Chester W. Nimitz Middle School

Nimitz Has No Limits Team

Public School Choice 4.0 Plan

Submitted October 31, 2012

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VISION AND INSTRUCTIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Chester W. Nimitz Middle School is founded on the belief that all students must be prepared for college and future educational endeavors so they are ready to meet the challenge of 21st century careers in a global economy. We believe student learning is achieved through a partnership between students, teachers, parents, and community. We believe students learn best when expectations are high and clear, classrooms are student-centered, and instruction is rigorous and based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). We believe students must be independent, self-directed learners who are able to work collaboratively and communicate effectively with the confidence to be successful. We believe students must possess a strong moral and socially conscious perspective in order to meet global challenges.

At Nimitz Middle School, our mission is to create an atmosphere that is conducive to engaging families, communities, and school to work together to prepare all students academically and socially based on the students' values and aspirations. We will prepare students to complete successfully the high school A through G requirements so they are prepared for college and careers. We will create an environment that values students' interests and fosters academic excellence, creates lifelong learners, builds positive community leaders, and develop our students' sense of social responsibility. Through our A.N.C.H.O.R.S. for Success, we pledge:

A   All students' **ACADEMIC NEEDS** in our school-wide Title I school will be met by implementing instructional strategies that include SDAIE, AVID, project-based learning, and differentiated instruction to cater to all learning modalities as measured by meeting proficiency on the *California English Language Development Test (CELDT),* district, state, and school assessments.

N   All members of our school community will feel part of a **NURTURING ENVIRONMENT** where they feel safe and supported. As a school community, we will create a school culture that values mutual respect, responsibility, and cooperation. This will be measured by responses from students, parents, and staff on the School Experience Survey.

C   All students will participate in rigorous, culturally relevant **CURRICULUM** that is standards- and research-based, aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and delivered by highly qualified teachers as defined by No Child Left Behind (NCLB). This will be measured by meeting proficiency on district, state, and school assessments as well as school marks.

H   All parents and school staff will be part of a **HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP** to ensure the success of all students. Regular communication will be maintained using Jupiter Grades, school website, and written and phone communication on informational and operational issues. This will be measured by attendance at school functions, student and parent use of Jupiter Grades, and responses on the School Experience Survey.

O All teachers, to meet the new requirements of CCSS, will participate in professional development to create collaboratively **ORGANIZED** units of instruction that will include essential questions, teaching strategies, and culminating tasks. This will be measured by implementation of the units that include pre and post assessments, posting of essential questions, and student work samples of culminating tasks.

R All students will have the academic, technological, and community-based **RESOURCES** necessary to communicate effectively their thoughts orally and in writing with focus, energy, and passion. This will be measured by the district, state, and school assessments as well as school marks.

S All students will practice the skills necessary for **SUCCESS** in the 21st century. These skills include the ability to think critically, collaborate effectively, adapt to diverse situations, and demonstrate resiliency as measured through self-reflective questionnaires, portfolios, peer feedback, and teacher anecdotal records.

Our instructional philosophy encompasses our belief that all our students will succeed academically and emotionally when provided with a student-centered, engaging curriculum in a supportive, nurturing environment. Our teachers will work together with parents and community members, through our home-school partnership, to support the learning in the classroom. Our teachers will provide instruction that is research- and standards-based to help our students perform to the best of their ability so they are ready to meet the challenges of 21st century careers. All our teachers will model collaboration through professional learning communities (PLCs) as well as interdisciplinary and vertical teams. All our teachers will utilize AVID and SDAIE strategies and incorporate collaborative group work to help all students, specifically our English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs). All our teachers will design units of instruction using Understanding by Design (UbD) that are aligned to the CCSS. All our teachers will utilize project-based learning (PBL) to help students synthesize their learning. All our teachers will integrate academic reading and writing across all subject areas. All our teachers will include life skills, as they are an important component to guarantee preparedness for college and careers. All our teachers recognize that motivation is a key factor for student success and we dedicate ourselves to researching and implementing all strategies that will help our students become successful. All our teachers, as lifelong learners, will continue develop the necessary skills to evolve as 21st century practitioners.

SCHOOL DATA PROFILE/ANALYSIS

<u>**School History**</u>

Chester W. Nimitz Middle School is located in the city of Huntington Park and serves students from Bell, Maywood, and Huntington Park. The original school opened as Carmelita Avenue Elementary School in 1928. In 1953, the elementary school became Carmelita Junior High School, and in 1966 was renamed in honor of Admiral Chester William Nimitz. In 1980, Nimitz Junior High became Nimitz Middle School when the ninth graders moved to the high school and sixth graders moved to Nimitz. Also in 1980, our school converted to a four-track, year-round schedule due to extreme overcrowding. The following year, we converted to a three-track, Concept 6, schedule. At its peak, our school's enrollment was over 3,600 students, the second largest and most densely populated middle school in the United States.

With the opening of new middle schools in the area, in September 2010, Nimitz returned to a traditional calendar. Nimitz now serves approximately 2,000 students in grades 6 through 8, which is still one of the largest middle school enrollments in the District. With the reduction in students, our teaching staff went from 180 at the height of year-round to a current size of 85. Due to redirected Reduction in Force notices, 24 of our teachers have received RIF notices in each of the past two years, with five teachers losing their jobs in 2012. This has resulted in a destabilization and reorganization of many departments.

Nimitz has also had a great deal of change to its administrative staff over the past three years. With the move to a traditional calendar, we went from six administrators to four administrators, two of whom were new to our school. In the fall of 2011, with the retirement of an assistant principal, another new administrator joined our school. This left only one administrator at our school who had been here more than two years and who was familiar with the school culture. In October 2012, after the principal requested reassignment, an interim principal was placed at our school until a new principal could be selected.

<u>**School Demographics**</u>

The ethnic composition of Nimitz has been stable for the last 20 years with a current Hispanic/Latino population of 98.8%. African Americans make up about 0.1% of the population, whites about 0.08%, and all other ethnicities less than 1%. Nimitz has been a school-wide Title 1 school since 2000. Approximately 17% of our families are Cal Work recipients and 85% of our students qualify for the National Lunch Program. Parent self-reported data indicates that 45% have high school diplomas. The seven feeder elementary school demographics mirror those of Nimitz.

<u>**Areas of Strength**</u>

We have established three discrete programs that have created strong pathways for our students to be college and career ready. These three programs have begun building a rigorous academic culture that has raised test scores and serves as a base for action research. Strategies used in these programs, such as AVID, Project Based Learning (PBL), and teacher collaboration, will be expanded and developed in all our classrooms as a major part of our turnaround effort.

Our <u>School for Advanced Studies</u> (SAS), set up in 2001, provides a high-quality school for gifted and talented students in the local area, serving 515 students including 80 students enrolling on SAS permits. Fourteen of the 24 SAS teachers have earned their certification in gifted education. Currently

315 of these students are identified gifted students, representing 19% of the regular school population, which is triple the District goal of 6%. Approximately 200 potentially gifted students are also enrolled in our SAS. Our SAS offers an enriched curriculum in all academic areas challenging students to become independent, self-directed learners through projects that encourage the use of technology. Sixty percent of our students in SAS demonstrate talent in mathematics and are accelerated to complete Prealgebra, Algebra, and Geometry by the end of eighth grade.

