high-level learning can occur, this curriculum creates a nurturing, inventive, and consistent environment where children learn to trust themselves. Research by Piaget and Vygotsky shows that infants and toddlers cognitive development is nurtured when children are given many opportunities to explore the world around them, to interact with others, and to play. Our curriculum, then, provides safe learning opportunities for students in the Early Education Center to explore their environment. In addition, *The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos* provides supplemental resources for teachers working with children with disabilities and dual language learners (See Appendix 3 for additional research and specific information about how the curriculum addresses the needs of our student population).

The Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum for Ages 3-5

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is a comprehensive, research based early childhood curriculum that improves cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional, and physical development in young children. Child development theory and research by Maslow, Erikson, Piaget, Vygotsky, Gardner, and Smilansky, form the basis of all recommendations that address the best developmental practices found in the curriculum. The learning environment meets children's developmental needs. It makes all children—including those with special needs and dual language learners—feel safe, comfortable, and validated. As a result, they are helped to become independent, confident learners who are prepared for kindergarten in the core areas of literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies (See Appendix 3 for additional research and specific information about how the curriculum addresses the needs of our student population).

Language Arts: McGraw-Hill's California Treasures

California Treasures, a research-based language arts program, meets all California state standards for grades K-6. As commissioned by *Reading First* guidelines, *California Treasures* provides a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction including the Five Fundamental Principles of Reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension. *California Treasures* bases its successful reading and writing instructional practices on findings from the Report of the National Reading Panel (2000) and the National Research Council (1998)

(See Appendix 4 for additional research and specific information about how the curriculum addresses the needs of our student population).

English Language Development: McGraw-Hill’s *California Treasures English Language Development*

California Treasures, a research-based English Language Development program addresses all English language proficiency levels and builds students’ academic language. It provides purposeful and targeted small group instruction opportunities for daily ELD instruction. The program includes leveled materials and cross-curricular activities (See Appendix 5 for additional research and specific information about how the curriculum addresses the needs of our student population).

Mathematics: Scott Foresman’s *enVision Math*

enVision Math, a research-based mathematics program for grades K-6, addresses the following Mathematic domains: concept development, problem solving, visual learning, the language of math, and communication of math. A national study conducted by Planning, Research and Evaluation Services (PRES) found that *enVision Math* promotes critical math thinking skills and extensively incorporates 21st century skills and technology. This study revealed that students using *enVision Math* over the course of the school year significantly improved in all mathematic domains (See Appendix 6 for additional research and specific information about how the curriculum addresses the needs of our student population).

Science: *Full Optional Science System (FOSS)*

FOSS is a research-based science curriculum for grades K–8 developed at the Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California at Berkeley. *FOSS* meets the California standards for the life, earth, and physical sciences as well as the standards for investigation and experimentation. The program materials are designed to provide meaningful science education for all students in diverse classrooms. Scientific knowledge advances when scientists observe objects and events, think about how they relate to what is known, test their ideas in logical ways, and generate explanations that integrate the new information into the established order. The best way for students to appreciate the scientific experience, learn important concepts, and develop the ability to think critically is to actively construct ideas through their own investigations and analyses. The *FOSS* program was created to engage students in these processes as they explore the natural world (See Appendix 7 for additional research and specific information about how the curriculum addresses the needs of our student population).

Social Studies: Pearson Scott Foresman *California History-Social Science*

The Pearson Scott Foresman *California History-Social Science* program is a standards-driven, interactive program written specifically for California. The instruction is focused through interactive texts, which are supported by technology resources. Based on the research of Kate Kinsella and Kevin Feldman, the program supports students with diverse needs in the reading and comprehension of informational text. The universal access teaching strategies and leveled content readers incorporated in the program support dual language learners and students with disabilities. (See Appendix 8 for additional research and specific information about how the curriculum addresses the needs of our student population).

2c. Addressing the Needs of All Students

The adopted programs at GLAYS will guide teachers in meeting the needs of all students regardless of learning and language abilities. Research-based instructional strategies and a multi-tier approach to instruction will narrow the achievement gap among all students. Students with disabilities are educated in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) using the most appropriate strategies for instruction to help them access the curriculum (See Section 7). By connecting individual students with their social-cultural-historical contexts, teachers will adjust their practice in order to meet the needs of students and build upon their experiences. Teachers will address the unique learning styles of all students whether they participate in mainstream Structured English Immersion (SEI), Bilingual, Dual Language, and/or Special Education Programs (See Section 7a IV).

To meet the needs of all students in our community, GLAYS provides parents the opportunity to enroll their children in one of three instructional programs: English Immersion (EI), Dual Language (DL), or Waiver to Basic (WB). All programs will follow Federal and State policies and procedures, including guidelines by the Office of Instruction, the Asian Pacific and Other Languages (APOLO)/Dual Language Office of the Los Angeles Unified School District, and the Language Acquisition Branch.

The EI program teaches English Language Learners (ELLs) and English proficient students academic content in English. Students will develop academic proficiency in English from age 2 through 6th grade. The goals of the program are to develop communicative and academic language proficiency in English and develop academic achievement in all subject areas.

The DL program teaches ELLs and English proficient students academic content in both English and Spanish. Students will develop academic proficiency in both languages from age 2 through 6th grade. The goals of the program are to develop communicative and academic second language proficiency, primary language proficiency, academic achievement in all subject areas, and instill an appreciation for cultural diversity. Both ELLs and English proficient students are mixed in the same classroom to promote bilingualism, bi-literacy, and multiculturalism. All students are held to the same high academic standards. Heterogeneous and homogeneous grouping strategies will be used to promote the development of language and literacy skills. GLAYS will implement a 50/50 model where both languages are used for instruction, and English and Spanish literacy skills are taught simultaneously. The DL program will begin at the Early Education Center and continue to expand as students move throughout the continuum.

The WB program teaches ELLs academic content in Spanish. Students will develop academic proficiency in both languages from age 2 through 6th grade. ELD is taught daily. As students progress in their English proficiency, English instruction is increased in academic subjects. The goals of the program are to develop communicative and academic English and primary language proficiency, increase academic achievement in all subject areas, and instill an appreciation for cultural diversity.

Students in need of intervention or those whose formal education has been interrupted will be identified through RTI², a multi-tier approach that supports students with learning and behavioral needs. Individual needs of students will be determined through diagnostic assessments and research-based strategies will ensure students move in and out of Tier II (strategic) and Tier III (intensive) interventions. Ongoing student data will be analyzed and student progress will be monitored. Based

on these analyses, customized and appropriate strategies will be used to provide students with access to the core curriculum.

Students with disabilities will receive the accommodations and modifications documented in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). The Resource Specialist Program (RSP) Teacher, Special Day Program Teacher, School Psychologist, and Administrators will collaborate to support the students' instruction in the classroom. IEP meetings will be held annually and/or as appropriate to monitor and document students' progress toward their goals. Supplemental materials, strategies, and small group instruction within the inclusion model will enhance curriculum and align with the students' IEP goals as defined within the California Content standards (See Section 7ai).

Students will have a variety of strengths, compelling teachers to create tailored and research-based learning opportunities. Our students identified as gifted, highly gifted, and/or students who demonstrate superior academic achievement will participate in our School for Advanced Studies program (SAS). This program provides instruction that meets and exceeds California content standards as described in the California Education Code, and provides opportunities for accelerated learning (See Section 2d).

Students will proceed through a system of universal screening as early as two years of age. Data will be used to guide program placement and to identify students in need of supplemental support and more frequent progress monitoring. Early in the school year, teachers will participate in whole class coordination of services team (COST) meetings where students who are identified at-risk (behavioral, emotional, academic, and social) will be referred for appropriate services (See Section 7b). Students deemed by the COST process to have intensive needs will proceed to the next tier of the problem solving process, the Student Success Team (SST). This team will develop modifications and interventions with the appropriate intensity and duration to address students' needs (Refer to LAUSD Bulletin 4827.1).

