



# **DOWNTOWN CHARTER ACADEMY (DCA)**

**A Charter Renewal Petition- Submitted to Oakland Unified  
School District (OUSD)**

**By Amethod Public Schools (AMPS)**

**September 26, 2018**

**Material Revision Submitted on November 21, 2025**

**Required Signatures [Education Code Section 47605(a)]:**

The attached charter petition merits consideration. We are hereby petitioning the Governing Board of the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) to grant renewal of this charter pursuant to Education Code 4605 to extend the function of Downtown Charter Academy (DCA) for a second term of five-years.

Amethod Public Schools (AMPS) agrees to continue to operate the school, Downtown Charter Academy, pursuant to the terms of the Charter School Act and the provisions of the school's charter. The organization's Executive Director is authorized to negotiate any amendments to the attached charter in order to secure approval by the Oakland Unified School District's Governing Board.

**Required Affirmations [Education Code Section 47605(d) (1)]:**

Downtown Charter Academy will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policy, employment practices and all other operations. It will not charge tuition, nor will it discriminate against any pupil based on ethnicity, national origin, race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability.

Admission to DCA will not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil, or of his or her parent or legal guardian, within California. DCA will admit all pupils who wish to attend the charter school. If the number of pupils who wish to attend DCA exceeds DCA's capacity, attendance, except for existing pupils of DCA, will be determined by a public random drawing. Preference will be extended to pupils currently attending DCA and pupils who reside in the school district except as provided for in California Education Code Section 47614.5. Preferences, including, but not limited to, siblings of pupils admitted or attending DCA and children of DCA's teachers, staff, and founders identified in the initial charter, may also be permitted by the chartering authority on an individual charter school basis. Priority order for any preference will be determined in this charter petition in accordance with all of the following:

- (i) Each type of preference will be approved by the chartering authority at a public hearing.
- (ii) Preferences will be consistent with federal law, the California Constitution, and Section 200.
- (iii) Preferences will not result in limiting enrollment access for pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.
- (iv) In accordance with California Education Section 49011, preferences will not require mandatory parental volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment.

In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of DCA and shall not take any action to impede DCA from expanding enrollment to meet pupil demand.

If a pupil is expelled or leaves DCA without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, DCA will notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and will, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including report cards or a transcript of grades, and health information. If the pupil is subsequently expelled or leaves the school district without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, California Education Code Section 47605(d)(C)(3) requires the school district to provide this information to a charter school within 30 days if the charter school demonstrates that the pupil had been enrolled in the charter school.

Please direct any questions regarding this charter to me at (510) 436-0172.

Respectfully,

Jorge Lopez  
Lead Petitioner



Adrienne Barnes  
Chief Executive Officer, Amethod Public Schools  
Lead Petitioner for Downtown Charter Academy

**DCA**  
**Oakland, California**

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## AFFIRMATIONS/ASSURANCES

### Affirmation of Conditions Described in Education Code Section 47605(e)

Downtown Charter Academy (also referred to herein as “Charter School”):

1. Shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. (California Education Code (“Ed. Code”) § 47605(e)(1))

2. Shall not charge tuition (including fees or other mandatory payments for attendance at Charter School or for participation in programs that are required for students except as authorized by those Education Code provisions that explicitly apply to charter schools). (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(1))

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Shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics included in Education Code section 220, including but not limited to disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, immigration status. (Ed. Code § See OUSD Required Affirmations / Assurances in Appendix A

3. 47605(e)(1))

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4. Except for legally permissible admission preferences [as provided in Education Code section 47605(e)(2)], admission to Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil, or of the pupil’s parent or legal guardian, within this state, except that an existing public school converting partially or entirely to a charter school shall adopt and maintain a policy giving admission preference to pupils who reside within the former attendance area of that public school. (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(1))

5. Shall admit all pupils who wish to attend Charter School. However, if the number of pupils who wish to attend Charter School exceeds its capacity, attendance, except for existing pupils of the charter school, shall be determined by a public random drawing. Preference shall be extended to pupils currently attending the charter school and pupils who reside in the Oakland Unified School District (“OUSD” or “District”) except as provided for in Education Code section 47614.5. Priority order for any preference shall be determined in the charter petition in accordance with all of the following: (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(2)(A)-(B))

a. Each type of preference shall be approved by OUSD at a public hearing. (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(2)(B)(i))

b. Preferences shall be consistent with federal law, the California Constitution, and Education Code section 200. (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(2)(B)(ii))

c. Preferences shall not result in limiting enrollment access for pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii))

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d. Preferences shall not require mandatory parental volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment. (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(2)(B)(iv))

6. If a pupil is expelled or leaves Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including report cards or a transcript of grades, and health information. (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(3))

7. Shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the charter school for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii). (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(4)(A))

8. Shall not request a pupil's records or require a parent, guardian, or pupil to submit the pupil's records to Charter School before enrollment. (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(4)(B))

9. Shall not encourage a pupil currently attending the charter school to disenroll from the charter school or transfer to another school for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii). (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(4)(C))

10. Shall post the California Department of Education's Charter School Complaint Notice on Charter School's website and Charter School shall provide a parent or guardian, or a pupil if the pupil is 18 years old, a copy of this notice at all of the following times: When a parent, guardian, or pupil inquires about enrollment; before conducting an enrollment lottery; and before disenrollment of a pupil. (Ed. Code § 47605(e)(4)(D))

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#### **Declaration Required by Education Code Sections 47611.5(b) and 47605(c)(6)**