The Math/Science/Technology Magnet School program was introduced within our main campus of Nimitz Middle School in the 2009-10 school year, and has grown into a full functioning program of 266 sixth through eighth grade students. Currently, our magnet program is accessible to all students within the LAUSD school boundaries but draws mostly students from the local area. The Magnet serves a wide range of student abilities from the highly gifted to students qualifying for Special Education services. Our magnet program focuses on math, science and technology, which are integrated into all the core academic subjects. In addition, our students have the opportunity to explore math and science concepts and the use of technology in the array of elective courses that are available to them throughout the year. Our program focuses on helping students to acquire traits of a scholar, incorporating social skills, and exposing them to university requirements and expectations.

In the 2010-11 school year, Nimitz began the Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) program with a small group of eighth grade students, has doubled in size, and now includes seventh graders. Participation is based on teacher recommendation and student self-selection. Students in AVID must be the first-generation college-bound. In AVID, our students learn strategies to help them become college and career ready.

Nimitz Middle School has made steady and substantial academic improvement over the last five years increasing our Academic Performance Index (API) from 642 in 2008 to 724 in 2012. All of our subgroups (Hispanic or Latino, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, English Learners, and Students with Disabilities) exceeded their API growth targets.

Our Attendance Rate of students with 96% or better attendance from the 2007-08 school year through the 2010-11 school year remained consistent. With the implementation of the Attendance Incentive Program in the 2011-12 school year, there was a significant increase in the percentage of students meeting the District goal of 96% attendance. We had the highest attendance for middle schools with an enrollment greater than 1,500 students as of April 2012. This resulted in Nimitz earning a District Attendance Recognition Award for outstanding attendance.

Year	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
96% or Better	65.0%	66.8%	66.7%	66.4%	73.7%

Our Suspension Rate has been cut in half over the last two years. In the 2010-11 school year 372 days were lost to suspension. In the 2011-12 school year, this number was reduced to 122 days. This can be attributed to the implementation of a School wide Positive Behavior Support.

Areas of Improvement

Over the past five years, we have seen growth in all subjects tested by the CST. English Language Arts and Math have made steady progress while Social Science and Science have seen marked improvement. This improvement can be attributed to focusing instruction on key standards, as well as common formative assessments developed collaboratively for use in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.

Additionally, our teachers have utilized a protocol for looking at student work. Our teachers have worked collaboratively to develop curriculum maps and common lessons, in addition to vertical teaming within the departments.

In analyzing our English Language Arts CST data, the number of Proficient and Advanced students has increased by 16% while students who were Far Below Basic and Below Basic has decreased by 12%. We have seen a trend of students moving out of the bottom two levels (BB and FBB) to the higher levels of Proficient and Advanced. Despite an increase of 9% of students who are Proficient or Advanced on the ELA CST from 2010 through 2012, this is also an area of concern, as we remain 6% shy of the District target of 45%.

CST Subject: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS					
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Proficient/Advanced	23.9%	27.1%	30.4%	36.1%	39.4%
Basic	36.0%	35.9%	33.0%	34.4%	32.5%
Below Basic/Far Below Basic	40.1%	37.0%	36.6%	29.5%	28.0%

In regards to Mathematics, the number of students scoring Proficient and Advanced over the same period has increased by 14% while students' scoring Far Below Basic and Below Basic has decreased by 17%. Despite an increase of 4.5% of students who are Proficient or Advanced on the Math CST from 2010 through 2012, our school is still 1.5% shy of the District target of 36%. While this is a general positive trend, closer analysis of course data shows a major concern with our Math 7 and General Math which we have detailed below in our Areas of Concern section.

CST Subject: MATHEMATICS					
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Proficient/Advanced	20.6%	21.7%	26.6%	30.0%	34.5%
Basic	29.9%	27.9%	27.3%	28.8%	33.3%
Below Basic/Far Below Basic	49.5%	50.4%	46.1%	41.1%	32.2%

In Social Science, the number of our students who scored Proficient or Advanced has almost tripled from 15.9% to 45.5% in the past five years. Approximately one-fourth of students are Below Basic or Far Below Basic. This is a decrease of 22.5%. This can be attributed to implementation of the LAUSD Model Lessons and Periodic Assessments for 7th and 8th grades.

CST Subject: SOCIAL SCIENCE					
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Proficient/Advanced	15.9%	22.0%	36.8%	40.2%	45.5%
Basic	35.0%	34.2%	31.7%	27.6%	27.8%
Below Basic/Far Below Basic	49.2%	43.8%	31.5%	32.2%	26.7%

In Science, the number of our students who are Proficient or Advanced has grown significantly over a five-year period. Over 60% of our students are Proficient or Advanced. Additionally, the number of our students who are Below Basic or Far Below Basic has been cut by more than half from 40% to 18%.

CST Subject: SCIENCE					
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Proficient/Advanced	36.2%	36.9%	45.8%	50.9%	61.4%
Basic	24.0%	18.5%	22.9%	20.7%	20.3%
Below Basic/Far Below Basic	39.7%	44.6%	31.2%	28.4%	18.3%

In 2011-12, the student population of Nimitz Middle School was approximately 1,900 students. English Only (EO) students numbered 300, 294 were classified as Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP), and over 1,000 were those who had Reclassified (RFEP). There were 380 students who were classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP). Within the LEP population, 136 were sixth graders, 138 were seventh graders, and 101 were eighth graders. The largest group is students who are Preparing to Reclassify (PRP) totaling 317 students. These students are designated as our Long-Term English Learners (LTELs).

This year, 2012-13, our numbers mirror those of last year. There are 352 students who are classified as LEP, with 238 of those students being LTELs. Over the course of the last three years, there has been a dramatic drop in enrollment of our LEP population. In 2009-2010, our school had 736 LEP students. The LEP population is less than half of that number two years later. Nevertheless, our reclassification rate has increased over the last three years; reclassifying an average of 15% of our LEP students per year. Last year our school's largest LEP population reclassified with 22% meeting the criteria.

Areas of Concern

English Language Arts, despite improvement, remains an area of concern. Approximately 60% of our students are not yet Proficient or Advanced. There are a large number of our sixth graders who enroll needing intervention in English language arts. Approximately one-fourth of our seventh graders and one- fifth of our eighth graders still need intervention in English language arts. There is a strong need to decrease the number of students who require an intervention class and increase the number of students who score at the Proficient or Advanced levels on the ELA CST.

In spite of the increase in reclassification rate, the gap in LEP students' performance in all areas of the CST is substantially below that of the non-LEP population and is an area of major concern. When compared to the general student population, we observed that in all content area state assessments, there is a gap of students performing at the Proficient and Advanced performance level that averages 30% points.

CST Data – 6th Grade LEP population		
Prof/Adv	ELA	Math
2011-12	1%	3%
2010-11	5%	5%

CST Data – 7th Grade LEP population		
Prof/Adv	ELA	Math
2011-12	5%	5%
2010-11	4%	4%

CST Data – 8th Grade – LEP population					
Prof/Adv	ELA	General Math	Algebra	Social Science	Science
2011-12	3%	1%	27%	7%	16%
2010-11	1%	0%	14%	3%	13%

Seventh grade mathematics is a strong area of concern. With the exception of seventh grade mathematics and General Math, all other grade levels and/or subjects met the District goal of 36% proficiency. Approximately three-fourths of our 7th grade students are Basic or lower in mathematics and are not eligible to enroll in Algebra based on the current District guidelines. In the past two years, the number of our 8th grade students taking Algebra has decreased by two-thirds (997 to 333) while the number of our students in General Math (Algebra Readiness) has increased. There is a strong need to increase the number of students who are able to enroll and succeed in Algebra.