The educational plan ensures that each student will be able to reach his or her highest academic potential. Students will meet the core programs' benchmarks or exceed proficiency through the use of process driven, product measured instruction. In all content areas, formative and summative assessments will drive the professional development and instruction. (See Sections 4 and 5).

2d. Accelerated Learning

Gifted and high performing students bring GLAYS advanced levels of creativity and innovation. To take advantage of these assets, our School for Advanced Studies (SAS) will create a learning environment that motivates students to expand their unique intelligence and artistic ability. The SAS program will enhance student learning by creating an opportunity to further in-depth application across all curricular areas. This model is designed to build on students' cumulative learning by creating a more cohesive, developmental, and generative learning experience. The program also aims to provide greater opportunity for students to apply their critical and creative thinking skills.

Students in the SAS program spend most of their day in a regular classroom setting, working collaboratively with their peers. SAS students will meet in homogenous groups afterschool and Saturdays to engage in more comprehensive, relevant inquiry projects that expand on the universal themes they have learned. They will participate in speech and forensics, academic excursions, decathlons, science fairs, and team events. Their evaluation will occur through a multiple-

assessment system based on demonstration and performance. Students will assist in the creation of rubrics for their project evaluations, bringing greater relevance, engagement, and meaning to their learning.

To ensure full student participation, teachers will work closely with families to expand support for participating SAS students. Parents will be encouraged to work along side their children, taking part in workshops and other SAS activities. It is necessary to identify a greater number of talented students. Currently, the SAS program at *Gratts Elementary* only supports 13 students; the GLAYS goal over the next five years is to identify at least 10% of the school's population. With an expected enrollment of 875 students, the SAS program would serve between 85 and 100 students. GLAYS will increase the representation of minority students in SAS through recruitment efforts such as teacher training for characteristics of gifted and talented students, observations, parent meetings, and student counseling. As per the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 5 requirements, gifted and high performing students will be identified as early as Kindergarten and across expanded categories, intelligences, and languages.

2e. Instructional Strategies

GLAYS will implement research-based instructional strategies adopted from the works of Walqui (2001) and Marzano (2000). Each of the strategies listed below are proven to be successful with English Language Learners, Standard English Learners, students with disabilities, accelerated learners, and socio-economically disadvantaged students. They provide these students with access to the core because they are hands-on, interactive, student-centered, and highly motivating. They help our students turn thinking into meaning, navigate, and synthesize new information in a relevant and purposeful way. As teachers create units of inquiry, they will explicitly incorporate these techniques into the learning processes. These strategies include, but are not limited to:

1. Conceptual and Academic Language Development
2. Non-Linguistic Representations
3. Accessing Prior Knowledge
4. Cyclical and Thematic Approach
5. Contextualized Learning
6. Culturally Relevant Instruction
7. Collaborative Learning
8. Self-Monitoring
9. Identifying Similarities and Differences
10. Summarizing and Note-taking
11. Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback
12. Generating and Testing Hypotheses
13. Cues, Questions, and Advanced Organizers

(See Appendix 9 for definitions and research supporting the use of these strategies with our student population)

3. School Culture and Climate

3a. School Culture

The *Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars*’ (GLAYS) learning continuum promotes a supportive and sustainable school culture with higher education as a common goal. Ninety-eight percent of Gratts’ staff that participated in the voting process confirmed the Pilot Model. This demonstrates our unity and commitment to innovation and reform. Although our school population is estimated to be 875 students, our four small learning communities (Early Education, Primary Center, Elementary, and Transition to Middle School) promote a personalized and nurturing culture. To promote positive behavior and create model citizens, GLAYS will implement the following district-wide behavior norms: *Be Safe*, *Be Respectful*, and *Be Responsible*. Teachers, parents, and community members will be active participants in modeling these key norms. Stakeholders will value diversity, social awareness, and personal responsibility.

Based on New Visions for Public School’s *Ten Principles of Effective School Design*, GLAYS will maintain a clear focus and high expectations for all stakeholders (2009). In order to develop a sense of community, GLAYS will implement the following principles:

- Equitable access to rigorous instruction
- Engaging and maintaining parent involvement
- Effective collaboration among all stakeholders
- Reflective professional culture
- Data driven instruction
- Professional partnerships

The GLAYS’ mission is realistic because we as teachers, staff, parents, and community members have been advocates for our children for the past 14 years. It is our commitment to continue and build upon what we already have in place. Thirty-five percent of staff members grew up in this area, 20% currently live in the community, and 20% have worked here since Gratts opened in 1996. This shared history and common vision for students amplifies our ability and desire to create a new and effective school culture. The most innovative model that aligns with our community needs is the Pilot Model. Its autonomies create an engaging, supportive, and equitable school environment that improve student achievement and prepare them for higher education.

GLAYS’ plan to motivate students is a balance of intrinsic motivation and the use of personal acknowledgements. Intrinsic motivation is developed first by teachers viewing students as authors, mathematicians, scientists, historians, and artists. This approach builds efficacy in students taking ownership of their learning. For example, in Author’s Gallery an author exhibits his/her craft and explains how it was developed. Teachers provide purposeful and specific feedback to motivate students (e.g. “I see you worked hard on your narrative, could you tell me what inspired it?”). GLAYS also provides a gateway for parents to motivate and participate as educational partners in their child’s learning by acknowledging students’ achievement and citizenship through the following:

- **Power Readers:** Benchmarks met in fluency, comprehension, and spelling
- **Perfect Attendance:** Daily attendance and punctuality
- **Student of the Month:** Recognition for effort/growth in any and or all-curricular areas

- **Good Citizenship:** Students demonstrate an acknowledgement and application of school-wide rules *Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible*.

High academic and social expectations are set for all students, regardless of language, socio-economic status, and learning abilities. Data will be used to build and sustain the expectation of instructional decision-making that is reflective of students' needs toward the attainment of the California Content standards. A reciprocal system of accountability will be used between teachers, parents, and students that ultimately lead to improved student achievement.

Students will meet high standards in each content area by learning and applying specific strategies for reading, writing, researching, problem solving, critical thinking, and speaking. They will demonstrate and articulate their learning through multiple assessments that include project presentations at the end of each unit of inquiry. Students will present their projects to parents, peers, community members, and school staff. These stakeholders will enhance student learning through questions, comments, and recommendations.

In addition, stakeholders will be held accountable to student achievement as part of the GLAYS School Compact (See Appendix 10). This compact outlines the responsibilities to be upheld in order to promote the culture of high expectations at GLAYS.

3b. College and Career Readiness

GLAYS' mission to create a college conscious culture is supported by its learning continuum. The explicit vertical articulation creates a pipeline from ages two through 6th grade, which will continue as they enter the Belmont Zone of Choice Schools, creating young scholars who have the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in higher education and their future careers. In partnership with *Advancement Via Individual Determination* (AVID) and *Families in Schools*, students will develop the habits of mind and advanced organizational skills that will prepare them for the 21st century.

GLAYS will implement a consistent and comprehensive system for reporting student progress and providing data on student achievement of the standards. It will be consistent with LAUSD's promotion policy (Refer to Bulletin Bul-2332.4).

3c. School Calendar/Schedule

GLAYS will follow a traditional school calendar, which will provide a total of 62,160 minutes per school year. A staggered bell schedule will be implemented in order to provide families with the opportunity to drop off their children to the different buildings and/or wings of the campus, including the Early Education Center, the Primary Center, and the Elementary School.