Charter School is and shall be deemed the exclusive public employer of the employees of Charter School for purposes of Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code, and shall meet the requirements of Government Code sections 3540-3549.3 related to collective bargaining in public education employment (Ed. Code § 47611.5)

#### **Other Assurances**

##### **Charter School:**

1. Shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the pupil assessments required pursuant to Education Code sections 60605 and 60851 and any other statewide standards authorized in statute or pupil assessments applicable to pupils in noncharter public schools. (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(1))
2. Shall operate in compliance with generally accepted government accounting principles. (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(I))
3. Shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
4. Shall be subject to conflict of interest and other laws pertaining to public officials, including

[Government Code section 1090 \*et seq.\* and the Political Reform Act. \(Ed. Code § 47604.1\(b\)\(3\) and \(4\)\)](#)

5. Shall require its teachers to hold a certificate, permit, or other document issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. (Ed. Code § 47605(l))
6. Shall not hire any person who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony except as otherwise provided by law, and, if the school contracts with an entity for specified services, verify that any employee of that entity who will have contact with students has had a criminal background check. (Ed. Code §§ 44830.1, 45122.1, and 45125.1)
7. Shall not discriminate against any employee or candidate for employment on the basis of the fact or perception of a person's race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, military and veteran status or any other protected classification, in accordance with applicable law, and shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. (Government Code § 12940; Title 5 CCR §11967.5.1(f)(5))
8. Shall adhere to all applicable provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and serve students with disabilities in the same manner as such students are served in other public schools. (Ed. Code §§ 47646, 56145)
9. Shall adhere to all applicable provisions of federal law relating to students who are English language learners, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974; MGL c. 76, section 5; and MGL c. 89, 71 sections (f) and (I).
10. Shall follow the provisions of the McKinney–Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 (42 U.S.C. ch. 119 § 11431 *et seq.*) and Education Code sections 48850-48859 to ensure that homeless students and foster youth have access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschools, as provided to other children and youths.
11. Shall provide reasonable accommodations on campus to a lactating student to express breast milk, breastfeed an infant child, or address other needs related to breastfeeding. (Ed. Code § 222)
12. Shall provide students the right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press including, but not limited to, the use of bulletin boards; the distribution of printed materials or petitions; the wearing of buttons, badges, and other insignia; and the right of expression in official publications. (Ed. Code §§ 48907 and 48950)
13. Shall comply with all other applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations that pertain to the applicant or operation of the charter school, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - a. The California Code of Regulations
  - b. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part

99)

- c. [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 \(20 U.S.C. Sec. 1681 \*et seq.\*\)](#)
- d. [Displaying all required postings at school site and online](#)
- e. [Following the minimum and maximum age requirements for enrollment](#)
- f. [Providing the minimum number of instructional minutes](#)

**NOTE:** Throughout this Charter there is specific “District Required Language” (DRL), including but not limited to the above *Affirmations, Declarations, and Assurances* section. All DRL should be highlighted in gray. To the extent that any inconsistency may exist between any provision contained within the body of the Charter and the DRL, the provisions of the DRL shall control.

#### **INTENT OF CHARTER SCHOOLS ACT**

In accordance with the California Charter Schools Act of 1992, as amended (the Charter Schools Act), Downtown Charter Academy petitions the Oakland Unified School District to grant renewal of the charter petition for the continued operation of a middle school campus.

The Charter Schools Act states:

*It is the intent of the Legislature...to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish all of the following:*

- (a) *Improve pupil learning.*
- (b) *Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.*
- (c) *Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.*
- (d) *Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.*
- (e) *Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.*
- (f) *Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.*
- (g) *Provide vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools.*

*California Education Code Section 47601(a)-(g).*

The Charter Schools Act provides that a petition must contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions of the elements described in California Education Code Sections 47605(b) (5)

(A)-(O). These sections of the law and the required descriptions are provided below.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Amethod Public Schools, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit public benefit corporation, was founded in Oakland, CA in 1993 with the intent to create charter schools that produce academic results and reduce the achievement disparity that exists among the different student subgroups. The organization's flagship school, Oakland Charter Academy (OCA), is the oldest charter school in the City of Oakland, and the 14<sup>th</sup> school chartered in the state. For nearly twenty five years, we have been serving hundreds of Bay Area families with effective programs that produce results.

It is the objective of DCA and organization to continue fostering a positive school environment and culture where being diligent and taking personal responsibility are the norm. DCA demonstrates that public schools can produce successful students if they are operated in small and organized settings. It is the organizational belief that any child has the opportunity to be successful if they receive the proper education they need to be triumphant in college, family, and life.

### Rationale for Material Revision

Downtown Charter Academy submits this material revision to reflect a temporary change in admissions and enrollment policies for the 2026–27 school year. In alignment with Education Code § 47607(a)(4), a material revision is required when a charter school proposes substantive changes to its enrollment preferences.

This revision establishes a one-year enrollment preference for families displaced by the closure of Oakland Charter Academy. Providing this preference ensures continuity of educational access for impacted students, supports equity for families experiencing displacement, and affirms DCA's commitment to serving the broader Oakland community.

By codifying this temporary policy through a material revision, DCA ensures transparency, compliance with applicable law, and responsiveness to community needs while maintaining the integrity of its admissions process for all families.