CST Subject: Mathematics 2011-12					
	Adv	Prof	Basic	BB	FBB
Math 6	12%	27%	35%	21%	5%
Math 7	9%	18%	31%	30%	12%
Algebra (7)	46%	33%	18%	2%	1%
General Math (8)	1%	9%	39%	32%	19%
Algebra (8)	8%	28%	37%	25%	3%
Geometry (8)	13%	58%	28%	1%	0%

Ten percent of our students at Nimitz are identified as Students with Disabilities (SWD) and are part of our Special Education Program. We serve 198 students in eight different disability groups: Orthopedically Impaired (OI), Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Mental Retardation (MR – including both moderate and severe), Autistic (AUT), Multiple Disabilities Orthopedic (MDO), Other Health Impairment (OHI), Speech and Language Impairment (SLI), and Hard of Hearing (HOH). Our largest group is students with a Specific Learning Disability (SLD). Current data shows 82 students are in the RSP and 109 are in Special Day Program (SDP). On the 2012 CST, 4% of our students were Proficient or Advanced on the CST. In ELA, 80% of our students scored Below Basic or Far Below Basic on the 2012 CST. In Math, 73% of our students scored Below Basic or Far Below Basic on the 2012 CST. For the students who took the 2012 CMA, 81% of our students scored Below Basic or Far Below Basic in ELA and 2% scored Proficient or Advanced. In math, 73% scored Below Basic or Far Below Basic and 14% scored Proficient or Advanced.

Our Parent Involvement is a concern because too many parents are not participating in school functions. Attendance at Back to School Night in August, 2012, was as follows: 57.8% of 6th grade parents attended, 41.7% of 7th grade parents attended, and 39.0% of 8th grade parents attended. Overall, 46.2% of all parents attended the event. Attendance at workshops sponsored by the Parent Center is between 40 and 50 parents regardless of the time of the workshop. For teachers using an online grade program where parents can access their child's grades, only 25% of the parents are logging in to check their children's academic progress. We need a more comprehensive plan to address this issue.

Issues and Challenges

Our first priority area is to improve student achievement in English Language Arts. Currently one-fourth of our students are Below Basic or Far Below Basic on the ELA CST. Although this is an improvement over the past five years, it is still not meeting the District or our expectation. Large percentages of our students scoring Below Basic or Far Below Basic are classified as LEP or has recently reclassified. Slightly less than 40% of our students are Proficient or Advanced. Additionally, one-third of our incoming sixth grade students require a language arts intervention class. Students must be able to

read fluently, comprehend what they read, and communicate effectively in writing to be prepared for college and 21st century careers.

Our second priority area is to decrease the number of our Long Term English Learners (LTELs). Currently 60% of our Limited English Proficient students are classified as LTELs. A significant percentage of these students are also in the special day program for students with disabilities. Students must be prepared to reclassify to be able to enroll in the mainstream English core curriculum so that they are able to meet the A through G requirements in high school and graduate on time. LTEL students also need to improve their performance on the ELA CST.

Our third priority area is to improve achievement in mathematics, specifically seventh grade, so that more of our students are able to qualify and succeed in Algebra. At present, one-third of all students are Proficient or Advanced on the Math CST and one-third are Below Basic or Far Below Basic. One-fifth of our incoming sixth graders require a mathematics intervention class. In the seventh grade, however, only 27% of our students are Proficient or Advanced and 42% are Below Basic or Far Below Basic. If seventh grade students do not perform well on the CST in math, they do not meet the qualifications to enroll in Algebra. Algebra is a gatekeeper class for all other higher-level math classes required for high school graduation as well as college enrollment.

Our fourth priority area is to improve achievement on the CST and California Modified Assessment (CMA) by our special education students. By 2014, per the Modified Consent Decree, special education students must participate in general education classes for a given percentage of the day based on their eligibility. To be successfully included in general education classes our students will need to acquire the necessary English language arts and mathematics skills.

Our fifth and final priority area is to improve the amount and quality of parent engagement. More outreach is needed to get our parents to attend Back to School Night, Parent Conference Night, workshops, and other activities and events. More outreach is needed to assist our parents in the consistent use of Jupiter Grades to monitor their child's grades via the internet or smart phone. More attention must be paid to meeting the needs of our parents in terms of workshop topics and scheduling of meetings.

SCHOOL TURNAROUND

To address the central areas of concern, we are basing our turnaround plan on our beliefs that students learn best when expectations are high and clear for all stakeholders, our classrooms are student-centered, and instruction is rigorous and based on the Common Core State Standards. These beliefs lead us to the following strategies to be implemented and strengthened school wide:

Personalized Learning Environments

Personalized Learning Environment's (PLEs) will be the gateway to increase rigor through a collaborative planning model utilizing the benefits of the small school environment structure. Currently, our students and teachers are divided into Small Learning Academies (SLAs). When our school was on a year-round calendar, there were three SLAs on each track and each had between 12 to 15 teachers. When we moved to a traditional calendar and the number of teachers was reduced, we made the decision to have four SLAs. This structure dramatically increased the number of teachers in each SLA and decreased the personalization and accountability component that must be part of academies.

Beginning the 2013-14 school year, we will move from our current SLA structure to a smaller PLE type structure. Each PLE will have between 12 to 15 teachers composed of two sixth grade interdisciplinary teams, one seventh grade interdisciplinary team, and one eighth grade interdisciplinary team, along with physical education and/or elective teachers. This will allow the sixth grade team to communicate with the seventh grade team, the seventh grade team to communicate with the eighth grade team, thus allowing for vertical articulation. PLEs will center on college and career ready themes where our teachers will think strategically, develop best practices over time, support existing practices immediately, and monitor and support change. We will move away from a structure focused solely on personalization, much like our SLAs are today, to a structure that will include a focus on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Teachers will align curriculum and instruction in order to feel a sense of ownership for the outcome of our students' success because our vertical team and PLE team will be the same. The PLEs will create a school culture of a nurturing environment needed for students to be successful. The teachers within each PLE will have a shared vision, shared leadership, a professional collaborative culture, and a structured time to talk about instructional practices, as well as time to visit each other's classrooms. Our students will be connected to caring adults within a culture of trust and understanding that will lead to greater student achievement. Research has shown that this is the type of atmosphere where middle school students flourish.

