



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Mann Middle School

The Prep at HMMS

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Executive Summary

1. Executive Summary

A. Mission and Vision

State the mission, vision and core beliefs of the proposed school as well as the school's values about teaching and learning. Include explanations of what students will know and be able to do as well as the rigorous intellectual habits of mind, essential skills, knowledge and attributes they will possess upon matriculation that will prepare them to be successful adults in the 21st century.

At the core of this transformational plan is the deeply held belief that there is no inextricable relationship between poverty, ethnicity and student achievement. Holding true to this belief, that all students, regardless of race and socio-economic status, are capable of academic excellence, The PREP focused on schools with similar demographics that were finding success on a consistent, replicable basis. This plan is based on the findings of Douglas Reeves and the 90/90/90 schools: schools with 90% free and reduced lunch, 90% minority enrollment, and 90% of students at or above mastery of academic standards. In these 90/90/90 high achievement schools, Reeves found five common characteristics: a focus on academic achievement, clear curriculum choices, frequent assessment of student progress and multiple opportunities for improvement, an emphasis on nonfiction writing, and collaborative scoring of student work. These five characteristics are the backbone of this transformational plan for The PREP at HMMS. Understanding the urgent need for effective reform at Horace Mann Middle School, this plan is designed to support significant academic gains.

PREP - Pride, Responsibility, Excellence, Preparation is the foundation of our educational philosophy. Our role in our young people's lives is to develop pride in self, school and community; to teach responsibility for actions, outcomes and behaviors, to demonstrate excellence in all endeavors, and to provide preparation for high school, college and beyond. Likewise, our adult stakeholders will pride in self, school, students and community. We are responsible for teaching and modeling appropriate behavior, and for *all* students achievement. We expect and exhibit excellence in our endeavors and are prepared to meet the needs of our students so they may achieve to their fullest potential.

The Mission of The PREP

In cultivation of an exemplary learning community, The PREP recognizes that confident and positive students are better learners; therefore:

- We develop pride in self, school and community
- We empower the individual rights of students to demonstrate excellence in all endeavors by teaching responsibility for actions, outcomes and behaviors
- Our collaborative community focuses on continuous improvement by preparing students for High School, college and the demands of an evolving global society

The Vision of The PREP

The PREP will develop and cultivate an exemplary learning community that is committed to continuous improvement. The PREP is committed to the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of its diverse learners. The PREP will empower students to uncover their unique talents, skills and gifts as they become competitors in an evolving global society.

The PREP at HMMS believes:

- In a safe environment where all stakeholders assume the responsibility to

maintain an orderly environment in accordance to the school-wide Positive Behavior Support Plan

- That students will succeed in a rigorous standards-based learning environment when they are supported, nurtured and encouraged.
- That each child is unique and valuable.
- In upholding high expectations and demanding school-wide accountabilities for learning.
- In the accountability and responsibility of all stakeholders (parents, teachers, staff, & community) to ensure every students' social, intellectual and academic well-being and success.
- In meeting the academic and social needs of all student, including second language learners, students with learning and physical disabilities, gifted/GATE students, and student in the general education program.

Upon matriculation from The PREP at HMMS, students will be self-directed and reflective learners. Students will be taught a variety of meta-cognitive strategies to help them to monitor and adjust their own learning. Based on the Learning Principles from Carnegie Mellon University, strategies such as evaluating their own strengths and weaknesses, planning their own future, and reflecting on what they are learning and how they will deepen their learning in every class, will be expected in all areas of the school environment. Developing the skills to engage in these processes will help students gain intellectual habits that not only improve their performance but also their effectiveness as learners. Evidence of rigorous habits of mind and mastery of state standards will be maintained in an Individualized Learning Portfolio (ILP). Modeled after the Individual Education Plan (IEP) and the Secondary English Learner Portfolio, the ILP will establish learning goals, monitor progress, and demonstrate standard mastery and skill proficiency. Created by the students with the support of parents, teachers, counselors and other school staff, the ILP will be updated, assessed and reviewed annually.

Graduates of The PREP will be proficient writers. The systematic and consistent emphasis on writing across all content areas, will strengthen and support graduates' ability to think about their thinking, question and pose problems, and apply past knowledge to new situations. Based on Reeves' findings, that a focus on non-fiction writing is linked to higher student achievement, The PREP will focus on writing to learn and learning to write. Reeves found that the use of written responses helps teachers obtain better diagnostic information about students. Similarly, writing to learn was found to help students demonstrate the thinking process that they employed in order to support students in becoming reflective, self-directed learners.