### DCA Meets the Renewal Standard CHARTER RENEWAL CRITERIA

#### Evidence of Meeting Charter Renewal Standards Pursuant to Education Code Section 47607(b)

Education Code Section 47607(b) requires that a charter school must meet at least one of the following renewal criteria prior to receiving a charter renewal:

- (1) Attained its Academic Performance Index (API) growth target in the prior year or in two of the last three years, both school wide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school.
- (2) Ranked in deciles 4 to 10, inclusive, on the API in the prior year or in two of the last three years.

- (3) Ranked in deciles 4 to 10 inclusive, in the API for a demographically comparable school in the prior year or in two of the last three years.
- (4) The entity that granted the charter determines that the academic performance of the charter school is at least equal to the academic performance of the public schools that the charter school pupils would otherwise have been required to attend, as well as the academic performance of the schools in the school district in which the charter school is located, taking into account the composition of the pupil population that is served at the charter school.
- (5) Has qualified for an alternative accountability system pursuant to subdivision (h) of Education Code Section 52052.

As indicated below with the most recent CAASPP comparison data, the Charter School meets the criteria of Education Code Section 47607(b)(4).

*See Also CAASPP Comparison Table in Appendix B*

School / Entity	ELA % of all students meeting standard	Math % of all students meeting standard
DCA	73.3%	84.61%
Bret Harte Middle School	25.55%	17.53%
Urban Promise Academy	24.51%	11.38%
Roosevelt Middle School	24.12%	20.63%
OUSD	30.81%	20.74%
State of California	47.93%	36.56%

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*Overview of AMPS' Schools*

Downtown Charter Academy (DCA) opened in 2013 and serves a student population that is 97% minority and 80% socio-economically disadvantaged. In 2013, DCA was the third highest performing middle school in California and in 2016, DCA received the Gold Ribbon Award from the California Department of Education for its academic achievement. According to CAASPP 2017 Results, 73.3% DCA students exceeded or met the achievement standard and demonstrated advanced progress towards mastery in English Language Arts, and 84.61% exceeded or met the achievement standard in Math. DCA is ranked 10/10 on greatschools.org. DCA is located at 2000 Dennison Street, Oakland, CA 94606, and can be reached at (510) 535-1580. DCA is currently petitioning OUSD for renewal of its charter.

Oakland Charter Academy (OCA), the flagship of the AMPS organization, opened Oakland's first charter school in the fall 1994; then the fourteenth charter school authorized in the State of California. OCA has not only survived, but progressed, becoming a nationally recognized *No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon School* in 2008; the second public middle school serving under the authority of Oakland Unified School District to receive the distinguished award. OCA is located at 4215 Foothill Blvd in Oakland, CA 94601, and can be reached at (510) 532-6751. OUSD renewed OCA's charter in 2018.

Oakland Charter High School (OCHS), established in 2007, is ranked one of the top 20 schools in California, outperforming many schools in more affluent areas of the state. Awarded the Gold Medal by US News Best High Schools two years running, OCHS has sent over 96% of its graduates over the last three years to colleges and universities such as Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, and various UC and CSU campuses. OCHS has received the Innovate Public Schools Award for low income student achievement every year since 2015. The majority of OCHS' students come from either OCA or DCA, and the successes enjoyed at the middle schools and the high school are inextricably linked. OCHS is located at 2433 Coolidge Avenue in Oakland, CA 94601, and can be reached at (510) 436-0101. OUSD renewed OCHS' charter in 2017.

Richmond Charter Academy (RCA), the first Amethod School in the city of Richmond, has proven to be an academic success. In its first year, RCA reached an API score of 817, making it the highest performing public middle school in Richmond since the inception of the 1998 California Public Accountability Act.

RCA was the recipient of the 2016 and 2017 Gold Ribbon Award from the California Department of Education for its academic performance. Innovate Public Schools also named RCA among the most highly coveted in the Top Bay Area Schools List. RCA is located at 1450 Marina Way South in Richmond, CA 94804, and can be reached at (510) 235-2465. West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) renewed RCA's charter in 2017.

Benito Juarez Elementary (BJE) opened in 2014, is the first elementary school established in the AMPS network. In its first few years, BJE has seen steady growth in test scores as it continues to serve some of Richmond's most challenged families. In 2015, BJE received the Innovate Public Schools Award for Top Performing Bay Area Schools for Low-Income students in math. BJE currently serves 489 students. BJE is located at 1450 Marina Way South in Richmond, CA 94804, and can be reached at (510) 215-7009. WCCUSD authorized BJE's initial charter petition. BJE is currently in the process of renewing its charter.

John Henry High School (JHHS) opened its doors in 2015 and is the second high school in the AMPS network. JHHS was established at the request of stakeholders to continue the success of Richmond Charter Academy and to mirror its sister school, Oakland Charter High School, by providing a rigorous, college preparatory high school for the West Contra Costa Unified School District. In its first years, JHHS has seen steady growth in test scores as it continues to serve a student population of 350 that is 99% minority and over 80% socio-economically disadvantaged. JHHS is accredited by the Western Association of School and Colleges (WASC) and is on its way to becoming one of the highest performing high schools in California. JHHS' first ever graduating class sent over 90% of its graduates to colleges and universities across the nation. JHHS is located at 1402 Marina Way South in Richmond, CA 94806 and can be reached at (510) 235-2439. JHHS is authorized by WCCUSD and will be seeking renewal in the 2018-19 school year.