Table 2

GLAYS Small Learning Communities Schedule

Gratts Early ED Center (Ages 2 through 4)	Begins 7:00 am	Ends 6:00 pm
Gratts Primary Center (Grades Pre-K through 1)	Begins 7:50 am	Ends 2:14 pm
Gratts Elementary School (Grades 2 through 6)	Begins 8:00 am	Ends 2:24 pm

Access to the library and computer lab will be provided for students who arrive before school, providing them with a safe place for enrichment activities. The Teacher Librarian will start his/her day at 7:00 a.m. in order to assist students in the library. GLAYS educators will teach summer school (up to 80 hours) for identified students in order to support them in meeting and exceeding their academic goals.

GLAYS will operate on a traditional 180-day calendar. This will give all stakeholders opportunities to participate in shared experiences: professional development, early assessment, parent workshops, and intervention. The learning continuum will be subdivided into four small learning communities: Early Education (ages 2-4), Early Elementary (grade K-1), Upper Elementary (grades 2-5), and Transition to Middle School (grade 6). School hours of operation take into account the needs of parents with children at various grade levels. A staggered bell schedule provides parents the flexibility to drop off their children and participate in various parent engagement activities (*Lee conmigo/Read With Me* and parent workshops).

The daily schedule allows for differentiated faculty meetings to provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate and plan. As a QEIA school, one of the program requirements is to maintain a student teacher ratio of 8:1 in Early Education, 20:1 in grades K-3, and 25:1 in 4-6.

3d. Extracurricular Activities

All students at GLAYS will have opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities. In an effort to prepare students for the secondary level and create a college conscientious culture, extracurricular activities will be referred to as electives. The following electives will be offered to students: *Enrichment Workshops*, *Let's Move*, *L.A.'s Best*, *East and West Youth Services*, and *Homework Club*.

Enrichment Workshops and *Let's Move* will operate in a two-month cycle. Teachers facilitate these enrichment workshops once a week for one hour after school. Prior to the commencement of the electives, a family orientation will be held to create an awareness of the courses offered. Some of the mini-workshops may include art, cooking, music, dance, etc. *Let's Move* will be taught by Focus Fish staff and will include classes such as ballet, capoeira, hip-hop dance, and yoga. *L.A.'s Best*, *East and West Youth Services*, and *Homework Club* will operate on a yearly basis. The *L.A.'s Best* and *East and West Youth Services* programs will operate from the student dismissal time to 6:00 p.m. Students will receive help with completing homework as well as enrichment lessons in art, physical education, science, etc. *Homework Club*, supervised by GLAYS teachers and facilitated by students from *Miguel Contreras Learning Complex*, will also provide academic support.

3e. Safe and Respectful Campus

GLAYS will ensure all students will learn in a safe and respectful environment. Students will understand and internalize expected behaviors by adhering to a clear and research-based discipline policy. They will develop social skills through *Second Step: A Violence Prevention Program*. This curriculum is designed to promote social competence and reduce social-emotional problems by teaching students empathy, emotion management, and problem solving skills. Parents will be trained on the fundamental principles of *Second Step* so that positive behaviors can be reinforced at home. A discipline policy will be implemented for all students, monitored by the site administrator, and data will be compiled to measure the effectiveness.

When discipline issues arise, a two-tiered approach will be implemented. First, teachers will implement research-based strategies to re-direct negative student behavior. Professional development will also be scheduled to address positive behavior support. When intensive support is needed, the student will be referred to the Student Success Team. The participants will include the child's parent or guardian, an administrator, the student's teacher, a Resource Specialist Program teacher, a school psychologist, and any other party that has pertinent information to share regarding the student's behavior (e.g. therapist, DCFS employee, counselor, etc.). The team will collaboratively develop an action-plan in an effort to positively impact the student's behavior.

3f. Health Mandates

In supporting GLAYS' overall efforts to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of all students; teachers, administrators, and the school nurse will assist in assuring that their health needs will be addressed in a proactive way by complying with all aspects of a student's with a Section 504 plan and/or IEP. The goals stated in these plans will be monitored through frequent evaluations and discourse between the general education teacher, the special education teacher, the resource specialist, and other support staff. To maintain rigor and provide the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), GLAYS will provide full inclusion and mainstream students into the general education classroom. Resources such as Additional Adult Assistance, assistive technology, and personalization of curriculum and instruction will ensure that they have access to the core program. The importance of a consistent, confidential, and effective communication system among all parents, school nurse, teachers and administrators is imperative to the successful implementation of our plan in meeting the needs of all students.

3g. Nutritional Needs

Free and reduced breakfast and lunch will be offered to students on the primary and elementary campuses. The menus are designed to be both nutritionally balanced and appealing. It is vital that students are encouraged to eat a balanced meal prepared with healthy cooking methods. The menus meet or exceed the District and USDA nutritional guidelines. In partnership with UCLA's School of Public Health, a daily salad bar will be available for students to make more nutritious and varied choices.

4. Assessments and Data

4a. Educational Goals and Metrics

At Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars (GLAYS), all students, regardless of language, socio-economic status, or learning abilities, will be expected to develop a core knowledge base, skills, and academic language in order to become global, critical thinkers who are socially just and prepared for a higher education. The student assessment plan incorporates research-based core beliefs, which support inquiry, creativity, and social justice. The plan will use varied, integrated assessments that capture each student's learning in a more relevant and comprehensive manner.

Based on the instructional cycles outlined in the State Board of Education Curriculum in language arts, math, science and history and social studies, GLAYS has created a matrix that combines the multiple measures of academic proficiency in their conceptual, procedural, factual and metacognitive understanding of those standards (See Appendix 11).

4b. Student Assessment Plan

GLAYS will measure student progress and achievement utilizing a standards-based assessment system that is built on ensuring student attainment of grade-level standards. Summative assessments include unit and quarterly tests, criteria and rubrics, models, performance evaluations, portfolios, and standardized tests. In addition, there will be alternative summative assessments that will monitor student attainment of our core beliefs. For example, students will demonstrate their ability to be socially just through community service projects. Formative assessments such as surveys, anecdotal records, and reading inventories will be used to give feedback on student progress toward the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes. For example, teacher-student conferencing in writer's workshop will give students specific feedback and the opportunity to discuss their work.

The early education assessments are unique in that they provide developmentally appropriate measures of student performance for children age two through four. These assessments (authentic assessments, orally explained responses to demonstrate learning, individual and group assessments, standards-based assessments) provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate multiple ways in which they understand and master the skills taught. The flexibility of using multiple measures as evidence of learning is part of our mission to meet the needs of all students.

A culture of continuous improvement and accountability will be established to ensure student learning in support of our vision. Through professional development and grade level discussions teachers will be able to analyze data and know where strengths and needs reside for individual students and classrooms while recognizing and addressing patterns throughout the learning continuum. This analysis drives professional development, facilitates vertical articulation, and informs instruction. A school culture of continuous growth will allow teachers to improve the way they deliver instruction and be part of identifying the problems and the solutions (Bernhardt, 1998).

The Multiple Assessments Matrix will provide the school with a comprehensive organizational structure for coordinating student assessments. The assessments respond to the educational goals and performance metrics that are observable and measurable, attainable, reflect the GLAYS mission, and are specific to its objectives and tasks. The use of both summative and formative assessments will ensure effective assessment of student progress and achievement in meeting the California Content standards. It is designed to inform teacher practice by tracking student learning (See Appendix 12).

The assessment tools align with the school's curriculum map and professional development plan. They are comprised of California STAR assessments as well as those provided by the instructional programs. In addition, research-based portfolios and project-based assessments, (Jerome Bruner, Ted Sizer, Lev Vygotsky), as well as diagnostic assessments, will be used to measure student progress and achievement. All students will participate in the assessment process to ensure that each student's progress and achievement is measured and supported, in line with the school's educational goals for all student subgroups, including ELLs, SEL, and students with special needs.

