

**Informational Summary**  
**Mission & Vision of the School**

**School Mission:**

The mission of Los Angeles Academy Middle School is to create a personalized learning environment for all students built on a foundation of trust and communication between staff, students, and families. Our campus is a place where intellectual curiosity and risk-taking are nurtured and where students develop ownership of their own learning, putting them on a firm pathway to college and a wide-variety of career options.

**School Vision:**

Los Angeles Academy Middle School will send students to high school who have fully-developed language, literacy and numeracy skills. To engage students in critical thinking and problem-solving, our faculty and staff will teach students how to advocate for their education. Furthermore we will work with families in understanding how to support their children on their pathway to college and career options.

**Designing Data Driven & Student Centered Instructional Programs**

In four out of the past five years, our school has shown a steady increase in the Academic Performance Index. Last year alone, 2010-2011 school year, Los Angeles Academy achieved a 44-point gain in our API. To increase the number of students to reach a proficient level in both English and Mathematics, we identified some key findings of student needs as follows:

- More strategic, intentional and differentiated design and delivery of standards-based instruction. Approximately 40%-50% of students are scoring Below Basic or Far Below Basic in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics on the California Standards Tests (CST).
  1. In English/Language Arts, student scores are uniformly lowest in Writing Strategies.
  2. The key curricular strands that need the most support and additional emphasis in Mathematics are Number Sense and Algebraic Functions & Rational Expressions.
- More personalized instruction for English Learners (EL) and Students with Disabilities (SWD) to show improvement on CST.
- Improvement in English language proficiency on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) (i.e., annual movement of students at least one ELD level annually) and to increase reclassification rates of EL students.

To meet these needs we are designing student services and interventions to:

- Use Specially Designed Instruction in English to provide students with lessons that enable them to understand and use the language of the curriculum.

- Use Flexible Grouping to differentiate instruction and meet the needs of all students.
- Ensure that reading development is personalized and monitored.
- Promote literacy across the curriculum to give students more opportunities to develop reading skills.
- Employ Writing Across Disciplines to give students more opportunities and practice to improve their writing.

### **Instructional Program**

Los Angeles Academy is committed to best, first, research-based instruction. Our program will be guided by the new 3 R's—Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships—to ensure that all students receive a solid foundation for high school in order to graduate on time college prepared and career ready. To effectively address the needs of all students, we have chosen six basic instructional strategies.

- Specifically Designed Academic Instruction in English
- Flexible Grouping
- Writing Across the Discipline
- Interactive Notebooks
- Personalized and Systematic Reading Development
- Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education

These strategies are the foundation for our basic instructional program and for students who need extra support additional interventions will be provided. These two tiers are part of what we call Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>). Through the use of data teachers will be able to quickly identify students who need additional intervention, ensuring that every learning challenge is caught early enough to prevent failure.

Los Angeles Academy will continue to offer double blocks of Math and English, implement the School Wide Positive Behavior Support Program, Intervention and Super Flex classes, college ready program, after school programs (tutorials and Saturday school).

To further strengthen our instructional program and to guarantee the achievement of our goals for students, we will be collaborating with West Ed. and Local District 5.

### **School Culture**

We at Los Angeles Academy foster a school culture that is positive, respectful, and builds relationships between and among students, parents and staff. Our students will be empowered and motivated to succeed in a personalized and safe learning environment. It will be a college ready culture fostering risk-taking, curiosity, purposeful effort, and collaboration that cultivates life-long learning. Parents feel welcomed, included, and empowered. The staff is committed to a student-centered professional culture

based on transparency, collaboration, and accountability.

The school culture will be enhanced through extracurricular activities that include:

- School dances;
- Lunch time music and/or performances;
- Friendly competitions and contests;
- Displays and performances during arts week;
- Awards assemblies;
- Positive interaction games/activities during lunch (e.g., cross-team competitions and sports tournaments, spelling and geography bees, door decorating contests, scavenger hunts, etc.); and
- A Student Leadership Council of 8th grades that share in school decision-making, and sponsor positive recognition awards for teachers.

### **A Day in the Life of Carlos, an 8th Grade Student**

Carlos starts his day off by going to dance class where he prepares for performances, scheduled before and after student led conference. At nutrition, he grabs a healthy choice snack at the cafeteria and eats with his buddies who are talking about the college field trip Carlos class will be taking tomorrow. When the bell rings, he goes to his first block where his English teacher requires him to read silently for fifteen minutes as part of the Million Words campaign. He then participates in a literature circle to discuss a book with his classmates. He finishes another draft of a writing process assignment after looking at a guideline that informs him of the revisions needed. When he is finished, the writing piece will be placed in his portfolio. Next is Flex class, where he gets extra assistance with math concepts as determined by his teachers. He looks forward to improving so he can move to Super Flex for enrichment classes. After eating lunch he heads to Social Studies where he is working on a team project about the Islamic Empire. Carlos finishes his day in Math where his teacher provides instruction to him based on his previous test scores. When the bell rings at the end of the day, he attends Woodcraft Rangers, one of the after school programs where he completes his Science homework. After having a snack, he plays soccer with his friends. Finally, Carlos heads home exhausted, but content from a productive day.

### **Parent Engagement & Involvement**

To engage parents and guardians in the academic education of their children, Los Angeles Academy will provide opportunities and information to them as follows:

- **Parenting:** Helping all families establish home environments to support children as students;
- **Communicating:** Designing effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress;
- **Volunteering:** Recruiting and organizing parent help and support;

- **Learning at Home:** Providing information and ideas to families on how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning;
- **Decision-making:** Including parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives; and
- **Collaborating with Community:** Identifying and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, student learning and development.

Los Angeles Academy staff promotes a welcoming environment for parents and guardians, through a “Cycle of Inquiry” that includes teams of parents, guardians, and staff discussing and taking action on important issues and concerns for continuous school improvement.

### **Staffing**

When recruiting highly qualified teachers, we will continue to follow LAUSD hiring procedures. Those who commit to work at Los Angeles Academy will support our Public School Choice mission, vision, and instructional plan while adhering to a clear code of conduct. Our teachers will collaborate with staff, students, families, and the surrounding community for continuous individualization of students’ learning experiences. Los Angeles Academy will ensure that the faculty is equipped with the necessary tools to accomplish the important job of preparing all students to be college prepared and career ready.

### **Applicant Team Contact Information**

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