#### ***Key Leaders***

**Claudia Lee (Site Director)** — Claudia Lee is a Fulbright scholar who began her career in education as a founder of a school for 57 homeless children for Children of the Andes Foundation, in Bogota, Colombia. She then worked as a first grade teacher for the Philadelphia School District. At Independence Charter Ms. Lee was a teacher, Spanish immersion-coordinator, and curriculum specialist. At Children Literacy Initiative, she was a professional developer and teacher coach for the north eastern states. At Pan American Charter School, she worked as Assistant Principal; she then worked as principal at Colegio Bilingue Santa Marta, and as a content specialist at Kipp Excelencia. Ms. Lee holds a master's degree in writing from the City College of New York, a M. Ed. in Education, Curriculum, Instruction and Technology from Temple University, and a master in school leadership from Arcadia University. As a published writer and translator, she received the Honorary Mention of the Book of the

Americas Award for the book *Messengers of the Rain and Other Poems from Latin America*. Ms. Lee also worked as the CEO of ASI, SAS, an environmental consulting company, where she learned about environmental laws and practices. Outside school, Ms. Lee enjoys hiking and cooking with her husband, reading, writing, gardening, and listening to music; but what she loves most, is traveling and chilling with her now grown up kids.

**Ainye Long (Regional Superintendent)** Ms. Long has over 17 years of experience in the educational field and most recently served as an 8th grade Mathematics and algebra teacher in Los Angeles. Prior to serving as Regional Superintendent, she was the Director of Parent and Community Engagement for the California Charter Schools Association, and a high school mathematics teacher in Oakland, CA. She served as an AMPS' middle school teacher for Oakland Charter Academy from 2007-2009, was a founding teacher at Oakland Charter High School, and was the AMPS Board President in 2013 when Downtown Charter Academy was first chartered.

Since returning to AMPS this past spring as Regional Superintendent—Oakland, Ms. Long is responsible for overseeing our instructional and operational programs as well as coaching, supporting, and developing our school leader teams. Ms. Long holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and American Studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz as well as an Administrative Service Credential from Fortune School of Education and a Single Subject Mathematics Credential from California State University, Dominguez Hills.

**Jorge Lopez (CEO)** CEO's primary functions are to set the strategic vision for the organization, ensure progress toward goals, make executive level decisions regarding organizational growth and strategy, and oversee external relations.

AMPS' current CEO, Jorge Lopez, has been with the organization for 14 years and has over 20 years of experience working with school reform organizations, charter schools, and at risk youth. Mr. Lopez is a former member of the California State Board of Education, as appointed by former governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, where he served as a liaison to the Advisory Commission on Charter Schools (ACCS). ~~Mr. Lopez is a current Harvard Business School Fellow and Aspen Pahara Fellow (Cohort XVI – 2016).~~

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With AMPS, Mr. Lopez began by transforming Oakland Charter Academy Middle School, a once struggling campus, into a National Blue Ribbon school. He has since overseen the growth of AMPS into a nationally recognized system serving over 2,000 students. In recognition of this strong growth, Mr. Lopez is representing AMPS at the National Charter School Accelerator (Cohort 4 – 2018).

Notable achievements over the last 14 years under Jorge Lopez:

- OCA transitions to AMPS model in Fall 2004
- OCA: 2007 National Blue Ribbon
- OCHS: 2012 956 API and 2017 Gold Medal School in the Top 100 Nationally and Top 5 in Bay Area
- OCHS: 2013 California Distinguished School

- Downtown Charter Academy and Richmond Charter Academy: 2017 California Gold Ribbon Schools
- Over 90% of AMPS graduating seniors are accepted to a four year university, including JHHS inaugural class where 25 of 27 were accepted to 4 year university (93%)
- AMPS is one of fifteen charters nationwide to receive the Federal DOE Expansion Grant for over \$4,000,000

Prior to working with AMPS, Mr. Lopez worked for the Federal Migrant Education Program Region 2 in Butte County, and Region 23 in San Joaquin County as a Program Director where he oversaw K-12 education site based services for identified migrant agricultural families and students. Mr. Lopez holds a BA and a graduate degree in Education from Sacramento State University.

**Pete Cordero** The AMPS Chief Operating Officer is responsible for the strategic growth and build out of support systems for AMPS, including Talent/HR, Operations, Finance and Accounting, Technology, and Marketing and Data Management.

Pete Cordero is the current COO of Amethod Public Schools. Prior to his role at AMPS, he was the Director of Resident Development for The Broad Residency in Urban Education. In this role, he focused on leadership development, role progression, supervisor relationships and all aspects of the resident experience that related directly to their work with partner organizations.

Mr. Cordero was a member and graduate of The Broad Residency's Class of 2007-2009 during which time he served as director of school support services at Partnership to Uplift Communities (PUC) Schools in Los Angeles. Prior to his career in education, he spent twelve years in the private sector serving as director of sales and marketing for DKN Hotels Inc., as national sales director for Kaplan Inc., and as regional sales director for Automatic Data Processing (ADP). Cordero holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Southern California and an M.B.A. from the Graziadio School of Business at Pepperdine University.

## INTRODUCTION

### ***Mission Statement***

DCA seeks to prepare students to become innovative individuals who take risks for the good of their academic progress and their community and persevere as they seek knowledge through college and beyond. DCA will strengthen the character and academic skills needed for underserved students in Oakland to excel in competitive middle schools, high schools and colleges and assume positions of responsibility and distinction. Central to the school's mission is the belief that all students can succeed in rigorous college-prep environments when provided with high expectations, a disciplined commitment to academics, extended time for learning, including summer school and daily supplemental instruction, and access to a wide range of enriching learning experiences. It is now a truism that an excellent college education is necessary for expanded opportunities in an increasingly competitive and global 21<sup>st</sup> century job

market and DCA will seek to meet the challenge through a collaborative effort with all of the school's stakeholders.