The results of student assessments will be used to support teacher practice, program implementation, and professional development. This includes providing scheduled time to review student data, identifying and providing teacher support, and continuing to calibrate instructional programs and practices.

4c. Data Team and Instructional

Data analysis will begin with the week long GLAYS Summer Institute where staff will collaborate to target supports for students and adults. This will be the foundation of our professional development and instructional planning for the school year. Using the protocol *Data Wise Cycle*, which is driven by inquiry, data will be reviewed on a regular basis in order to reflect and ensure student achievement. Teachers will become proficient at disaggregating, analyzing, and interpreting student and other data sets (See Appendix 13).

4d. Data System

To fulfill the requirements of the LAUSD Modified Consent Decree (MCD), GLAYS will maintain the existing services provided to our students with special needs. We will continue working closely with the District's Special Education Division to ensure full compliance in meeting the outcomes established by MCD.

To monitor IEPs and track related services, GLAYS will use the LAUSD Welligent online system. This system allows administrators, teachers, and support staff to track IEP timelines and delivery of service. It also provides for the reporting of student progress and compliance.

4e. LAUSD School Report Card

Systematic presentations of school and grade level performance will be scheduled throughout the year to publicly review data with all stakeholders to inform and encourage their engagement in supporting the work. Utilizing *My Report Card* through the LAUSD website, all pertinent subcategory measures will be posted on a monthly basis to assure transparent articulation of the school's performance. Data will also be shared via the available District technology for reporting measures.

4f. Research and Evaluation

GLAYS will participate fully in research and evaluation projects that collect and disseminate best practices, including support for English language learners, low performing students, gifted students, and students with special needs.

4g. Operational Goals and Metrics (Not Applicable)

5. Professional Development Program

5a. Professional Development

Professional development at *Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars* (GLAYS) will “deepen teachers understanding about the teaching/learning process and the students they teach” (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1996). Our professional development plan is directly aligned with the school's vision and mission of using inquiry as a process of learning. All stakeholders are part of our learning community, using collaboration, teambuilding, and leadership skills to prepare our students for higher education. According to Dr. Judith Wilde (2009), successful professional development is founded on five principles to ensure student success: building on prior skills, knowledge, and expertise; engaging participants as learners; providing practice, feedback, and follow up; measuring changes in teacher knowledge and skills; and measuring changes in student performance.

Professional development will be provided throughout the year in a variety of formats. The Instructional Leadership Team will research, develop, and facilitate the learning in core program training, English Language Development strategies, data analysis, differentiated instruction, classroom management, and AVID implementation (See Appendix 14).

Our new focus of inquiry-based education will use creativity to enhance instruction for all students (i.e. English Language Learners, Standard English Learners, students with disabilities, and accelerated learners) and will play a major role in our professional development plan. Each academic year, teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, and support staff will participate in a weeklong Summer Institute. The objective of the institute will be to renew our commitment to the school vision, introduce and align new programs and practices based on data, and continue to build a sense of community. The last two days of the institute, teachers will collaborate during grade level sessions to apply developmentally appropriate instruction related to using inquiry, creativity, and social justice across all content areas.

The Summer Institute will drive ongoing professional development. Throughout the school year, weekly one-hour grade level meetings will be led by teachers to address student needs. The content of the meetings will be differentiated and determined by the Professional Development Needs Survey (See Appendix 15). Grade level meetings will be held every Thursday after school. After the first hour of Tuesday's faculty meetings, all staff will meet for an additional hour of professional development. Our Teacher Librarian also serves as an instructional leader, providing staff development for administrators and teachers on the latest technology tools and resources.

Following the summer institute, the *Gratts Academy for Teachers on Saturdays* (GATS) will provide three hours of focused professional development monthly where teachers build on their expertise in inquiry-based education, the use of technology as an instructional tool, and additional opportunities for support.

5b. Teacher Orientation

New teachers will participate in a mentoring program that consists of a one-hour weekly meeting where they will partner with a National Board Certified teacher or experienced educator to support and give feedback on student learning. The mentoring program will provide opportunities to observe best practices and apply them in the classroom while receiving immediate and constructive feedback from the support provider.

GLAYS will provide coaching opportunities in collaboration with the UCLA Center X partnership. Center X coaches assigned to classrooms will model, co-teach, and observe instruction. They will provide constructive feedback and monitor application of learned practices. Coaching will be a non-evaluative process built around a planning conference, a lesson observation, and a post-conference. These processes follow the format developed by Dr. Wilde's five principles of professional development.

5c. PD Calendar

The goals and focus for the school year will be developed at the GLAYS Summer Institute. The Instructional Leadership Team will develop, monitor, and refine the professional development calendar throughout the year (See Appendix 16). All teachers will participate in a significant amount of professional development during non-instructional time. More than 200 hours of professional development opportunities will be provided (See Table 3).

Table 3**GLAYS Professional Development Time Table**

	Frequency	Total Hours
Summer Institute	5 days x 6 hours a day	30 hours
Gratts Academy for Teachers on Saturdays	10 days x 3 hours a day	30 hours
Ongoing Professional Development Meetings	38 days x 2 hour a day	76 hours
Grade Level Meetings	38 days x 1 hour a day	38 hours
New Teacher Mentoring	38 days x 1 hour a day	38 hours
		212 hours total

5d. Program Evaluation

Student performance data (i.e. CST, CELDT, Quarterly Assessments, student work samples, etc.) will measure the effectiveness of professional development. The Instructional Leadership Team will analyze data to determine how professional development is impacting student achievement. As a means to gather evidence, this team will conduct classroom observations to determine quality of implementation of professional development content. Apart from professional development feedback and data analysis, teachers will reflect on their instructional practices with grade level colleagues on an ongoing basis (See Appendix 17).

6. Professional Culture**6a. Professional culture**

Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars' (GLAYS) mission of creating global, critical thinkers who are socially just and prepared for higher education requires a strong professional culture with teacher and staff collaboration. Teachers bring strengths that will be cultivated and challenges that will be supported. By working in grade levels, affinity groups, and as a whole, teachers will collaborate to build their capacities and leadership abilities. The Instructional Leadership Team and eight additional shared-decision making teams will support professional growth and development (See Section 9). It will be comprised of the school principal, assistant principal, and grade level chairs. It will use student data and teacher surveys to facilitate the targeted professional development plan, provide ongoing grade level workshops, and give individual teacher support (See Section 5).

6b. Evaluation

Guided by the California Standards for the Teaching Profession, GLAYS teacher support and evaluation process is designed to enhance teacher professional growth and development. The domains of support include:

- Engaging and Supporting All Students in Learning
- Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments
- Understanding and Organizing Subject Matter
- Planning Instruction and Designing Learning Experiences
- Assessing Student Learning
- Developing as a Professional Educator

Ultimately, it is about helping teachers become self-regulated and accountable professionals. Through a comprehensive process of both formative and summative assessments, administrators, in collaboration with grade level chairs and colleagues, will provide feedback. Formative evaluations will provide teachers with ongoing feedback on how to improve their practice. Grade level chairs, in collaboration with their colleagues, will participate in focused observations and conversations to identify areas of need for each teacher. Feedback will be provided through a comprehensive narrative that offers recommendations to implement and support options for learning. The principal will conduct summative evaluations. The Governance Board will make end of year decisions on tenure, personnel assignments, transfers, and dismissals, as defined by Article X of the UTLA/LAUSD Bargaining Agreement.

Grade level chairs will guide conversations based on data and student need. Through this mentoring process, teachers will work with grade level chairs to reflect on their practice and identify the appropriate supports. Lesson study, classroom observations, and *Focused Conversations* will address student and teacher needs (See Table 4). Additional opportunities for support and follow-up will be provided once a month through the *Gratts Academy for Teachers on Saturday* (GATS) (See Section 5).