Professional Learning Communities

Professional Learning Communities will be our vehicle for professional development. Our teachers will be organized into PLC groups of three to five teachers by subject and grade level. The strategies we have chosen will be introduced and/or reviewed for all teachers as needed. Each PLC will use a continuous improvement cycle to implement, assess, reflect and revise. Our curriculum will be aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as they are implemented throughout the District. Understanding by Design (UbD) will be our primary framework for designing units around the new CCSS to help close the achievement gaps we have identified above. Our school will focus on strengthening curriculum, assessment, and instruction that parallels the CCSS. All PLCs will develop SMART (Strategic, Measurable, Attainable,

Results-Oriented, Time Bound) goals for each instructional unit. Our instructional focus will revolve around reading and writing across the curriculum. We will include all core content areas along with physical education and the elective classes. The units created using UbD will be centered around "enhancing student understanding and in designing more effective curricula and assessments" (Wiggins and McTighe, pg.5), incorporate Project-Based Learning (PBL) as culminating tasks that will foster collaborative learning, build positive community leaders, and help students develop a sense of social responsibility. In order to gauge the effectiveness of the units of study, our PLC groups will collaborate to look at student work, analyze data, focus on providing student intervention, and present opportunities to revise the units of study

   We will see a growth in teacher collaboration, real-world application, and focused units of study that are aligned with the CCSS and the new system of assessments using PLCs to implement UbD and Project-Based Learning (PBL). As part of our common professional culture, teachers will create common formative assessments to use in conjunction with the District Periodic Assessments to effectively gauge student learning (the dates of the District Periodic Assessments will be modified to accommodate the time needed for completion of the activities and projects within the instructional units). These assessments will allow teachers to become more reflective during the Professional Learning Cycle using student data to measure attainment of the benchmarks that were created. The PBL program that is part of our school turnaround will challenge our students with real-world situations to demonstrate their mastery of the standards and retention of the material. Students will understand the learning expectations and be able to self-assess their learning through cooperative learning and interdisciplinary teaching. They will also experience positive interdependence, individual and group accountability, teamwork, and group processing skills.

   When teachers create instructional units of study using UbD, a great deal of focus will be on making the learning objectives student friendly. Students need to know the learning goals of a unit or lesson and criteria for successfully demonstrating proficiency with the goals (Tomlinson and McTighe, 2006). In a student-centered culture, when students are aware at the onset of what they need to know and be able to do, more students will achieve proficiency and fewer students will need Tier 2 intervention. In our first year of implementation, our SMART goal is 100% of our PLCs will create and implement UbD units for a minimum of half their instructional units. In year two, all of our PLCs will create and implement all of their instructional units using UbD.

   Through their PLCs, our teachers will begin utilizing Project Based Learning (PBL) that will be developed within the UbD process. Our students will design projects through an extended process of inquiry in response to complex questions, problems, or challenges. These projects will foster 21st century skills such as collaboration, communication, and critical thinking which will drive students to encounter and grapple with the central concepts and principles of the discipline (http://www.pblonline.org/About/whatisPBL.htm). Compared to traditional classes, students in PBL classes performed better on assessments of content knowledge (Boaler, 1997; Penuel & Means, 2000; Stepien, et al., 1993). PBL will not only meet the academic needs of our students by following the CCSS but will also promote parent participation through parent input in the process of completing projects by means of reflections, questions, and organization of time.

Project Based Learning

   PBL will be used to help close the gap between our students' achievement and targets in all subject areas. We will incorporate PBL as our driving force in curriculum implementation as

we use UbD to frame our curriculum. PBL will not only help produce an innovative Nimitz Middle School student by the end of the eighth grade, but also one that will embrace and meet the challenges of his/her educational career in the 21st century.

   School wide we will have one inquiry based project per class per semester in year one. By year, two we will increase to one project per class per unit. These projects will incorporate AVID and SDAIE strategies to meet the academic needs of all students. Teachers will differentiate and accommodate the needs of all students' ability levels. PLCs will develop, implement, revise, and assess these projects and lessons. Expert teachers who have successfully implemented project-based learning in their classrooms will conduct professional development on these topics.

Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID)

   AVID's mission is to "...close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society". AVID's college-readiness system is designed to increase school wide learning and academic success by raising expectations for student performance and providing students with effective, research-based classroom instruction. AVID strategies will be implemented school wide to increase rigor, critical thinking, collaboration and preparation for college learning. Trained AVID staff will provide meaningful professional development on the AVID strategies which emphasize looking at student work and data, and assist with designing meaningful lessons that include re-teaching strategies.

   The AVID program stresses Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization and Reading (WICOR), which are research-based instructional strategies designed to prepare students for success in rigorous courses. We will increase the use of AVID strategies from two teams to school wide implementation. Over the next two years, all of our teachers will be trained on Cornell Notes, Costa's Levels of Thinking, philosophical chairs, Socratic seminars, and critical reading and writing skills that will be embedded into all units of study. This will help increase critical thinking, higher level questioning, common writing across all curriculum, and critical reading throughout the school day.

FIVE AREAS OF CONCERN

Math

   All math teachers will implement PBL by using interactive notebooks to help students organize and explain their learning. The interactive notebooks will integrate Cornell Notes. This provides a writing component that will prepare students for the future CCSS assessments. Interactive notebooks will help seventh grade math students synthesize their learning so they are better prepared to take Algebra in the eighth grade. Part of PBL will require students to complete Problems of the Month. These problems will challenge students' critical thinking skills, help them apply their conceptual understanding, and develop their ability to interrelate math concepts into the real world. These Problems of the Month and other projects will have a parent component to promote parent involvement. This will consist of parent reflections/survey about their son/daughter's performance on their projects. To address the different type of learners that exist in our school community we will provide all students with the opportunity to produce any given project in a different representation, such as PowerPoint, essay, or video, to meet their needs. Lastly, teachers will incorporate Bloom's Taxonomy in all projects to teach higher-level thinking skills and appeal to multiple intelligences.

English

The CST and District Periodic Assessment data tells us that our students need to improve in all areas of English (reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing, and language conventions). Students need to improve their writing skills as well as their ability to evaluate and revise their writing. As we collaborate and create units of instruction using the UbD model, we will address these specific areas of need and the strategies across all instructional units. Units will include daily lessons that emphasize first good teaching and address re-teaching. Our units will also include other intervention strategies and enrichment. We will include AVID and SDAIE strategies in our daily lesson plans to ensure that all learner needs are addressed. The CCSS call for us to imbed writing in all curricular areas. As we write our UbD units, all teachers will include writing components. This will assist our students in developing their writing skills. As part of each unit of instruction our language arts teachers will develop common formative assessments so that students meet benchmark standards and are prepared for the culminating tasks.

Reading comprehension and vocabulary needs to be improved so that students can achieve success in all their classes. Students come to us able to decode words but are often unable to comprehend grade level text materials. Students become better readers by reading books in their zone of proximal development (ZPD). All our teachers will actively use Accelerated Reader (AR) and embed it into their curriculum. Math, science, and social studies teachers will incorporate content appropriate fiction and non-fiction books and articles into their UbD units. Professional development on reading strategies such as text chunking, previewing vocabulary, think-pair-share, talk to the text, and metacognition will be provided. We will help our students develop their vocabulary by using illustrated, student-centered word walls. We will teach Greek and culturally relevant Latin roots in all subject areas.

Parent Involvement

To increase meaningful parent participation from 20% as described in the 2011-2012 School Report Card, the Nimitz Family Center will create opportunities for teachers and parents to interact together. This will help students achieve their academic goals in the classroom by empowering parents to help their children at home. This will give parents a better understanding of the classroom curriculum. In the study, "A New Wave of Evidence, Annual Synthesis 2002", Henderson and Mapp propose that,

> "…teacher outreach to parents was related to strong and consistent gains in student performance in both reading and math. The effective outreach practices included meeting face to face, sending materials home, and keeping in touch about progress. Workshops for parents on helping their children at home were linked to higher reading and math scores."