#### ***Vision Statement***

AMPS fosters students' motivation and belief in perseverance and academic achievement. We are a free and public charter school that believes in the promise of hard-working students from all perspectives, backgrounds, and talents. We challenge every student to strive towards a purpose larger than the self, and encourage every family to expect more from their schools, themselves, and their children for a prospective future for the next generation.

#### ***Amethod Public Schools (AMPS) - Core Values***

The Core Values of the organization represent what all people who work for the organization stand by, defend, trust in, and go forward with. One cannot "set" organizational values; these are attributes that we have discovered to be impactful through our nearly twenty years of service in public education. Over those years, we have learned that the task is to *find* people who are predisposed to sharing the Core Values, and work at attracting and then retaining these people.

#### *Organization's Core Values:*

1. Students First
2. Adaptability
3. Goal Oriented Mindset
4. Lead People
5. Commitment to Distinction

#### ***Successful and Innovative Programs***

Downtown Charter Academy pursues lofty academic goals while infusing methods for instilling a sense of intellectual and studious culture and high expectations among our student body. The Amethod Public Schools culture and procedures are rooted in traditional values such as respect, responsibility, work ethic, academic rigor, and community service. These ideals are explicitly taught to every teacher, and subsequently to every student. AMPS campuses have become known for upholding these values, and this is a large component of what makes our system effective. Our task is to empower underserved students to be different and stand out from their community peers, many of whom are assigned to underperforming schools.

#### ***Highlights of College Acceptances (OCHS and JHHS)***

DCA students populate OCHS, and AMPS is committed to continue to prepare students to compete and attend the top four year colleges and universities throughout the nation. Accordingly, our graduates have been accepted and have gone on to attend prestigious universities such as, but not limited to the following:

*Boston College  
Harvard*

*University of the Pacific  
Bryn Mawr College  
California State Polytechnic University,*

*The University of Arizona  
Grinnell College*

*University of California, Berkeley  
University of Wisconsin, Madison  
Ohio State University*

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Pomona College	Hampton University
Pitzer College	University of California, Davis
California State University, Hayward	Spelman College
California State University, Long Beach	San Jose State University
San Diego State University	University of California, Los Angeles
Claremont McKenna	University of California, Riverside
Syracuse University	Johns Hopkins University
Dartmouth College	University of California, San Diego
Fordham University	University of California, Santa Barbara
George Washington University	University of California, Santa Cruz
St. Mary's College	Cal Lutheran University
St. Johns University	University of California, Santa Cruz
New York University	Loyola Marymount University
Sacramento State University	University of Southern California
Chico State University	Florida State University
Princeton University	Notre Dame University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)	Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
University of Southern California	University of San Francisco
	San Francisco State University
	Tulane University
	Wake Forest

## ELEMENT I: EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM

Governing Law *A description of the school's "The educational program of the charter school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the charter school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an "educated person" in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners." – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(A)(i)*

"The annual goals for the charter school for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals. A charter petition may identify additional school priorities, the goals for the school priorities, and the specific annual actions to achieve those goals." – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(A)(ii)

*California Education Code Section 47605(b) (5) (A)(i-ii)*

DRL: *"In accordance with SB 1290, [CHARTER SCHOOL] pupil outcomes related to annual academic achievement goals will be set and disaggregated by all numerically significant subgroups as defined in Education Code section 52052; including race/ethnicity, socio-economic status (SES), English Learner status, and "If the proposed charter school will serve high school pupils, the manner in which the charter school will inform parents about the transferability of courses to other public high schools and the eligibility of courses to meet college entrance requirements. Courses offered by the charter school that are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may be considered transferable and courses approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the "A to G" admissions criteria may be considered to meet college entrance requirements." – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(A)(iii)*

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### Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)

Special Education designations, in the state priorities that apply for the grade levels served or the nature of the program operated, as well as the specific annual actions to achieve those goals, any additional school priorities, the goals for the school priorities, and the specific annual actions to achieve those additional goals.

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*Charter School acknowledges and agrees that it must comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from time to time, which include the requirement that Charter School shall annually submit a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)/annual update to the Office of Charter Schools on or before July 1, in accordance with Education Code section 47604.33. In accordance with Education Code sections 47604.33 and section 47606.5, Charter School shall annually update its goals and annual actions to achieve those goals identified in the charter pursuant to Education Code section 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), using the Local Control and Accountability Plan template adopted by the State Board of Education, as it may be changed from time to time, including but not limited to the following:*

- A review of the progress towards the goals included in the charter, an assessment of the effectiveness of specific actions toward achieving those goals, and a description of the changes to the specific actions the charter school will make as a result of the review and assessment.
  - Listing and description of the expenditures for the fiscal year in implementing the specific actions included in the charter as a result of the reviews and assessments, classified using the California School Accounting Manual.
  - To the extent practicable, data shall be reported in a manner consistent with how information is reported on the California School Dashboard.

Charter School shall comply with all other requirements of Education Code section 47606.5, including but not limited to the requirement that Charter School ~~“~~ shall consult with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, parents, and pupils in developing the local control and accountability plan and annual update.”<sup>12</sup> (Ed. Code § 47606.5(e)-(d))

## Independent Study

Charter School recognizes that a long-term independent study program (greater than 15 days per school year), is a material term of the educational program described in Charter School's petition. Therefore, if offered, Charter School's petition will contain a reasonably comprehensive description of the long-term independent study program, including how the school will comply with the legal requirements in providing such a program.