Table 4

Focused Conversation		
Consulting	Collaborating	Coaching
Share information, advice, resources about procedures, learning, learners, curriculum and practices	Co-develop information, ideas, approaches, share and exchange resources and model a collegial relationship for professional practice.	To support ideas, production decision-making, and ultimately to become self-directed learners.

Through the partnership with UCLA's Center X, extended coaching will be provided. This external support brings an additional perspective to the professional development process for the faculty and support personnel (See Section 5). New teacher support will also be crucial to ensure improved student achievement. They will participate in a comprehensive mentoring program where they will receive feedback that is consistent with their learning and builds on their progress (See Section 5).

Cohesion and alignment of teacher practice and program implementation are key to school wide growth. Vertical articulation across programs and grade levels will provide opportunities to share program implementation, best practices, and key learning about student progress. This alignment supports GLAYS' vision of creating a seamless continuum from age 2 through 6th grade.

6c. Feedback

Administrators and members of the Instructional Leadership Team will provide feedback through a comprehensive narrative based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession that will identify areas of strength and challenges in a teacher's practice. It will offer support in a timely manner and identify personalized professional development. Student data and teacher practice will identify the methods which best support student academic achievement.

7. Serving Specialized Populations

7a. Specialized Instruction

Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars (GLAYS) has selected key instructional strategies that will help our specialized student population (students with disabilities, English learners, gifted and talented students, homeless students, and culturally and linguistically diverse student) acquire the knowledge base, skill sets, and academic language needed to access the core instructional program. This supports our vision that all students will become global, critical thinkers who are socially just scholars. These strategies developed by Aida Walqui and Robert Marzano, are aligned with the instructional strategies used by all students (See Section 2e). Some of the strategies that are especially effective with this population are Direct Instruction, Strategy Instruction, and Performance Instruction.

- Direct instruction, a strategy essential in giving explicit instruction in all content areas, is incorporated in both adopted programs: *California Treasures*, English Language Arts and the *California Treasures English Language Development*.
- Strategy Instruction is a model for teaching processes that involves a complex interaction of component skills. All students will be taught *Language Learning Strategies* (Oxford, 1990). These strategies are actions students take to help them acquire, retain, use and recall information in a more meaningful and effective way.
- Performance Instruction requires teachers to design contextualized “performances” and to teach students to access, interpret, produce, and disseminate content in authentic ways to show mastery of California Content standards.

Teachers will be instructed on the use of effective instructional strategies for students age two through 6th grade including: grouping, print rich environment, Thinking Maps, adapted books/texts, and differentiated instruction. In addition, specialized strategies will be used with students with disabilities: pivotal response, picture communication system, and social stories (See Appendix 18).

7ai. Special Education

The goal of the Special Education Team is to work collaboratively, follow LAUSD Special Education Policies and Procedures, and to maximize resources and talents as they serve the population of the community. The Special Education Team includes the Special Education Teacher, Language and Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Adapted Physical Education Teacher, School Psychologist, and others. The team will support the school site in maintenance and compliance with the Modified Consent Decree (MCD) Outcomes.

Procedural safeguards will be used to identify and evaluate students who have or may have a disability. We will adhere to the district's policy of *Child Find* where all staff will be trained to

identify children with disabilities. Students not making academic progress will then go into the RTI² process. Interventions will be implemented and monitored through the SST model. Students making limited progress or those who may have a disability will be assessed for special education eligibility. Using multiple measures, such as *Woodcock-Johnson*, *Brigance*, *Kaufman Test Educational Achievement*, *Cognitive Assessment System*, *Test of Auditory Processing Skills*, *Test of Visual Perception*, and *Behavior Assessment System for Children*, appropriate staff will determine eligibility for special education and related services that meet federal and state mandates.

If determined to be eligible, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, which includes parents, will develop an IEP based on student academic and social needs. IEPs will be implemented, monitored, and evaluated for all students identified with special education needs. They will be reviewed annually or as needed to determine progress towards goals. Students will be re-evaluated at least once every three years to determine their progress and eligibility for continued special education programming and services. Clear communication to parents of procedural rights, involvement, participation and cooperation will expand the potential for successful implementation of the child's IEP.

7a.ii. Students with Disabilities

GLAYS is committed to the provision of services designed to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities will receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) as determined by the IEP. In order to provide for continuity of services and a coherent program, GLAYS will address the needs of students with disabilities in the LRE as follows:

- A Pre-School Mixed Program at the Early Education Center for ages 3 and 4
- Special day programs at the Primary Center for grades K through 1
- Special day programs at the Elementary campus for grades 2 through 6

We will serve the wide spectrum of children with disabilities in the special education program and those in the general education classroom. The Resource Specialist Program addresses the needs of students classified as mild/moderate and moderate/severe. General and special education teachers will collaborate and co-teach to allow opportunities for special education students to mainstream with typically developed peers in a LRE.

7a.iii. Extended School Year

Extended School Year (ESY) services will be in the summer for four weeks for students with disabilities who have unique needs and require special education and/or related services supplementing the regular academic year. ESY services will be based on student need and determined by the IEP team. ESY's purpose is to assist a student in his or her ability to maintain the skills at risk of regression or for students with severe disabilities to attain the critical skills or self-sufficiency goals essential to their continued progress. Services may include curriculum instruction, language and speech, occupational therapy, and adapted PE.

7a.iv. English Language Learners and Standard English Learners

The California English Language Development Test (CELDT) will be administered to all students with a home language other than English. The results of these assessments are used to identify

English Language Learners (ELLs) and assign a language proficiency level. CELDT results are used to monitor the students' annual language proficiency progress.

Parents are given the opportunity to select the instructional program that best meets their child's needs. The following programs will be offered: Structured English Immersion (SEI), Mainstream English or Alternative Programs: Dual Language or Basic Bilingual.

Once students are placed in an instructional program, classrooms will be comprised of no more than two English Language Development (ELD) levels. This will support differentiation and individualized instruction. All students, regardless of program type, will receive one hour of daily ELD to ensure mastery of the California ELD and English language arts content standards. The adopted ELD program, *California Treasures English Language Development*, addresses all English language proficiency levels and builds students' academic language.

Lessons will be differentiated based upon a students' ELD level. Teachers will incorporate the research based Title III ELD Practicum Strategies: *Think-Pair-Share*, *Backward Buildup*, *Pull Out Talk/Write*, *Vocalized Reading*, and *Repeat/Read/Recite by All by Some, and by One Person (RASP)* to differentiate and support student learning. Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD). Strategies will also be used to augment the *California Treasures ELD* program (See Appendix 19).

In Early Education, students will be provided with multiple opportunities to practice oral language development. Cooperative learning groups and opportunities for role-play will maximize the student's language output. An emphasis will be placed on language acquisition where students will be provided meaningful and varied opportunities to practice language in authentic and relevant ways.

Through Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) ELLs will access content instruction to successfully master grade level standards. Students will develop academic language to express critical thinking processes and abstract concepts. Instruction will draw on the work of Susana Dutro and her emphasis on forms and functions. The English language arts curriculum also supports ELLs by providing them the opportunity to fully engage in literacy learning through the use of *Accelerated Reader* and *Writers Express* programs. Additional instructional strategies such as *Thinking Maps*, realia, hands-on learning, and differentiated instruction will supplement the core curriculum and meet all students' needs.

Standard English Learners (SEL) will receive instruction that is culturally responsive and tailored to meet their needs. Teachers will understand that language is an integral part of an individual's identity and culture and must be recognized and respected.

