

**PSC 3.0 INFORMATIONAL SCHOOL PLAN SUMMARY****FOR: VISTA MIDDLE SCHOOL****PROPOSED BY: VISTA MS, LOCAL DISTRICT 1 & UTLA****FOR: VISTA MIDDLE SCHOOL****Mission & Vision of the School**

- ***In 3-5 sentences, describe the school's vision for its students.***

At the first Vista Middle School (Vista) PSC Community Meeting, Maria, a mother of five, approached our principal and implored: "I clean houses all day long and my husband is a gardener. Please help my children. Give them what they need to go to college and get good jobs, so they can have a good life and never be poor again." This parent's heartfelt plea echoes throughout our community. In response to the needs of our students and community our mission is to provide a comprehensive K-12 educational experience where our students obtain and demonstrate the knowledge, skills and motivation needed to be successful citizens. Our vision is to work in collaboration with our sister elementary and high schools and with all stakeholders in our community, to maintain a safe and caring environment that fosters the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of all students and adults. At Vista we believe that knowledge is power, and this power is our students' passport to success.

- ***In a brief paragraph, explain what students will know and be able to do upon matriculation from your school.***

Address what students' needs to learn to be at grade level and proficient to remain on track for graduation.

Our well-rounded curriculum that differentiates instruction, builds academic literacy for English learners, provides learning opportunities that are relevant, and integrates an interdisciplinary approach to enable all Vista students to be successful in all future college and career endeavors. We will use the LAUSD approved core curriculum to implement a standards-based, culturally relevant program that emphasizes project-based learning and writing across the curriculum. Students will be taught and assessed based on their mastery of the grade-level standards for each subject area. Working with VRES#13 we have designed a K-8 instructional program that will develop vital 21st Century Skills through learning experiences that focus on the challenges of daily life and encourage the exploration of the career themes of: Technology, Environment, Arts, Media, Science/Math – T.E.A.M.S. Having the same curricular focus will ease the transition from elementary to Vista. This year our test scores improved tremendously with a 52 point increase in our API score. We met both District performance meter expectations, our student attendance was 96.5% and the reclassification rate was at 16%. This data proves we are on target to help improve learning for all of our Vista students.

Designing Data Driven & Student Centered Instructional Programs

- ***Using bullet points, note some of the key findings about students' needs at your school.***

Based on the 2009-2010 School Report Card, Vista's student body was: 92% Latino, 4% Filipino, 2% African-American, and 2% other. Of the Latino population, 35% were identified as English Learners, and 45% were Reclassified as Fluent English Proficient. 92% of our students were identified as Economically Disadvantaged, and 18% were designated Special Education students. Test scores indicate a need to focus on improving English Language Arts and Math skills; for our large number of English Learners, we must provide English Language Development. Vista students will all have enhanced instruction in reading comprehension and math problem-solving skills.

- ***Using bullet points, list how you will design student services and interventions to prepare all students to graduate college-prepared and career-ready. Connect the services and interventions you propose to evidence and research regarding best practices.***

Our program, designed with VRES#13, is based on our student's data and matched to the most current research to improve student achievement including: *90/90/90 and Beyond*, *First Things First: A Framework for Successful School Reform*, and a study of the outstanding middle schools in California. To best prepare our students to graduate and be college-career ready Vista students will receive:

- enhanced instruction in reading comprehension and math problem-solving skills
- early intervention (tutoring, small group instruction, special materials) will be provided beyond the core classroom in advisory, after-school and Saturday school and various in-school supports. Interventions will be prescribed depending on various assessments of each student's performance
- constant examination of student performance data will allow teachers K-8 to: review instructional effectiveness, reflect on different strategies, and then revise their methods (Cycle of Continuous Improvement) to ensure top quality instruction that will lead to success in high school and college.



- focus on preparing students for graduation and college with many activities (college fairs, field trips, college speakers, etc.) for students and parents to learn about college requirements, various college programs, options for financial aid, etc.

Instructional Program

- **Briefly describe in bullet point format how your proposal will serve the following student sub-groups.**

Vista teachers will collaborate around data analysis/discussions and work together to design cross grade-level supports for all students. Besides teacher, counselor and school nurse, coordinator and other school support staff observation, Elementary school logs, *MyData*, CELDT, IEP, and MAZE assessment information will identify high-risk students and prescribe interventions. Also, COST (Coordination of Services Team) will be convened to determine strategic interventions.