## **Home and Hospital Instruction**

Charter School is responsible for providing both its general education and special education students with individual home instruction during any period of temporary disability when the student is unable to participate in on-campus instruction. In the case of a parent notifying Charter School of a request for home instruction, Charter School shall determine the appropriateness of home instruction services within five days of the request and shall begin home services within five days of determining eligibility. If a student disenrolls from Charter School in order to enroll with their school district of residence for home instruction, Charter School shall re-admit such students if they request re-enrollment within one calendar year from disenrollment from Charter School.

If a student with an IEP is unable to attend school due to a temporary or ongoing medical or psychological disability, Charter School shall continue to be responsible for the provision of special education and related services during that time. Home instruction for a student with an IEP or Section 504 plan shall only be provided under the following circumstances (5 CCR § 3051.4): the IEP team has recommended home instruction based on a medical report which is from the student's attending

physician, surgeon, or psychologist; states the diagnosed condition; certifies that the student's condition prevents attendance in a less restrictive setting; and contains a projected calendar date for the student's return to school.

Home instruction shall be provided only by teachers with valid California teaching credentials who consent to the assignment. There is no provision in statute that specifically addresses instructional content; however, the goal of home instruction should be maintenance of the pupil's former level of performance.

A student with a temporary disability, who is in a hospital or other residential health facility within the boundaries of OUSD, excluding a state hospital, shall receive educational services by OUSD. A pupil with a temporary disability, who is in a hospital or other residential health facility outside the boundaries of OUSD, excluding a state hospital, shall receive educational services by the school district in which the hospital is located. Pursuant to Education Code § 48207, Charter School shall continue to enroll such students while they are receiving Hospital Instruction. Average daily attendance shall be calculated consistent with the law.

#### **Student Enrollment and Grade Levels Served**

Charter School will serve a student enrollment at each grade level and at all grade levels combined in each of the years of the term of the Charter as follows:

<b><u>Projected Student Enrollment for Each Year by Grade Level and Total Enrollment</u></b>								
<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Year 1 2019-20</u>	<u>Year 2 2020-21</u>	<u>Year 3 2021-22</u>	<u>Year 4 2022-23</u>	<u>Year 5 2023-24</u>	<u>Year 6 2024-25</u>	<u>Year 7 2025-26</u>	<u>Year 8 2026-27</u>
<u>6</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>112</u>						
<u>7</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>156</u>						
<u>8</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>157</u>						
<u>Total</u>	<u>330</u>	<u>425</u>						

Special Education DCA's pupil outcomes, disaggregated by numerically significant subgroups in compliance with Education Code section 17607(b)(5)(A)(ii), are as follows:

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Attached as Appendix B.

DRL: "If Charter School serves students in grades 9-12, Charter School shall obtain Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation before Charter School graduates its first class of students."

N/A

Add the following text and remove any text to the contrary:

Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 51224.7 with respect to implementing a fair, objective and transparent mathematics placement policy for pupils entering the ninth grade.

Downtown Charter Academy is committed to serving all students, including those with disabilities, in full compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and applicable state laws. The school ensures that students with exceptional needs have equitable access to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

DCA operates as its own Local Educational Agency for special education purposes and is a member of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA. As an LEA member, DCA follows SELPA policies and procedures for identifying, assessing, and serving students with disabilities, and uses SELPA forms for all referrals, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and record-keeping. The school may also contract with outside providers or non-public agencies as needed to ensure students receive appropriate services.

Students who may qualify for special education are identified through multiple means, including analysis of achievement data, teacher referrals, and the Student Study Team (SST) process. The SST—which includes parents/guardians, teachers, the Site Director, and other staff—reviews concerns and develops interventions. If general education interventions are not sufficient, the SST may recommend a comprehensive evaluation for special education eligibility. Parents may also request assessments at any time, and DCA responds in compliance with mandated timelines.

For students enrolling with existing IEPs, DCA immediately provides comparable services and convenes an IEP team within 30 days to review and adopt or revise the plan. The IEP team, including parents and qualified staff, determines eligibility, placement, and services. Instruction and supports are delivered by appropriately credentialed special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and related service providers such as speech therapists, occupational therapists, and psychologists.

DCA provides a full-inclusion model to the extent appropriate, ensuring students with disabilities learn alongside their non-disabled peers whenever possible. Services are individualized, ranging from classroom accommodations and modifications to small-group or one-on-one instruction, as required by each IEP. Progress toward IEP goals is monitored regularly and reported to parents as frequently as report cards are issued to general education students.

Funding for special education is derived from federal, state, and SELPA revenues allocated to the school, supplemented by DCA's general budget. These funds support internal staff, contracted providers, and specialized resources. DCA invests significantly in special education programming, allocating over \$1,000 per student with disabilities for staff, software, and contracted services.

In all matters of discipline and school policy, DCA follows IDEA requirements, ensuring that students with disabilities are afforded due process and appropriate behavioral interventions. Staff receive professional development on compliance with IDEA, Section 504, and SELPA policies to ensure consistent implementation.

Through these structures, Downtown Charter Academy demonstrates its commitment to identifying, supporting, and educating students with disabilities, while upholding its mission to provide rigorous, inclusive, and equitable learning opportunities for all students.