7b. At-Risk Students

Once at-risk students are identified, staff will proceed through a problem solving process in order to develop strategies and support students (See Section 2c). Services for students in at-risk situations may include:

- Students with low achievement are offered services and interventions such as attending the Learning Center. Intervention materials from the adopted curriculum programs will be used to plan RTI² lessons that target the students assessed level of need. The Psychiatric Social Worker (PSW) will offer counseling to support the students' academic and social development.

- Students living in poverty, including the homeless, are referred to partner agencies (*Families in Schools* and *Youth Policy Institute*) that provide social/emotional/physical support, food, shelter, and workshops for parents (See Section 8).
- Students with behavioral and emotional issues will receive school-based social skills instruction and consultation support. Through professional development, teachers receive classroom management training to better assist and support all students. The PSW will refer students in need of additional support to partner agencies (*Youth Policy Institute* and *GEL*) that specialize in behavior supports (See Section 8).
- Students experiencing sexually related issues will be offered school-based counseling for both the student and family. If additional support is needed, students will be referred to partner agencies (e.g. *Planned Parenthood*, Assembly Bill 3623 referrals).

8. Family and Community Engagement Strategy

8a. Identification

Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars (GLAYS) has been serving this community for 14 years. Thirty-five percent of staff members grew up in this community, 20% still live here today, and 20% have worked here since Gratts opened. Through a shared history, students, parents, and staff have a common vision and commitment to the school.

Located in the second dense area in Los Angeles, the campus covers approximately one-half square mile and has high levels of poverty and crime. Historically, this area is a first stop for many immigrants from Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador. It is estimated that 70% of the adult population is foreign born with a median 3rd grade education. Part of this population includes indigenous groups speaking languages such as K'njobal and Quiche. The median resident age is 26.6 years, approximately 38% are single parent households, and 99% of the residences are rentals. The median household income is \$19,337. Ninety-five percent of the families are living below the poverty level, as indicated by their children's eligibility for the federal free lunch program. Gangs, drugs, and homelessness are all challenges our students face in their daily lives. Poverty levels directly affect the amounts of educational resources such as home libraries and computers that impact academic achievement. In spite of these challenges, this community is resilient and parents are committed to helping them excel in school.

Gratts Elementary has been in this community for the past 14 years and the staff has developed relationships with families that give us unique insight into their daily lives. We witness the violence and challenges our families deal with on a daily basis. Home visits have helped develop a better understanding of the whole child. Through community needs assessments, we know our families struggle with healthcare and legal issues. We have learned that many of our students live in small, crowded quarters with limited resources and space for schoolwork. Parent language and levels of education limit the amount of at-home support. We have also learned that due to levels of poverty many students suffer from lack of proper nutrition.

GLAYS will maintain partnerships already established by Gratts in the community to address the challenges we know our families face. For example, *Aztec Rising* works with the community on gang prevention; *Planned Parenthood* provides information and hands-on experiences to promote healthier eating habits and combat diabetes; *Reading to Kids* increases the number of books at

home; and local universities cultivate the expectation of higher education. Through our annual *Parent Colloquium*, *Lee conmigo/Read with Me*, weekly parent workshops, ESL classes, and our Parent Center led by a parent liaison, we provide families with access to community and school resources.

8b. Family and Community Engagement

The Community Engagement Plan consists of several components that develop a sense of community and engage parents in their child's education. These components provide access to health and human services, adult education for parents and community members, and additional support for student learning. Two members of the community are on the Governance Board in order to ensure effective communication within the broader school vicinity (See Section 9). The plan consists of six synchronized components: Community Partnership Outreach, Direct and Immediate Social-Emotional Support and Crisis Intervention, Family Assistance, Shared Decision Making, Home-School Connection, and Classroom Support (See Appendix 20).

The Parent Center is the heart of the GLAYS support system. The school has a six-hour community representative to coordinate the various programs offered at school. He or she refers parents to resources in the community and serves as a liaison between the school and community. The center is where parents sign up to volunteer, attend ESL classes, and education classes such as technology, parenting, and leadership. Childcare for young children is provided to allow parents to attend classes.

The vision of our annual *Parent Colloquium* is to empower parents to become advocates for their children. Three hundred parents come together with community members and agencies to have critical dialogue and learn about resources, tools, and strategies that empower them to take action. Through surveys and conversations, parents identify specific challenges they face on a daily basis. Staff and parents organize the event to address these specific needs. Seminars are divided into three categories: education, law, and health. Three years ago, child/parent workshops were added with topics related to educational, emotional, and social issues. Through this forum parents have an opportunity to learn with their child about gang prevention, drugs, sex education, and resources to access higher education. In addition to seminars, the colloquium includes a community fair featuring non-profit agencies that showcase various services that are available to our families. The colloquium has featured powerful keynote speakers such as: Dolores Huerta, Alma Flor Ada, Richard Alonzo, and Antonia Darder. These inspirational leaders speak to our parents and community members, reaffirming the critical role they play in their child's education.

Parents, teachers, and representatives from community agencies lead the seminars. The faculty, administration, and local church youth groups volunteer by setting and cleaning up, providing day care for three to five year olds, organizing activities for older students, and address other event needs. Local restaurants and stores participate by donating food and door prizes. Community agencies and health entities provide information booths.

As a result of the *Parent Colloquium*, Gratts now has ESL classes for parents 4 times a week and weekly parent workshops related to education, legal issues, or social topics. Due to these workshops and classes, many of our parents are now politically active, improving not only their children's education but also bettering the community. For example, after learning their rights in a workshop series provided by the Mexican American Leadership Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF),

parents were able to secure a fully equipped computer lab as well as a community center on campus.

Finally, GLAYS' Interdisciplinary Units of Inquiry (See Table 1) will help to build families' involvement and understanding of the curriculum. All students will address six universal questions throughout the year, allowing parents and siblings to become more involved in each other's learning. For example, if a family has three children: a four year old in early education, a third grader, and a sixth grader, all of them will be focused on the same guiding question simultaneously (i.e. *What can we learn from nature?*). Yet, each will be studying developmentally appropriate units of inquiry (i.e. Early Ed: *My Favorite Animal*, 3rd grade: *Those Amazing Animals*, and 6th grade: *Our Incredible Earth*). This framework encourages families to work together as active participants in the curriculum while developing common academic language.

8c. Key Community Partnerships

Many community partners support our vision of creating global, critical thinkers and socially just scholars prepared for higher education. Key partnerships include: *Inner-City Arts*, *Reading to Kids*, *LA's BEST*, *Youth Policy Institute*, *Families in Schools*, *UCLA Impact*, and *First 5 LA*.

Inner-City Arts is a non-profit organization that provides off-campus arts education in the fields of visual arts, ceramics, dance, music, drama, and poetry to children in the inner city. Gratts *Elementary* has been working with *Inner-City Arts* for the past 12 years where students participate in creative and fun lessons that develop English language and critical thinking skills. Through the appreciation and understanding of the arts, students gain self-esteem, develop their creativity, and learn the value of collaboration.

Reading to Kids is a grassroots organization that works with at-risk children to foster a love of reading. This program was first created at *Gratts Elementary* in 1999. In this monthly reading club held on Saturdays, volunteers read to small groups of children by grade level. Parents receive training on how to read aloud to their children, which is critical to build the social bond that nourishes the love of reading. Families in attendance receive books for their home libraries.

Families in Schools is an organization that provides programs, curriculum, and technical assistance from pre-k through 12th grade and has been working with Gratts for the past nine years. GLAYS has implemented two of their components, *Lea conmigo* (Read with Me) and *Transition to Middle School*. *Lea conmigo* is a family program designed to improve early literacy skills. It engages families in early reading activities by sending home a weekly supply of award-winning children's books. *Transition to Middle School* provides a curriculum that helps parents navigate the school system and ultimately prepare their children for higher education.