Students with disabilities – Vista's personalized learning environment will provide students with disabilities key supports. The use of researched based interdisciplinary project-based learning and performance based assessments will allow these students to demonstrate their learning in a non-traditional and non-discriminatory way. Vista will: provide equal access to project-based learning opportunities; allow participation in a fully inclusive model; and, mainstream according to each student's individual IEP.

Socio-economically disadvantaged students – We will implement proven strategies that include: Project-based learning, LINK Crew of peer supporters, Personal advisors/coaches, Advisories, Agenda Books, Technology training as a teaching and learning tool, PSA Counselors, and PSW Counselors. Parent and community supports for health referrals and counseling will also help these at-risk students succeed at Vista.

Special needs students – Vista has a block schedule that allows students with special needs the time in their daily schedule to work in a learning lab, if needed. Targeted scaffolding techniques will be used as a regular practice in the Special Day Class and/or the regular education classes to help students succeed in meeting the content area standards. Support systems in place include PSA Counselors, PSW Counselors, the Impact Program, the Safe Schools Collaborative, university interns for counseling support, Project Grid (At-risk family case workers), Parent Resource Center and liaisons, Safe Passage and mentors.

Gifted students – Gifted and Talented students will be clustered for instruction provided by classroom teachers who have extensive training in the implementation of differentiated, accelerated learning strategies. These strategies include: Differentiated pace and depth appropriate to the students' skills, differentiated rate of mastery, an environment that encourages creativity through divergent thinking, originality, fluency, flexibility and elaboration of thought processes and products, inquiry and challenging attitudes toward learning, and the use and application of technology.

English Language Learners – Instructional strategies known to be effective with our student population will be implemented and supported through professional development: SDAIE strategies, Enrichment/intervention learning lab, ELD strategies, AVID strategies, Word Walls, Good First-teaching RTI, digital portfolios, CREE pedagogy, and small group instruction. ESL classes will also be provided to help parents master English so they can better help their students with homework.

Standard English Learners – **Learners'** instruction includes specialized lessons for: academic language development, writing across the curriculum, CRRE techniques, graphic organizers, after-school tutoring and enrichment and targeted intervention programs.

School Culture

- **In 3-5 sentences, describe the school culture that you envision for your school.**

We will foster a rich learning environment where all students and their families are respected and valued by our faculty. The goal of Vista is to create a safe, supportive environment that promotes student learning, while alleviating negative behavior and maximizing achievement for all students. Some of the strategies we use to accomplish this are:

- Utilizing mentoring and tutoring programs across grade levels.
- Providing counseling support groups for students who need more assistance.
- Implementing a school-wide anti-bullying program.
- Utilizing counselors and support staff to create personalized student learning plans and goal setting.
- Communicating clear policies consistently to our students and their parents.
- Sponsoring many activities and creating a college going culture in our school
- Involving students with parents and other adults in community activities for enrichment, entertainment and improvement of our city.

Students will not only be members of classes but also belong to a grade-level House and highly personalized Core Teams with designated teachers that will monitor each student at Vista. This intense level of consistent contact across classes will permit teachers to track students and share information among themselves in ways to quickly identify and address problems with struggling students. This personalization will afford, teachers and students, the opportunity to develop positive close



relationships where “no child will be left unknown.” The teachers meet and work together to discuss the achievement of their group of students and determine if any interventions are needed.

- ***In a brief paragraph, describe the typical day in the life of a student at your school***

Many of our students who walk to school. Each day, they are greeted by our Asst. Principal, Carlos Valdovinos, across the street from our school, who helps them safely cross Roscoe Blvd, the busiest street in Panorama City. At the front of the school, they are welcomed by our Principal, Mrs. Castro. After breakfast, students proceed to their Advisory period where their Advisor gives them the academic, social, and emotional supports they need to be successful students. After this period, students attend 3 block classes per day where a team of teachers, who share the same group of students, engage them in challenging lessons across the curriculum. Vista teachers incorporate Rigor, Relevance, Relationship, Results and Respect in their lessons. Students who need extra support, are pulled out during advisory, PE and elective classes to receive personalized academic and emotional support provided by instructional coaches, coordinators and counselors. Currently, there are 25 active clubs at Vista. Some of them meet at lunch time. These groups afford our students the opportunity to share their interest with other students. Lunch time music is provided and students hold shuffling contests in addition to the intramural sports being played. Over 200 students participate in our After School “All Stars” program for sports, enrichment, tutoring and other clubs and extra-curricular activities; some students use our new family fitness center and exercise with teachers and administration.