### Educational Philosophy

Our philosophy was developed to reflect our vision of how to best remedy the deficiencies in academic performance of poor and/or minority children in California public schools. This major achievement gap in performance between the different subgroups, divided among racial

and economic lines has exposed an issue that should be considered a national crisis. A first-rate free and public education is at the cornerstone of this America's success; however the current disparity among poor and minority children's academic performance should now be considered a crisis and a major concern to the country's future.

Amethod Public Schools, parent organization for Downtown Charter Academy (DCA), believes that higher education is the surest path to future success for poor families, and having high expectations of all students is an absolute necessity. Drawing the best from every student takes immense effort from the teachers, families, administrators, and students; but the results are well worth it. We reason that some of the keys to drawing the best from every student requires schools to have high expectations, highly effective teachers, academic rigor, professional development, stakeholder commitments, and the will to support a demanding academic program.

The AMPS organizational framework encourages students and families to realize that commitment to an intense academic program and establishing a strong work ethic is pivotal to future personal success. It is our intent to teach students to go past their academic level of comfort and pursue challenging coursework eagerly and to see rigorous courses as the key for success.

Moreover, we believe that students and families need to be conscious of the messages that reinforce low expectations and excuses which are pervasive in many institutions, including schools, and the messages they convey to inner city students.

Parents sending their children to DCA can expect:

- 1) **Small Campus-** Schools with large populations of students are built on the premise that theoretically, due to the economies of scale, a large school is more efficient at delivering a comprehensive educational product. The problem is that these large schools are too big and students become numbers, not individuals. Many students can fall through the gaps and end up with their academic needs failing to be addressed in large schools. Moreover, problems such as discipline and violence can escalate, and campus security becomes a serious issue. Teachers can end up becoming nothing more than traffic cops, and as expected, the quality of instruction deteriorates. Our smaller campuses expose students to more information, time, and individual attention therefore making it much easier to figure out how a student learns and what makes them tick academically, and socially. It is far easier to close the gaps in a school system in a small campus setting.
- 2) **Departmentalized Classrooms-** A core part of the AMPS middle school curricular model is the implementation of departmentalized classrooms. By offering the departmentalized classrooms, DCA students are offered highly qualified instructors, best practices for specific content disciplines, more in depth focus on each discipline, and increased opportunities for inquiry based learning. This curricular approach has been proven extremely effective at AMPS middle school sites.
- 3) **Structure-** AMPS considers effective teaching practice, structured classrooms, and orderly schools to be the key measures to prevent negative student behaviors. Teachers must give students a clear understanding of how tasks proceed. For example, if students are to enter the class, teachers will begin by describing how students are to enter the facility and classroom properly. This must be explicitly taught and re-taught early to avoid confusion. We expect every teacher to make lists of student roles and group responsibilities, and explain, and teach these thoroughly to students. In this way, students will know what is expected of them throughout the course of the year. Explicit information detailing what is expected of students is provided, taught, and reinforced through clearly structured daily patterns, rituals, and class activities. We do not ascribe to the spiral of continual suspensions and the constant flow of students to the office as

is seen in many schools and view a focus on a structured school as the best remedy to this issue.

4) **Attendance Matters-** As basic as the concept may be, many students, particularly those at the middle and high school levels, become careless about regular school attendance. Missing a few classes seems inconsequential to them and at times it may seem insignificant to parents and families as well. School administrators are sometimes faced with parents who are unaware of their child's absence from school or, worse, which are aware but quite willing to make excuses for the absence. Each lesson presented to students is based upon or related to those that preceded it. Just as we can never regain a moment of time wasted, the child who misses a day of school also misses a day of education which cannot be retrieved. DCA uses an incentive-based program for students and parents to encourage maximum attendance rates.

There are several reasons why regular attendance at school is important for every student.

- **Absenteeism hurts the student.** Students who are frequently absent fall behind in academics and miss important concepts that enhance their ability to understand and follow directions or, ultimately, plan for the future.
- **Absenteeism hurts other students.** Students who are frequently absent require more individual attention and catch up time from the teacher.
- **Absenteeism hurts the school and organization.** State financial support for schools is directly linked to student attendance. When students are absent the school loses funding.

5) **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports and Social Emotional Learning –** Part of the AMPS mission statement includes a character development aspect to instill in our scholars the importance of committing to distinction. One of the methods our schools employ is a Positive Behavior Interventions and Support system which reinforces positive behaviors and values rather than punitively punishing bad behaviors. This ensures that students are being focused on the positive qualities that we want them to cultivate at our sites. We also utilize a social emotional learning curriculum to help students learn to manage their stress, time, and relationships with others in a positive and productive way. This is an important aspect of our character development program that supports students' social and emotional growth by offering them the space and language to create a supportive learning community, develop self-awareness and self-management, build positive relationships, and resolve their own conflicts.

6) **High Expectations for All Students:** At DCA, there are high expectations for all students. We assure that every student takes rigorous courses, such as Algebra I in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, so that every student is on track to have a better choice for advanced and/or honors college preparatory high school courses. Considering that we are an

academically focused school system, we require extensive individual and group work outside of the classroom. As such, our schools offer academic support programs to meet the needs of the entire student population, and to empower students to reach their full potential. The staff is committed to, and required to, ensure that all students are either performing on grade level or working their way through, regardless of their skill level upon enrolling in the school. We also have high standards for student behavior and expect all staff, parents, student, and administrators to understand and reinforce the adherence to proper student conduct and school policies.