Given the rapidly changing demands on workforce skills in the 21st century, The PREP will support students' development as insightful and independent learners; therefore, allowing them to learn how to manage impulsivity, think flexibly, and create, imagine and innovate

B. Student Population

Describe the student population your proposed school will serve, including the interests and critical educational needs of the students. Explain your team's experience serving a similar population of students, and how your proposed school will meet the identified needs of these students.

The PREP at HMMS will serve a student population of primarily Latino (49%) and

African-American (49%) youth. Approximately 17% of the student population is classified as English Language Learners (EL), with the primary language of the students being Spanish. The majority of our Spanish speaking population is from Mexico and more than 15% of the student population is identified as Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP). There has been a steady increase in the number of students who reclassify while at Mann, from 5.4% in 2004-2005 to 17.6% in 2008-2009. In recent years, the EL enrollment population has shifted from students who had recently immigrated to a population of long-term English Learners. The educational needs of long-term EL students is significantly different than those of recent immigrants. Long-term ELs are often ignored because they can easily communicate their needs verbally. However, their ability to communicate and comprehend using rigorous academic language and literacy skills is often lacking. These needs are similar to many of the school's Standard English Learners (SELEs) who are able to communicate effectively in everyday situations, yet struggle with the demands of academic Standard English. Using Specifically Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies and the instructional methodologies found in the LAUSD's Academic English Mastery Program (AEMP) in conjunction with The PREP's Flex period, we will provide targeted support to the linguistic needs of all of our students.

The PREP will also service a special education population. Currently, 18% of students are identified as special needs students and 5% are identified as gifted and talented. The PREP will offer a variety of specialized classroom settings including the special day program, resources program and gifted/talented program to meet the identified needs of these students.

The school is identified as a school-wide Title 1 school with 86% of the student population identified as economically disadvantaged. The socio-economic status of a majority of the student population has a significant impact on the educational needs of the students. Currently, the entire student population receives breakfast and lunch at no cost. In addition, all students receive basic school materials, including notebooks, pencil pouches, notebook paper and highlighters to support their academic needs. The PREP will continue to provide supplemental resources and services to meet the socio-economic needs of our population.

A considerable number of students enrolled at the school are not living in the "traditional" two-parent household. Many students are being raised by extended family members, grandparents, aunts or cousins. In addition, a portion of the student body is enrolled in the foster care system. The school must not only meet the educational needs of the student, but must also engage and support these extended caregivers. These students need support, not only instructionally, but socially and emotionally as well. The transiency rate of foster care children and the stresses that occur on the child when transferred from one location to another are factors in providing a comprehensive and supportive educational program. The PREP will coordinate wrap-around services for students. Through referrals to school mental health, partnerships with agencies such as AADAP, TeamWorks and Mentor and Me, The PREP will support the development of the whole child.

C. Instructional Program

Provide an overview of the instructional program of the proposed school, identifying and describing the key instructional strategies and practices that the school will employ to drive student achievement. Briefly explain the research base that demonstrates that the identified strategies will be successful in improving academic achievement for the

targeted student population.

The instructional program at The PREP is designed to support the development of cognizant learners who are able to monitor and adjust their approaches to learning. This will be achieved through an inquiry-based approach to learning based on the California State Content Frameworks. Driven by student interest and data identified needs, standards-based instruction is delivered daily through a scaffolded approach to mastery. Students maintain Individual Learning Portfolios (ILP). Based on periodic reviews of the ILP, students will be enrolled in a Flex period course designed to support mid-course correction and/or academic exploration.

Non-fiction writing, emphasized across all content areas, will strengthen and support graduates metacognitive skills. A common school-wide rubric (Attachment 8) will provide uniformity of expectations and provide reliable feedback to support students' growth as writers. Reeves findings in the 90/90/90 study found consistent academic gains in schools that focused on non-fiction writing.

The use of the LAUSD's identified core access strategies: Academic Vocabulary Development, Cooperative Learning, Instructional Conversations and Advanced Graphic Organizers will be used to scaffold instruction. To support the Standard English Learners, a demographic who has traditionally been unsuccessful on the CST, the instructional practices of the Academic English Mastery Program (AEMP) will be implemented. The AEMP program provides targeted research-based linguistic support to bridge the gap between the "home language" and Standard English. In support of the English Language Learner, SDAIE strategies will be utilized to enable students to access core standards.

D. School Culture

Describe the school culture that your team envisions for the proposed school and what, if any social-emotional supports are necessary to create that culture.