Based on this belief, we will continue to provide engaging activities based on parents' needs. We have seen that parent participation has increased by approximately 40% in the past two years due to the topics that have been presented to parents. We have set a goal to increase parent involvement by another 20% for the upcoming school year. The topics of most interest by parents have been: "Jupiter Grades", Internet Use, Workshops on Core-Academic Subjects,

College Awareness, Special Education Workshops/Trainings, Second Step Violence Prevention Program, Discipline Techniques, Bullying, Law and Youth, Gang Prevention, and Drug Use. We will continue to create more opportunities for parent involvement in which parents and teachers work together to create a nurturing environment, which will increase their level of communication, thus, helping all stakeholders to be kept informed as to what is going on in the classroom and the school as a whole.

According to Dahl's study, "Parent Involvement & Student Achievement, 2011",

> "Schools can improve parent involvement and student achievement by setting up activities related to parenting, communication, volunteering, and learning in the home environment, decision making and collaborating with the community. [Therefore], when schools, parents and communities work together in this way, student outcomes improve."

Our school believes that it is beneficial to create these types of parent and community involvement activities. The Family Center will provide opportunities to create a Home-School Partnership to engage parents with the intention of increasing parent involvement. The Community Representative, support staff, District personnel, outside agencies and volunteers will collaborate to offer meaningful activities. The following events will bring parents and teachers together: Family Day/Night, Grade Level Orientations, Academic Showcases, Student-Led Parent Conferences, Field Trips, Award Assemblies, and Career and College Fairs with guest speakers.

Through workshop and class evaluations, we learned that there is more to be done to provide opportunities for parent involvement. We will create activities for parents to learn new techniques on how to: use the student planner, help their children be organized, motivated, manage time, set up routines that mirror those from school. In addition, parents will learn how to talk to their children about academics and make connections to everyday life experiences to assist their learning in the classroom. We believe these actions will help guide the children to make appropriate decisions that will lead to academic and personal success as they continue to grow to become 21st century learners who are able to take on the challenges of our global society.

In "Parent Involvement & Student Achievement, 2011", Dahl found that,

> "…children perform well in school when their parents have set up a daily routine, including a regular bedtime, and pay attention to their children's extracurricular activities, setting limits on screen time, for instance. Parents should also set high but appropriate expectations, model learning and hard work in their own lives, show interest in student achievement and making reading and writing a part of home life"

We know that these are important topics that need to be addressed by parents, teachers and students in order to help our students make smooth transitions to and from their social and academic worlds. We will help parents with topics like these because they are of great interest to

parents and because these are some of the concerns that parents have brought to our attention. This will help students meet their academic needs.

Motivation is key to learning and all children can be motivated to learn when they feel supported by those involved in their lives. The parent involvement opportunities that will be provided for all stakeholders are designed to create greater access for parents and community members to help our students become motivated to be successful academically and socially. We are constantly in search of ways to motivate our children. We will provide meaningful workshops, which allow all stakeholders to be motivated and willing participants to continue to be involved as active members of our school community. Opportunities will be provided for parents and community members to volunteer on campus in different capacities, from supervising in the lunch area to assisting in other activities that will support the children's education.

In order to meet our goal of improving parent involvement, we will send out flyers, use ConnectEd, utilize Jupiter Grades, articulate with feeder schools, and make announcements at school meetings and functions to share the activities that the Family Center will offer. The effectiveness of the Family Center activities will be evaluated monthly by attendance and parent evaluations, to check where we are in terms of meeting school and District goals making modifications as needed to continue to provide meaningful activities.

Special Education

At Nimitz Middle School, we will ensure that all students will achieve to their maximum potential in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). By placing students in the LRE and Inclusion periods Students with Disabilities (SWDs) will be provided with rigorous instruction, integration into the regular program and a nurturing environment.

In order to increase the percentage of SWDs participating in the General Education program for at least 73% of the instructional day and improve test scores, we will provide an academic inclusion period for students with mild-moderate disabilities and an elective inclusion period for students on the alternate curriculum. The needs of all students, including SWDs, will be met by providing opportunities for differentiation of instruction, intervention, and support implemented through their daily academic class, inclusion period, and before, during, and after school tutoring. In conjunction with our school-wide instructional focus (UbD, CCSS, and PBL) and strategies (SDAIE and AVID), special ed and general education teachers will differentiate lessons and accommodate work to help our SWDs meet their goals and objectives as stated in their Individual Education Plans (IEP). Interdisciplinary curriculum and collaborative PBL will also allow for multiple opportunities for cooperative learning and to bring real-life connections and experiences to SWDs. The school will focus on strengthening curriculum, assessment, and instruction that parallels the CCSS. Our instructional focus will revolve around reading and writing across the curriculum; to include all core content areas. SWDs will be included in general education classes either in an academic class, elective, or inclusion period. By piloting an inclusion period, learning will improve for both SWDs and general education students. When SWDs are included in general education classes, they perform better academically and this is demonstrated in their test scores.

Our strategy is to ensure that all SWDs are programmed into an inclusion period. Special ed teachers, along with general ed teachers, will collaborate and provide effective instruction and adapt work to SWDs. The best way to help general Ed students overcome their misconceptions about SWDs is to bring them together in an integrated setting.

Long Term English Learners

After reviewing our data, we have determined that focusing on our English Language Learners success will be critical for our school. Despite increasing in reclassification rates over the last three years, we see a strong need to concentrate our efforts on our Long-Term English Learners (LTELs). They need to acquire the tools to become successful and reclassify before high school so they have access to the A through G requirements and become college-bound.

As indicated in the new Master Plan Program, all stakeholders are responsible for the success of English Language Learners (ELLs). By utilizing our A.N.C.H.O.R.S. for Success, we will create a learning environment that will keep all stakeholders accountable for student success and will help students participate in a rigorous, culturally relevant curriculum. The use of specific SDAIE strategies will be an integral part of our school turnaround. Each stakeholder will participate in school-sponsored trainings and workshops that will solidify their understanding and application of SDAIE strategies and the four pillars that make our curriculum: comprehensible, interactive, connections, and content-based.

We will use Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to revise our curriculum, to test instructional strategies, and to offer various management techniques. Understanding by Design (UbD) allows our teachers to have instructional conversations that include the incorporation of effective instructional strategies, create opportunities for intervention, and construct assessments that will challenge our students. At the center of this framework is what students should know and be able to do. By encouraging our students to engage with these strategies, they will be able to incorporate them into their project-based learning (PBL) and utilize these strategies as life-long learners.

The work by Hill and Flynn in Classroom Instruction that Works with English Language Learners will be a key element to help our ELLs become successful and our teachers become responsive to the needs of our students' language challenges. As a school, we recognize that we have a large segment of our ELL population who are LTELs and performing at an Intermediate Level. Therefore, we see the urgency to provide both our students and our teachers with tools for success. These tools include modeling, scaffolding, accessing, and activating students' prior knowledge, providing cooperative learning activities, and differentiating instruction. When our teachers meet in their PLC groups, they will embed these instructional strategies in their curricular development.

For students who do not meet expectations, a responsive framework of strategic intervention modeled after the Response to Intervention (RtI) model specific for English Language Learners will be utilized. Using the District's new Master Plan Program for ELL students and the framework for RtI, our teachers will be prepared to offer immediate intervention and, as a school, we will create a uniform system of accountability for intervention services. During first core instruction, all teachers will incorporate SDAIE instructional strategies. These instructional strategies will be used as a "language shelter" so that our students can learn both "the content and the language simultaneously" (pg.10). Every teacher will integrate all four English Language Development domains: listening, reading, writing, and speaking in their instruction and curriculum development.