LA's BEST is a non-profit organization that provides a safe and supervised environment for children after school from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. This program has been in place for 13 years at Gratts and provides students with homework assistance and creative enrichment activities. *LA's BEST* site staff maintains close communication with teachers in order to support classroom instruction and ensure individual student needs are met. In a study conducted by UCLA/CRESST, researchers found that *LA's BEST* students are 20% less likely to drop out of school and 30% less likely to commit juvenile crime.

Youth Policy Institute (YPI) provides education and training in low socio-economic communities. *YPI* began working with Gratts 2 years ago when we received the Belmont Full Service Community Program Grant. As part of the five-year, 1.5 million dollar grant, a *YPI* coordinator works full-time to streamline access to resources at school and community agencies. Part of their work has already included funding intersession classes, providing clothing and school supplies for families in need, and funding parent workshops.

UCLA Impact: Urban Teacher Residency is a partnership between UCLA Center X, Los Angeles Small Schools Center, and LAUSD Local District 4. This innovative program will transform teacher preparation in the early years of child development. They will develop a model site for educating children age 2 through 5 in partnership with UCLA's Department of Psychology, connect early education seamlessly to K-6 programs on elementary campuses, and provide a pathway for UCLA undergraduates to become certified as exemplary education teachers.

First 5 LA builds upon existing early childhood development programs by integrating them with parenting/family supports, as well as health and social services. Services are culturally and linguistically appropriate, and sensitive to the needs of diverse populations including children with disabilities and other special needs. *First 5 LA* will provide parents with early childhood classes, educators who will work with families, and will coordinate community-based and family-related services. *First 5 LA* will recruit and train parents as community advocates to promote greater social networking among parents and community agencies. *First 5 LA* will improve the quality of early childhood by providing training on issues directly affecting children from the prenatal stage through age 5 such as nutrition and developmentally appropriate behavior.

(See Letters of Support from Partners in Appendix 21)

9. Governance

Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars (GLAYS) will be governed by a democratic system where all stakeholders are part in the decision-making and shared responsibility, which supports the academy's vision of creating a socially just climate. This governance structure, in alignment with the Pilot Model, allows for effective communication, purposeful planning, fair evaluation, and accountability among all stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents, students, classified staff, community members, and partners) in addressing the needs of the whole child. The Pilot concept will allow us to create a collaborative culture in which faculty, administrators, and the school community work together to create a learning environment which best meets our students' and families' needs.

GLAYS will work collaboratively to close the achievement gap by providing our students with a quality standards-based instructional program driven by data. Various data related to student achievement will be collected, analyzed, discussed, and utilized by all stakeholders in order to make accurate, purposeful decisions to monitor student progress and set goals. The Governance Board and eight advisory councils will act on behalf of all stakeholders.

1. **School Governance Board:** The Governance Board will be in charge of maintaining the vision and mission, annually reviewing and approving items such as: Elect to Work Agreement, budget, school policies and procedures, school calendar, hiring, and evaluating the principal and teachers. The Governance Board will review performance indicators to

ensure we are in compliance with state and federal guidelines and making consistent academic progress. The group will be composed of: the principal, four elected teachers (one representative from each small learning community), one elected classified staff member, four elected parents, and two appointed community members. The Student Council President and two professional partners will serve as advisory members. The purpose of this democratic system is to make school-wide decisions based on recommendations from the advisory committees such as ELAC/CEAC, Instructional Leadership Team, and the Student Council (See Appendix 22). The board will meet monthly or as needed and by-laws will be created after its formation.

2. **Instructional Leadership Team:** The primary responsibility of this team will be to oversee the creation, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum. They will make modifications, refine the curriculum, and analyze data to support its development. The Instructional Leadership Team will also promote academic achievement through various events (i.e. Gratts Reading and Math Activities Week and the GLAYS Science Fair). This team will be comprised of the principal, one teacher per grade level, coaches, assistant principal, elementary instruction specialist, generic assistant principal, early education specialist, and representatives from UCLA, USC, *Inner-City Arts*, *Families in Schools*, and *Beyond the Bell*. They will meet weekly or as needed.
3. **Intervention Team:** This team will communicate and collaborate to identify at-risk students using a protocol to provide targeted services and monitor student progress (See Sections 2 and 7). It will be comprised of administrators, teachers, a resource specialist, school nurse, a psychologist, Psychiatric Social Worker (PSW), and parents. The following three subgroups will work collaboratively to support the intervention programs: Student Success Team (SST), Language Appraisal Team (LAT), and Coordination of Services Team (COST). They will meet weekly or as needed.
4. **CEAC and ELAC Councils:** These councils will discuss and advise the governance board on issues and needs of Title I or English Language Learners to help raise student achievement. These groups will be comprised of elected parents with students in these categories and will meet monthly.
5. **Operations Team:** The primary responsibilities of this team will be to create a school wide safety/emergency plan and review the budget pertaining to facilities. This group will be comprised of the administrators, teachers, school administrative assistant, plant manager, coordinators, and parents. They will make recommendations to the governance board and meet quarterly or as needed.
6. **Academy Affiliates:** This group's primary purpose is to establish alliances with the school and support a college conscious culture (i.e. Spirit Week, College Pride Week, and career-related events). This group will be comprised of staff, parents, professional partners, and community members. They will meet monthly and report to the Governance Board.
7. **Student Leadership Council:** The primary purpose of this council is to provide students with opportunities to develop leadership skills and prepare them to be responsible members of our community and society. This team will organize and promote real life experiences and project-based learning activities that support our school vision and mission in order to motivate students to become global, critical thinkers and be socially just scholars (i.e. Summer Leadership Camp, Food Drive, and Pennies for Peace). The group, comprised of

two teacher advisors, an administrator, a parent, and elected student representatives from grades four through six, will meet weekly.

8. **Parent Community Alliance:** The purpose of this team is to facilitate communication between parents, teachers, and staff (i.e. Parent Colloquium, Community Partnership Outreach, and Home and School Connection). This group will also find community resources and advise the School Governance Board of parent needs. It will be led by the parent liaison and comprised of parents and community members. They will coordinate weekly workshops at the Parent Center and meet monthly or as needed.

The Governance Board and advisory councils will communicate with each other through representatives attending monthly meetings (per agenda) and as needed to ensure all members are working on common goals. They will also contribute to a summary of their work in a monthly electronic newsletter.

GLAYS' school governance structure allows for distributed leadership where all stakeholders are held equally accountable to carry out the vision of the school. This governance structure is supported by James P. Spillane and John B. Diamond's theory of distributed leadership where an "organization development includes developing and maintaining a school culture in which norms of trust, collaboration, and collective responsibility for student learning support ongoing conversations about instruction and its improvement" (Spillane and Diamond, 2007).

10. School Leadership & Staffing Plans

10a. Leadership Team Capacity

Under the leadership of Local District (LD) 4, the following core values have driven the professional development program to improve student achievement at *Gratts Elementary*: Learner-Centered Instruction, Collaboration, Transformation, Accountability, and Safety.

With these core values in mind, the leadership teams at *Gratts Elementary* (administrators, teachers, parents, instructional coaches, categorical program coordinators, and the technology advisor) have focused on research to address the needs of English Language Learners, Standard English Learners, students with special needs, and socio-economic disadvantaged students.

Professional development for the leadership teams have focused on the work of Lauren Resnick (accountable talk and regular classroom walkthroughs), Richard Elmore (building school accountability and leadership capacity), Michael Fullan (personalized pedagogy through data-driven school planning), Aida Walqui (ensuring universal access to standards through regular student academic experiences and interactions), and Dr. Judy Elliott (systematic RTI²; See Sections 2 and 7). Using this research, instructional practices have been developed to address the needs of the students at *Gratts Elementary*.