- ***Using bullet points, list some of the extracurricular activities that will be provided at the school.***

Youth Services and Afterschool All-stars provide:

- a daily hour of tutoring and many sports programs including soccer, football, volleyball and basketball
- "Blast-Off," which provides enrichment activities such as Cheer, Gardening, Cooking, Fashion, Folklorico, etc.
- field trip opportunities to different Los Angeles area locations
- 25 clubs such as: Students Run LA, Anti-Bullying, African American Students United, GLA (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Alliance), Gardening Club, French Club, International Club, Chess Club, Battle of the Books, and others.

Parent Engagement & Involvement

- ***In a brief paragraph or using bullet points, discuss the strategies that you will use to meaningfully engage parents and guardians in the academic achievement of their children.***

We will partner with our families to provide the best possible education through:

- Communication – Communication between home and school will be regular, two-way, and meaningful. It will include written correspondence, email, a school website, and the use of ConnectEd. Parent meetings and our Vista Parent Center will provide additional information.
- Parenting – Parenting skills will be promoted and supported through parent education and engagement activities offered at the school and through the new Panorama City Community Partnership (PCCP.)
- Volunteering – Parents will feel welcome in the school, and their support and assistance will be sought and valued at all types of events and during the school day.
- School Decision Making and Advocacy – Parents will be full partners in the decisions that affect children and active members of ESBMM Council and other advisory councils.

We believe it takes a village to educate a child. We want to improve our “village” in Panorama City so that students, families, businesses and organizations can work together to achieve success for everyone. Vista will also be part of a Panorama City Community Partnership (PCCP) that will actively maintain a one-stop community center to service the Panorama Complex. Our vision is to have a community center that will provide the following services and use multiple strategies to engage our parents and greater community:

- Health and social service referrals to school based clinics and local facilities
- Information on tutoring, academic intervention, social and emotional counseling for students and families
- Parenting, job training, ESL, computer, nutrition and family health classes
- Panorama City and school site beautification projects, a community garden, that cross grade levels
- Community choirs, orchestras, theatre groups (adult and children)
- Gang intervention, crime prevention, and community safety classes
- Community entertainment at schools i.e. movie nights, picnics, holiday parties for families.
- Access to the Vista Family Fitness Center exercise classes and the Panorama HS Community Pool

- ***In your response, include how you will create a welcoming, respectful environment for parents, families, guardians.***

Parents will feel respected and welcome at Vista because they will be treated as full partners in the education of their students. All communication will be in Spanish and English and translators will be available for parent-teacher conferences. Our onsite



Parent Center has a full time coordinator who provides social and educational opportunities (ELS, computer classes, arts) for parents to get to know each other and learn about how to participate in our school at all levels. We also have a Community Liaison to interpret and help parents communicate with teachers and counselors. Our principal holds regular "Have Coffee with the Principal" meetings and is very available to meet and talk with parents about their students.

Staffing

- *In a brief paragraph, describe what characteristics the school will look for when recruiting teachers and select staff in order to ensure that staff acknowledge and support the academic, social, and cultural needs of the students.*

A Vista Principal must provide guidance to implement the ideals of our mission and vision. Vista's Principal must be a change agent who inspires and leads new and challenging innovations to benefit our students and families. Characteristics of our present and future principal include: 1) An instructional leader whose priority is student learning; 2) A bilingual, effective communicator; 3) Someone who uses current research and data analysis to improve our school; 4) A team player able to collaborate and work with all stakeholders; and 5) A leader who understands that people, teachers, parents, students and staff are our greatest educational resource. In her second year working at Vista, our principal, Ms. Castro has been responsible for implementing many changes that have increased student performance and changed the atmosphere of Vista to a "culture of success" for all students.

We will recruit teachers who demonstrate a wide variety of teaching strategies that meet the learning styles, social and cultural needs of our Vista students. We will seek out teachers who have experience in similar schools and have positive results in teaching English learners. Vista will look for committed individuals who have the energy and interest to actively support our mission, vision and instructional goals and those who have enthusiasm, a willingness to be part of a real learning community, and who are committed to:

- Developing and delivering standards-based instruction in a variety of learning modalities (i.e., English Language Learner, Special Education, Gift and Talented, etc.) with sensitivity to learning styles and student needs
- Working collaboratively in interdisciplinary teams/family
- Integrating 21st century skills and technology into the instructional program
- Designing project based learning that requires critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and allows for student voice and choice
- Using the RTI problem solving model along with analyzing student data to guide instructional practices
- Participating in the Panorama City Community Partnership and creating positive parent-teacher interactions

Applicant Team Contact Information

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