During PLC time, teachers and administrators will review student assessment data. They will engage in conversations revolving around student learning and classroom instruction, so that our ELL population will receive the necessary support needed to gain at least a year of English proficiency for every year they are in school.

We expect our ELL student population to demonstrate a better understanding of the CCSS as measured by school, District, and state assessments. Our ELL students will demonstrate language proficiency so that it accurately matches their ELD level. Overall, our goal is to decrease the large number of LTELs.

Our staff will possess a better understanding of the strategies that improve the learning of our ELLs. Each PLC will establish short-term and long-term SMART goals to meet the needs of their ELL students. The short-term goals will be evaluated on a quarterly basis based on assessment results and intervention opportunities. The long-term SMART goals will be evaluated on a yearly-basis to assess the overall successful implementation of the instructional strategies, curriculum design, and management techniques that are selected as a whole. With the use of UbD as our curriculum development framework, the use of PBL to engage students, the process of the PLC cycle to evaluate and revise strategies, and RTI to remediate learning gaps, all stakeholders will be held accountable not only for our students' success but for the success of the school as a whole.

IMPLEMENTATION

In order to be consistent with our instructional vision across our campus, all stakeholders will work in collaboration so that we serve as models to our students. When our students see their teachers, administrators, and parents working together to help improve their education, our students will be willing to work together. Reading and writing across all content areas will be the school wide focus and will revolve around the Common Core State Standards. All of our teachers will expose our students to similar research-based strategies in order to ensure that our students become successful. Prior to the beginning of the school year, we will host a Summer Learning Institute that all teachers will be expected to attend. At this time, all teachers will be expected to begin the development of their curricular units of instruction. The teachers, along with the administration, will work collaboratively as professional learning communities (PLCs) to implement the instructional strategies in the Turnaround section.

Each PLC will work collaboratively to create instructional units and a pacing plan that all of the teachers from that specific grade and content level will follow. The reason that our teachers will work in PLCs is to provide our students a consistent instructional program across all Personalized Learning Environments (PLEs). Our teachers will create common units of instruction that include project-based learning (PBL). Teachers must be ready to reflect on the strategies and implementation of their instructional units, look at student work and analyze student data during PLC time, and agree to implement immediate modifications to the instructional units.

One of the most effective tools that we will use is the "Porthole into the Classroom" checklist. This checklist will grant teachers the opportunity to visit and observe classrooms with a specific purpose. The observation will focus on the effectiveness of the strategies being used. The elements of the "Porthole into the Classroom" checklist will complement the District's Teaching and Learning Framework. This will create consistency and provide teachers with many opportunities to reflect on the instruction and the strategies that are being used in the classroom. The intent is to be transparent in our work and allow for constructive feedback to our teachers by serving as coaches to one another. Each teacher will have an open door policy for observations, participate in professional dialogue, and be prepared to provide student work as a means of demonstrating effective teacher practice. The expectation is for the teacher to meet with the observer and review the checklist within a week after the observation. The "Porthole in the Classroom" checklist will be left with the teacher at the conclusion of the conference. Teachers can share the checklist at their PLC to discuss common findings of the observations. In no way will this checklist be used as part of a STULL evaluation.

Additionally, each PLC will be expected to provide agendas, minutes, and a pacing plan. They will also be held accountable for student learning objectives, assessments being used and analyzed, and providing intervention. Teachers will commit at least two on-site hours per week to provide additional intervention for students. This intervention can range from homework help, assignment completion, or enrichment.

Administrators will be required to participate in the PLC discussions with teachers in their assigned departments. All administrators will be required to provide written feedback and/or recommendations a minimum of once a month twice a semester per PLC to ensure consistency across the classrooms and learning goals for students. In order for administrators to be knowledgeable of what is occurring outside of their department, administrators will also visit classes in other departments a minimum of once a month. During the administration meetings, all administrators will share their observations to ensure that all instructional strategies (AVID and SDAIE) are being utilized effectively to guarantee reading and writing across the curriculum. Teacher observations must be followed by feedback within a week. This includes both the teacher and the administrator meeting during the teacher's conference period. This includes meeting with teachers to reflect on the strategies and implementation, looking at student work samples during PLC time, and talking about future modifications for the projects. The administrator in charge should bring District and state assessment results for the whole department to be analyzed and discussed. Every staff member should constantly use MyData to inform instruction.

Once a semester, administrators will be rated by their assigned department. The department will rate their administrator based on the following categories: instructional support, management support, student intervention support, and professional development support. The criteria will complement that of the Teaching and Learning Framework.

Coordinators along with the Title III Coach will play an integral role in the implementation of the school plan. They will be part of the PLCs with teachers and provide assistance, guidance, and resources so that the instructional plan is implemented. They will be held accountable by the members of the PLC and the administrators who supervise them. They will conduct classroom visits using the "Porthole into the Classroom" and meet with those teachers afterwards to provide assistance. Furthermore, the coordinators along with the administrators will be responsible for being instructional leaders and trainers of staff. They will serve as mentors to new teachers and provide opportunities for professional growth.

One of the challenges that we anticipate in implementing our instructional plan is the need to have all faculty commit to the multiple components of the instructional vision and to implement the turnaround strategies. The teachers who wish to stay at Chester W. Nimitz Middle School will have to sign the Oath to Accomplish School Plan. For example, all teachers will have to attend professional developments on UbD, AVID and PBL. We will depend on our expert teachers to conduct the trainings on the previously mentioned topics of professional development. New teachers to Nimitz who have little to no experience will be given first preference to attend either in-house or District-run Professional Development.

Our goal is to build a professional family with one voice who are active participants and share our common mission and vision. All professional development activities must be practice-oriented with structured follow-up activities. The professional development may also include; instructional strategies, lesson planning, classroom management, student engagement, and/or technology. This type of professional development will continue throughout the year to allow

our teachers to enhance their understanding of the instructional strategies that are embedded in our turnaround plan.

Another challenge that we may face is how successful teachers will be in implementing the new instructional plan. The PLCs will create common goals, lessons, and observe one another teaching. Teachers who feel they need assistance can request a mentor teacher to support their professional growth. We will designate model classrooms to serve as additional support. The model classrooms will focus on specific instructional strategies such as Cornell Notes, Interactive Notebooks, effective student grouping, SDAIE strategies, and project-based learning.

ALTERNATIVE GOVERNANCE MODELS AND AUTONOMIES

Our writing team reviewed all the alternative governance models of Expanded School-Based Management Model (ESBMM), Local Initiative School (LIS), and Pilot. We discussed, at length, which would be the best fit for our school. We decided ESBMM would best support the successful implementation of our plan.

In 1989, our school began utilizing the governance structure of Shared Decision Making Council (SDMC). SDMC ushered in the culture of consensus building between all stakeholders: administrators, teachers, classified staff, and parent/community members. Throughout the ten years of SDMC, decisions were overwhelmingly made by consensus with only a few issues requiring votes of the council membership. In the 1999-2000 school year, we rewrote our school plan. The stakeholders voted to adopt School Based Management (SBM) as our governance model. SBM continued our culture of consensus building. Overall, our school has operated in a culture of consensus building since 1989.