To ensure equity and access in all core curricular areas, the Instructional Leadership Team has studied the frameworks and state adopted materials to understand the pedagogy and intent of the programs. The Lesson Study process has enabled the instructional team to deepen their knowledge of California Content Standards and provide a means to reflect on instructional practices. LD 4 and the *Gratts Elementary* staff have studied the work of Aida Walqui and Robert Marzano to address the needs of English Language Learners. Based on their research, teachers have used Lesson Study to collaboratively develop lessons that focus on linguistic and academic development.

For the last five years in LD 4, California Standards Test (CST) data suggests the investment in leadership development has resulted in a 16.9% increase in the percentage of students scoring Advanced or Proficient in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics. At *Gratts Elementary*, the rate of increase has been 9.5% and has benefited all student subgroups: African American: 5.4%, Hispanic: 9.2%, Socio-Economic Disadvantaged: 9.3%, English Learners: 0.5%, and Students with Disabilities: 10.2%.

In establishing leadership roles for school improvement at *Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars* (GLAYS), we are adopting the key principles that have guided effective implementation in districts awarded the Broad Foundation Prize for Excellence in Public Education. In these districts, the common factors include:

- A system-wide approach to improving instruction that articulates curricular content and provides instructional supports
- A vision focused on student learning and guided by instructional improvement
- Decisions based on data and research
- New approaches to professional development that involve teachers in relevant, useful, and coherent research-based instructional strategies
- Leadership roles focused on support and monitoring of collaborative instructional decision-making
- Sustained reform

10b. Staffing Model

To address the needs of all students at GLAYS, staffing will be comprised of highly qualified individuals with the appropriate credentials, skills, and experiences. Staff members will also possess a belief system that aligns with the academy's vision and mission. The seamless continuum of education from age 2 through 6th grade will include 7 teachers and 14 aides for the Early Education Center; 16 teachers for the Primary Center; and 31 teachers for the Elementary School (See Appendix 23). We will also provide the services of APEIS, early education specialist, categorical program advisor, teacher librarian, instructional coach, technology coordinator, psychiatric social worker, nurse, early education office manager, and two school administrative assistants to support our program (See Appendix 24).

10c. Compensation

(See Salary Schedules Appendix 23)

10d. School Leadership

We believe those who live and work in the GLAYS community should have a voice in making decisions regarding the school. The Pilot model creates a shared-decision making governance to ensure all stakeholders are represented in the school's vision, budget, policies, and staffing.

The principal selected for the Primary and Elementary campuses and the Early Education Supervisor selected for the Early Education Center will both be dynamic, innovative instructional leaders who share our vision of transforming education for our students. The principal and supervisor commit to building a learning continuum for students ages 2 through 6th grade in an

environment that affords them an opportunity to learn. They will foster inquiry, critical thinking, social justice, global awareness, and leadership skills. The principal and supervisor will both work closely with community leaders to ensure GLAYS is a vital site for teaching, learning, research, and service (See Principal Responsibilities Appendix 25 and Early Education Supervisor Responsibilities Appendix 26).

The principal and supervisor positions will be posted on the LAUSD website, Edjoin, Education Week, and the AALA newsletter. Candidates will submit resumes that will be reviewed and evaluated by the Governance Board. In addition to the interview, members of the board will visit the candidates' current school sites to evaluate school culture (through observation, interviews, etc). The Governance Board will select the principal and supervisor with final approval by the Superintendent (per the LAUSD/UTLA Pilot Schools Agreement). Hiring for the principal and supervisor will take place in March 2010.

10e. Leadership Team

Recruitment for leadership positions beyond the principal (assistant principal, early education supervisor, etc.) will be posted on the LAUSD website, Edjoin, and Education Week. Candidates will submit resumes that will be reviewed, evaluated, and selected by the Governance Board (See Leadership Team Responsibilities Appendix 27). Hiring for these positions will take place in March 2010.

10f. Recruitment of Teaching Staff

Teachers at *Gratts Elementary* will staff GLAYS, per the LAUSD/UTLA Agreement, credential and any qualifications and dedication to our philosophy and desire to be a part of our learning committee. Recruitment of additional and future teachers, coordinators, and coaches, will be posted on the LAUSD website, Edjoin, and Education Week. Candidates will be invited to an open house to learn about GLAYS. In addition to the interviews, the final candidates will be observed teaching at their current site, submit a taped lesson, or complete a demonstration lesson. The Governance Board will select the faculty. Hiring for these positions will begin in March 2010. New teachers will participate in a teacher-mentoring program. Coaches will be assigned to classrooms where they will model, co-teach, and observe instruction. Teachers will receive constructive feedback and assistance to help improve their practice (See section 5b).

11. Operations

All stakeholders are committed to ensuring all students have access to a safe and clean school environment. This section addresses our plans to operate *Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars* (GLAYS) securely and efficiently.

- a. We will continue to use all existing LAUSD operational services provided at the school site and follow Collective Bargaining Agreements.
- b. We agree to enter into a discussion regarding the viability of master service agreements.
- c. The School Operations Tasks outlines individuals responsible for coordinating and leading all non-academic aspects of school management (See Appendix 28).
- d. The Operations Start-up Plan Timeline provides a time-line and schedule for the operations-related activities we will undertake to ensure a successful school opening and beyond (See Appendix 29).

The operational activities and time-line listed will allow GLAYS to maintain continuity.

12. Finances

12a. Funding

Gratts Learning Academy for Young Scholars (GLAYS) will receive funding via LAUSD's transparent process (based on ADA). Funding figures are shared with the governance council who will make decisions for expenditures based on data, parent council recommendations, and a review of budget survey results provided to stakeholders.

12b. Budget Narrative

The financial management plan aligns with the mission, vision, educational program, and staffing plan because it addresses the needs of all students. School wide goals and student academic achievement will help target the school's financial resources. We will review data, identify areas of need, and make budget decisions that address student needs. This will effectively serve the needs of all students. The school's budget will be developed and reviewed on a monthly basis, with maximum input by the Governance Board and advisory councils.

Funds will be targeted to: staff highly qualified faculty and support personnel; implement the instructional programs; provide professional development in core instruction, intervention and enrichment; provide extended funding for staff to support academic achievement; build partnerships with community agencies to provide health and social services for students and their families; and expand parental engagement.

School wide goals determine the appropriate resources to allocate and fund. The Governance Board, Instructional Leadership Team, and staff will review decisions on the use of personnel and/or materials regularly. Multiple checks and balances ensure that support and resources are maximized and targeted to achieve our goals.

Fundraising will be an integral component of the academy's finances. The booster club will organize seasonal fundraising campaigns. These include: fall catalog sale with annual targets of \$15,000, spring chocolate sale with annual targets of \$15,000, and on-going sale through its student store with annual targets of \$5,000. The revenue gained from these fundraisers will be used to pay for after school electives, busses for field trips, and special student assemblies (e.g. dance troupes, multi-cultural performers, professional authors, etc.). Existing partners will continue to provide scholarships to assist students to attend an institution of higher education. Supporters include: The Gratts Family with annual targets of \$500 and La Curacao with annual targets of \$1,000. Future partners will be identified to provide additional student scholarships.

12c. Internal Financial Controls

Rigorous and consistent fiscal control procedures are common practice at GLAYS. Such procedures include monthly reconciliation of purchases, chronological filing of receipts in preparation for audits, and regular meetings with Fiscal Specialists to ensure regulatory standards are being met. Business Tools for Schools (BTS) software will be used to maintain fiscal records. BTS reports are shared with the governance council on a monthly basis. Fiscal records are maintained for a minimum of five years.

Gratts Learning Academy
for
Young Scholars

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