The culture of The PREP is crafted to meet the needs of adolescents and is based on the findings of Taking Center Stage Act II (CDE). Middle schoolers are going through a tumultuous period of rapid physical development and emotional turmoil. To support these needs, The PREP is designed to look less like a large, impersonal high school or an extended elementary school. In fact, it is a blend of the two: a caring and nurturing learning environment that will afford students a challenging, subject-specific curriculum.

As defined in Taking Center Stage Act II, high performing middle schools provide "relationships that foster student achievement. In support of this need, The PREP is divided into two vertical houses: the Alphas and the Gammas. The vertical structure of the houses allows students and staff to develop relationships across grade-levels, while supporting curricular and skill articulation. Each house is allocated a contiguous space on campus that is easily identified by its colors and banners. Vested and known within their community, each member of the house participates in a multitude of activities and competitions designed to instill pride and build confidence. For example, rituals, activities and routines that clearly identify each house promote personalization, team unity, and school spirit. School opening activities, such as competitions to return compliance documents and assembling and maintaining the AVID binders, are a part of the school's culture. This model is in alignment with the LAUSD's policy for Personalized Learning Environments (PLEs) for middle schools. Houses are serviced by a counselor (or an administrative designee) and an administrator. In addition, lead

teachers take an active role in distributed leadership and the day to day administration of the house.

Further personalization of the middle school experience is achieved through the creation of grade-level interdisciplinary teams. A core set of teachers at each grade-level share the same students and provides personalized instruction and supplemental support to their students. Likewise, the master schedule is designed to provide a common conference period for core teachers; thereby, allowing them to collaborate, discuss student progress and provide targeted interventions. In addition, this more personalized setting allows teachers to “keep closer tabs” on students and to work with them and their parents. It also allows teams to: build relationships with families and guardians; team-teach; network with other teachers, and develop success strategies to aid students with difficulties.

The staff at The PREP play a significant role in the culture of the school. Effective teachers and staff are flexible, positive, creative, and student-centered rather than rule-oriented. They maintain high expectations for all of their students and show they care about their students' success. Additional support is provided through itinerant support providers. Counselors, a school psychologist and a school nurse are available during school hours to assist students with emotional concerns, career awareness, college preparation and social needs. An array of extra-curricular activities such as Teamworks, Students Run L.A., and clubs further personalize the middle school experience and promote positive interaction among students and other stakeholders.

E. Accountability and Performance Goals

Briefly discuss how your organization will set and annually update targets for the indicators in the table below. Please share key data from the Performance Management Matrix highlighting the goals of the proposed school.

PREP Mission Specific Five Year Goals 2011-2016

- All stakeholders, including students, are vested, known and supported within their personalized learning environment (house). Pride is evident through improvements in attendance, lowered behavioral incidents and an increase in parental involvement.
- Students will demonstrate excellence as self-reflective and directed learners by maintaining and assessing an Individual Learning Portfolio. Portfolios showcase students' benchmark achievements and are presented to parents and the academic community at the 8th grade culmination fair.
- Common assessments, collaborative scoring of student work, and cross disciplinary data-analysis are used to inform instruction and support the collaborative culture at The PREP.
- Writing to learn strategies are incorporated across all disciplines to provide rich and complex diagnostic information about students' learning and allow students the opportunity to clearly process information and become meta-cognitive thinkers. Evidence of student writing is incorporated into the Individual Learning Portfolio.

Core Academic Performance Goals 2011-2016

- Students will demonstrate excellence by meeting established English/Language Arts performance standards in reading, interpreting, discussing and critiquing various writing domains (descriptive, narrative, expository, and persuasive). Students will communicate effectively through independent and collaborative

writing exercises that utilize the writing process that demonstrate their ability to write for a wide variety of purposes and audiences. In accordance to the state's Reading/Language Arts framework for California public schools, by culmination from The PREP, students will have independently read one million words annually.

- Students will demonstrate excellence by meeting established mathematics performance standards in manipulating numbers and equations and understanding general mathematics principles at work. Students will have the skill set to solve multifaceted mathematical equations and understand the connections between mathematics and their daily life.
- Students will demonstrate excellence by meeting established science performance standards in critical thinking, technology and inquiry skills in life, physical and earth sciences. Students will use the scientific inquiry method to develop and test hypothesis and evaluate arguments based on evidence.
- Students will demonstrate excellence by meeting established history/social science performance standards through a historical analysis of the geography, religion, arts, politics, economics and social structures of multiple world cultures and governments. Students will use chronological and spatial thinking skills to understand the connectedness of events in time and place.
- Students will demonstrate excellence by meeting the established standards in physical education using motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities in order to improve health and physical fitness. Students identify and evaluate three preferences for life long physical activity that are incorporated into the Individual Learning Portfolio.