Our writing team presented the information regarding ESBMM, Local Initiative School, and Pilot to our faculty at a meeting held October 16, 2012. Teachers were also provided with a written summary of ESBMM, Local Initiative School, and Pilot. We presented our recommendation of ESBMM. After our team answered all questions, a vote was conducted. Faculty members were asked whether they agreed with our team's recommendation of ESBMM. Teachers who were not members of our writing team counted the votes. A total of 89 votes were cast. Eighty-six (86) voted in support of our recommendation and three did not support our recommendation. This overwhelming vote indicates to us that our faculty wishes to proceed with our recommendation.

Our ESBMM Council will follow the membership guidelines as described in the Memorandum of Understanding. The principal and United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) chapter chairperson will be automatic members. The remainder of the council will be comprised of seven certificated staff members, one classified representative, five parent and/or community members, and one student. Their peers will elect each group.

All of our teachers will need to be members of at least one committee authorize by the ESBMM Council. These committees will report directly to the ESBMM Council. All committees must meet at least once a month with a minimum of nine times during the school year. The individual committees will determine meeting dates and times. Attendance and all work done by the committees must be well documented. Committees will include those called out in the MOU (budget, calendar, professional development, equipment, and discipline). Additional committees will be formed to help meet the goals of our school's vision. These committees will include, but will not be limited to:

- Accelerated Reader Cheer Squad: This committee will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the homeroom reading program utilizing the Accelerated Reader (AR) program.
- Beat the Beast: This committee would be responsible for raising awareness about the CST throughout the year.

- AVID Site Team: This committee will be responsible for collecting all AVID data for the school and getting it to the AVID Center.
- Attendance Incentive Committee: This committee will be responsible for recognizing and rewarding students who maintain excellent attendance.
- Scholarship Society: This committee will be responsible for preparing and distributing cards and certificates to the Admirals (GPA 3.5+) and Captains (3.0 to 3.49).
- Positive Behavior Support Team: This committee will be responsible for designing incentives and rewards for students who demonstrate good behavior or improved behavior.

The autonomies we are requesting, and whose rationales are explained in our Turnaround section, are:

- **Methods of improving pedagogy:** We are requesting to utilize Understanding by Design as our vehicle for unit planning to improve pedagogy and student achievement.
- **Assessments:** We are requesting to modify the District Pacing Plans for all content areas so that our students will have sufficient time to master the content. Our school is requesting to use common formative assessments for each grade level and content area to measure our progress at regular intervals in addition to utilizing the District Periodic Assessments.
- **Scheduling:** Our school is requesting to schedule District Periodic Assessments in accordance with our locally developed pacing plans.
- **Internal organization:** Our school is requesting to divide our students into Personalized Learning Environments.
- **Professional development:** Our school is requesting to utilize Professional Learning Communities as a means of providing professional development, in addition to school wide and departmental, on the topics of AVID strategies, Understanding by Design (UbD) unit construction, Project Based Learning (PBL), Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies.
- **Budgeting control:** Our school is requesting budgeting control pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding regarding alternative governance models.
- **Mutual consent requirement for employees:** Our school is requesting a "mutual consent" requirement by school and applying employee with respect to filling site-based openings.
- **Staff appointments:** Our school is requesting that teachers democratically elect all out-of-classroom positions (coordinators and deans).

SCHOOL PLANNING TEAM

Our school's planning team consists of an administrator, coordinators, teachers, a classified staff member, and parents. Our writing team coordinator is Mary Mills, Assistant Principal. As the foremost instructional leader at our school, Ms. Mills was the natural choice to be our writing team coordinator. She has a long history of working collaboratively with all stakeholders and building consensus.

In May 2012, all staff members who were interested in writing our school's plan for PSC 4.0 were asked to submit a letter of intent. All staff members who expressed interest became part of our writing team. Along the way, teachers who had not originally expressed interest began attending meetings and became part of our team.

A letter was sent home to all parents informing them that we were assembling a writing team. Our Community Representative contacted all parents who indicated they were interested and invited them to join our writing team. Parents who attended meetings at our school's Parent Center were also informed and invited to participate. Alliance for a Better Community (ABC) and District facilitators for PSC 4.0 also came to our school to work with parents, guiding meetings to gather input. Additionally, Student Involvement, Development, and Empowerment Unit (Office of Intensive Support and Intervention) met with students from our school's Leadership class to gather input.

In August, our team began meeting after school twice a week, on holidays, and on Saturdays. We asked for assistance from Los Angeles School Development Institute (LASDI) and Joseph McLaughlin joined us a consultant. A short time later, Carol Perry from LASDI also became our consultant.

Our writing team is comprised of:

- Mary Mills, Assistant Principal, with 25 years of experience in education, holds a multiple subject credential as well as an administrative credential.
- Joel Najjar, Title I Coordinator, with 16 years of experience in education, holds a multiple subject credential with a BCLAD as well as an administrative credential.
- Jorge Parra, English Language Learner Coordinator, with eight years of experience in education, holds single subject social science credential with a BCLAD as well as an administrative credential.
- Brenda Regalado, Bridge Coordinator, with nine years of experience in education, holds a mild/moderate education specialist credential as well as an administrative credential.
- Virginia Oropeza, Title III Instructional Coach, with 12 years of experience in education, holds a single subject English with a BCLAD as well as an administrative credential.
- Theresa Pearson, Gifted and School for Advanced Studies Coordinator and UTLA Chapter Chair, with 27 years experience in education, holds multiple subject, single subject mathematics, and Intro English credentials and teaches sixth grade math and science core. She is also co-chairperson of School Based Management Council and member of School Site Council.
- Diana Amador, with six years of experience in education, holds a single subject mathematics credential and teaches seventh grade math and algebra.

- Elisha Meave, with seven years of experience in education, holds a multiple subject credential as well as an administrative credential and teaches sixth grade language arts and social studies.
- Sandra Leon, with 10 years of experience in education, holds a multiple subject credential and teaches sixth grade language arts and social studies.
- Ana Valencia, with 16 years of experience in education, holds a multiple subject credential and teaches sixth grade language arts and social studies.
- Marcelo Torrico is the Student Information System clerk.
- Amparo Mendoza is the Parent Community Representative.
- Jeannette Godina is a parent volunteer, member of School Based Management Council, member of School Site Council, and president of the English Learners Advisory Committee.
- Raquel Toscano is a parent volunteer, member of School Based Management Council, and vice president of School Site Council.

Our support team is comprised of:

- Juan Perez, Magnet Coordinator, with 13 years of experience in education, holds a multiple subject credential with a BCLAD as well a counseling credential.
- Heather Melanie Brennan, AVID Coordinator, with seven years of experience in education, holds a single subject English credential and teaches seventh grade language arts.
- Erika Rey, with eight years of experience in education, holds a single subject mathematics credential and teaches algebra and geometry.
- Maria Camarena, with seven years of experience in education, holds a single subject mathematics credential and teaches algebra and geometry.

The Vision and Instructional Philosophy was collaboratively written by Mary Mills, Joel Najjar, Jorge Parra, Brenda Regalado, Juan Perez, Virginia Oropeza, Theresa Pearson, Maria Camarena, Diana Amador, Elisha Meave, Sandra Leon, Erika Rey, Ana Valencia, Marcelo Torrico, Amparo Mendoza, Jeannette Godina, and Raquel Toscano with assistance from Joseph McLaughlin and Carol Perry.

The School Data Profile/Analysis was collaboratively written by Mary Mills, Joel Najjar, Jorge Parra, Brenda Regalado, Juan Perez, Virginia Oropeza, Theresa Pearson, Maria Camarena, Diana Amador, Elisha Meave, Sandra Leon, Erika Rey, Ana Valencia, Marcelo Torrico, Amparo Mendoza, Jeannette Godina, and Raquel Toscano with assistance from Joseph McLaughlin and Carol Perry.

For the School Turnaround, the team divided into subcommittees based on areas of expertise and interest to research the various aspects we wished to include in our plan. Virginia Oropeza wrote the section on Personal Learning Environments (PLEs). Maria Camarena, Diana Amador, and Erika Rey wrote the section on Project Based Learning (PBL). H. Melanie Brennan wrote the section on AVID. Jorge Parra wrote the sections on Understanding by Design (UbD) and English Language Learners (ELLs). Brenda Regalado wrote the section on Students with Disabilities (SWD). Ana Valencia and Sandra Leon wrote the section on Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Jeannette Godina, Raquel Toscano, Amparo Mendoza, and Joel Najjar wrote the section on Parent Involvement. The sections written by the subcommittees were

then collaboratively edited by the entire team to unify the Turnaround section with the Vision and Instructional Philosophy section.

The Implementation was collaboratively written by Mary Mills, Joel Najjar, Jorge Parra, Brenda Regalado, Juan Perez, Virginia Oropeza, Theresa Pearson, Maria Camarena, Diana Amador, Elisha Meave, Sandra Leon, Ana Valencia, Marcelo Torrico, Amparo Mendoza, Jeannette Godina, and Raquel Toscano with assistance from Joseph McLaughlin and Carol Perry.

Theresa Pearson wrote the Alternative Governance Models and Autonomies section with feedback from the entire team.

Theresa Pearson wrote the School Planning Team section with feedback from the entire team.

In addition to participating in the writing process, Marcelo Torrico was also responsible for uploading the "working copy" of the plan to the school's website and making sure our technology needs were met.

Inspiration to continue our work was provided by Arely Godina, whose first five months of life were spent in writing team meetings, and Mia Meave, whose two-year-old enthusiasm and hugs reminded us of our purpose.

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Appendix A

Porthole in the Classroom

Instructional Delivery Method
- o Whole group
- o Small group
- o Pair share
- o Lecture
- o Discussion
- o Guided practice
- o Individual practice

Strategies
- o Use of manipulative/graphic organizers
- o Outlining
- o Note-Taking/Cornell Notes
- o SDAIE
- o Scaffolding/Bridging
- o Modeling
- o Culturally Relevant Material
- o Interdisciplinary
- o Checking for understanding
- o Differentiation
- o Diverse learning
- o Creating opportunities for students to arrive at multiple solutions
- o Active learning
- o Literature Circles
- o Essential Questions
- o Project Based Learning
- o Digital Literacy

Teacher Observation

Standard(s)
- o Posted/Clear and High Expectations
- o At grade level work
- o Connected to lesson
- o Connected to prior knowledge/life skills/culture
- o Aligned with 21st Century Skills

Classroom Environment
- o Inviting and welcoming
- o Current student work displayed
- o Respect for cultural diversity
- o Artifacts/realia that reflect students' culture
- o Clean/Safe/Free from distraction
- o Effective classroom management
- o Affirmation for all students
- o Parent Presence
- o Use of technology is present
- o Student Projects are displayed

Notes:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Porthole in the Classroom

Student Task/Work Products
- o Individual assignments
- o Presentation
- o Performance
- o Taking assessment
- o Cooperative learning
- o Project Based Learning
- o Academic dialogue
- o Self-evaluation/reflection/assessment
- o Real-world application
- o Interdisciplinary
- o Technologically based assignment

Taxonomy Level/Rigor
- o Creating
- o Evaluating
- o Analyzing
- o Applying
- o Understanding
- o Remembering
- o

Notes

_____
_____
_____
_____

Student Observation

Student Learning Behavior Observed
- o Engaged in task(s)
- o Asking relevant questions with academic language
- o Student contributes to their learning
- o Learning demonstrate competence in traditional and non-traditional ways
- o Actively answering questions
- o Group activities
- o Engaged in constructive dialogue/Accountable Talk

Materials Observed to be in use by students
- o Interactive student notebook
- o 21st century technology
- o Classroom materials that reflect diversity and is current
- o Core Materials
- o Manipulative
- o Hands-On material
- o Supplemental materials
- o Artifacts/Realia that reflects students' culture

Appendix B

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Nimitz Middle School

Oath to Accomplish the School Plan

Our school's design plan outlines a coherent and consistent academic program based on the best practices, common vision, clear expectations, careful planning, evaluation of teaching goals and a supportive professional environment, and implementation of the Home School Partnership to prepare students for college and our 21st Century society.

By my signature below, I acknowledge the following:

- I have received and read the approved instructional plan and its professional development plan for: **Chester W. Nimitz Middle School**

- I understand and commit to support the expectations, goals, vision, mission, and the school A.N.C.H.O.R.S. embedded in the approved
  Chester W. Nimitz Middle School Plan

- I understand and acknowledge that my commitment to this plan along with all of the additional responsibilities that are expected and the performance of duties required by the plan are a condition for my continued assignment at:
  Chester W. Nimitz Middle School

  This includes a satisfactory STULL evaluation and meeting my individual plan goals.

_____   _____

Teacher Signature   Date

_____   _____

Print Name   Employee Number

Verified by:_____

        Print Name

Public School Choice 4.0
Waiver/Autonomy Checklist

School Site: _Chester W. Nimitz Middle School_

Proposed School/Design Team Name: _Nimitz Has No Limits Team_

Proposed Governance Model (mark all that apply):

☐ Traditional   ☐ Pilot   ☒ Expanded School Based Management

☐ Local Initiative School   ☐ Affiliated Charter   ☐ Technical Assistance Partner

☐ Limited Network Partner   ☐ Full Network Partner

Waiver/Autonomy Requests

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

☒ **Methods of improving pedagogy.** Rationale on page(s): __pages 9-11__

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

☐ **Curriculum.** Rationale on page(s): _____

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

☒ **Assessments.** Rationale on page(s): __page 10__

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

☒ **Scheduling.** Rationale on page(s): __pages 9-10__

Local instructional schedules and strategies, including modified daily instructional days/minutes, the school's schedule of activities and events, and special schedules such as those designed to accommodate additional prep time for elementary teachers (all of the above being subject to District-mandated annual number of school days and minimum annual minutes of instruction and calendar requirements, and contractual pay in the case of additional required hours of regular daily instruction).

☒ **Internal organization.** Rationale on page(s): __page 9__

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

☒ **Professional development.** Rationale on page(s): __pages 9-16__

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

☒ **Budgeting control.** Rationale on page(s): __pages 20-21_____

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

☒ **Mutual consent requirement for employees.** Rationale on page(s): ___pages 20-21_____

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

☐ **Teacher assignments.** Rationale on page(s): _____

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

☒ **Staff appointments (e.g., department chairs).** Rationale on page(s): __page 21_____

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

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

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

☐ **Health and safety.** Rationale on page(s): _____
School's health/safety matters, aligned with District-wide health/safety mandates.

☐ **Additional Waivers:** (list waivers requested) _____

_____

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