F. Community Analysis and Context

Describe the community that your proposed school will serve. Include an analysis of the strengths, assets, values and critical needs of the community. Discuss your rationale for selecting this community, your experience serving this or a similar community, how your team has engaged the community thus far and how it will continue to do so if selected.

The PREP at HMMS is located in the Chesterfield Square community of South Los Angeles. This .63 square mile area is home to a population of 6,382. Approximately 58% of the community's residents are black, while 23.4% of residents are foreign born, primarily from Mexico and El Salvador. This is a unique area in Los Angeles, with a high percentage of black residents compared to a relatively low number of Latinos.

The notoriously gang-infested neighborhood is serviced by the Los Angeles Police Department's 77th precinct. Walking through neighborhoods primarily controlled by the Rolling 60's and Eight Trey Gangster Crips, students find safe haven at The PREP. Gang colors, gestures, or activity of any kind are not permitted on the campus. Partnering with community organizations such as Brotherhood Crusade and the Safe Passage Program, in conjunction the LAUSD's commitment to safety, The PREP maintains a safe and orderly campus.

Many of the students attending The PREP will be second or third generation families at Horace Mann Middle School.

Supported by Families in Schools (FIS), PREP families are afforded extended learning opportunities. FIS workshops include *Transition to Middle School*, which provides support and resources for parents of 6th grade students and the *College Knowledge Academy*, designed to inform 7th and 8th grade students and families of their future

possibilities. The underlying purpose of FIS workshops is to open dialogue between students and their families. The PREP is committed to continuing this partnership to bring these valuable learning opportunities to our school family.

Throughout the PSC process, The PREP has been committed to seeing the input and feedback of the families and community we serve. Through a series of hosted meetings, we were able to gather information and ideas from all stakeholders and have taken their recommendations into advisement. Through a variety of media, including phone messages, mailings, flyers and our website, we have sought to engage all of our stakeholders in the transformational process. Their input and support have been invaluable resources in shaping The PREP.

G. Leadership

Provide an overview of the proposed school's governance structure and leadership team. Highlight the strengths of the leadership team and the proposed leader. If a leader has not been identified, speak to the key attributes the potential leaders should possess.

The PREP is supported through the guidance of the school-wide Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). Members of the ILT include the principal and assistant principal(s) (per District norms), two categorical coordinators (Title 1 and EL), Instructional Coordinators and Coaches, department chairs, house lead teachers and the school's administrative assistant. In the first three years, a member of the school's professional development partner, InnovateED, will also serve as a member of the ILT. Leadership training and capacity building will be provided to the ILT to provide instructional support to staff. This team will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the instructional program of The PREP.

Each house at The PREP is supported by a House Leadership Team (HLT) consisting of an administrator, counselor, lead teacher and office clerk. The HLT will provide support for the day-to-day administration of each house. The HLT will be responsible for the development, monitoring and evaluation of the activities and instructional practices of their house.

Per state mandate, The PREP will establish a School Site Council to create and monitor the Single Plan for Student Achievement and the supporting categorical budgets. The SSC will seek the recommendations of the established Compensatory Education Advisory Council (CEAC) and English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC) and data in its decision making process. To engage students in the governance process, a student body council will be elected from the student body at large.

Like the staff, leaders of The PREP are flexible, positive, creative, and person-centered rather than rule-oriented. They maintain high expectations for all and show they care about students' and staff success. Leadership has an understanding of the unique needs of middle school students and values the role of middle school in the education continuum. Leadership at The PREP is committed to working collaboratively with stakeholders to provide excellent educational opportunities for all. Distributed leadership comes by way of transparent decision-making and engaging stakeholders in leadership opportunities.

H. School Governance Model

Briefly explain the rationale for your choice of school type. Why are you applying to

operate your school as a traditional, Pilot, Expanded School-Based Management Model (ESBMM), Network Partner, Affiliated Charter or independent Charter school?

The PREP at HMMS is applying to operate as a traditional middle school in the LAUSD. As a traditional middle school, The PREP will provide the best level of service to its constituents. As a member of the LAUSD, our students and staff have access to the wealth of resources and support that the comprehensive district provides. This includes access to instructional support, access to counseling and mental health resources and professional development for administration and staff.

Building on the resources of the district, The PREP, has the flexibility to execute much needed reform at the school site. This includes the implementation of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP), the development of Personalized Learning Environments (PLE) and a tailored professional development plan. Greater school-based decision making ensures that reform efforts are targeted to the unique needs of the schoolsite