#### ***Character Development***

In addition to focusing on academic skills, teachers at DCA place a strong emphasis on character building. Students learn how to behave in large group settings, track all speakers and presenters, participate in student competitions (e.g., spelling or geography bees), and greet school visitors. Students also have the opportunity to help their community through volunteer programs and activities.

Teachers are expected to use an appropriate mix of instructional techniques such as direct instruction, feedback through engagement, and individual student practice in their lessons that reinforce the character education expectations and keep the character goals active and present through the lessons. DCA students acquire life skills that provide a meaningful connection to society.

The goal for all of our students is to develop an understanding that education is imperative for their future, and absolutely necessary for their success in adulthood. It is our intent to establish a school culture where diligence, perseverance, and creativity are respected, and where students feel responsible for their own education is the ultimate goal.

#### **WHOM THE SCHOOL IS TRYING TO EDUCATE**

Downtown Charter Academy Middle School shall be nonsectarian in its programs, curriculum, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations; shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity or disability. Amethod Schools has demonstrated tremendous success over the past 25 years in providing effective programs to different subgroups and school sites, and will continue to make a difference in the neighborhoods it serves.

As previously stated, DCA is open to any student or family who wishes to attend; however, the school will concentrate outreach efforts to OUSD students who fit the following criteria:

- *Students who live in low-income households and neighborhoods;*
- *Students whose primary home language is not English;*
- *Students who would be the first in their families to attend college.*
- *Students from immigrant head of households;*

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN EDUCATED PERSON IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

An individual must be able to thrive in a demanding, fast paced and extremely competitive global environment with a very demanding and fluid economic and technological market. The reality is that America is losing many of the manufacturing and industry driven jobs that once were at the core of the American workforce and middle class. Combined with the demands of an extremely competitive global citizenry, Americans will be compelled to be persistent, industrious, innovative, adaptable, trained, and self-motivated individuals who are committed to continuous learning. The ability to think and analyze with an open mind and make informed decisions based on acumen and understanding of a wide range of perspectives and possibilities will also be essential. This is what education should provide; an academic foundation that will offer the opportunity to enter the world of academia and higher learning in preparation for the challenges of the future global market. DCA students are taught to think, not what to think.

Contemporary success and prosperous career paths, more often than not, demand a college education. Especially for poor minority students residing in urban inner cities; a college education presents the surest path out of poverty and generational disparity. Data from the US Census Bureau indicates that college graduates will earn far more money over their lifetime than non-college graduates.

Tony Wagner in his book, *The Global Achievement Gap*, discusses the new millennium that was ushered in by a dramatic technological revolution and states that we now live in an increasingly diverse, globalized, and complex media-saturated society. According to his research, there are seven skills a well-educated person in the 21st Century must possess (Wagner, 2008). The seven skills highlighted by Wagner are the following:

1. Critical thinking and problem solving
2. Collaboration and leading by influence
3. Agility and adaptability
4. Initiative and entrepreneurialism
5. Effective oral and written communication
6. Accessing and analyzing information
7. Curiosity and imagination

Therefore, DCA believes that a strong academic foundation in the middle school content is imperative. Students need to first receive and master the essential fundamentals such as analytical reading, math fundamentals, and reading comprehension that are the building blocks for academic and brain development. Also, equally important is the development of a steadfast work ethic that will compel the individual to persevere and persist through academic and personal challenges they will encounter in their lives.

Our schools exist to ensure the pipeline to college is filled with students who possess the knowledge and aptitude necessary to succeed in college and the increasingly competitive society. Regardless of their backgrounds, economic standing or any other demographic, it is our task to instill and cultivate these habits with our students and see to it that they possess the tools and confidence necessary to succeed in school and beyond, as contributing citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### **HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS**

Our schools use data and data analysis as the guiding standards to our methodology. We collect and evaluate achievement, grade performance, and non-academic data such as attendance, and suspensions to measure the effectiveness of the school's overall performance. One of the core concepts for our methodology is to focus our instructional minutes in core content subjects Math and English, Science and History. For example, students in our model receive up to 72 minutes of English daily, with tutoring options available during and after school hours.

Another pillar is our belief that a school must first and foremost provide a safe, orderly, and disciplined classroom culture otherwise the resulting chaos will have a detrimental effect on the learning, and success of all students. Too many excuses are being made and negative attitudes tolerated in local schools and this has resulted in chaotic campuses, school safety issues, burned out faculty, and meager student performance. Learning best occurs when the teacher is organized, engaging, constantly assessing and capturing student attention all the while commanding the curriculum and management of the class. We assert that proper classroom procedures, practice and a sound discipline policy are essential to effective teaching and learning. Inexperienced or laissez-faire teachers tend to be fearful of allowing students to share responsibility for the class. Indeed, many students will behave irresponsibly when given too much latitude while some students, when given a choice in the matter, will choose to not work at all.

#### ***Instructional Domains***

The Instructional Domains are a compilation of desired best teaching practices summarized with common measures of student success. AMPS' own practice throughout 25+ years of existence have also influenced the standards for every school site. Each standard is designed to create clear, rigorous and effective site pattern for success.

The selected instructional domains are used to gauge teacher effectiveness and instructional practice in Amethod Public Schools classrooms. The framework provides an expectation of common practice to facilitate peer and administrative observations. Through in-house instructional development, coaching and reinforced teaching practices expected within our schools – we develop highly effective teachers. At the student level, the standards in the framework serve to create a common instructional experience across classes and schools by instituting valuable organization wide procedures, rituals and strategies.

There are five (5) areas identified as *Domains* aligned to our teacher evaluation. The described standards and strands demonstrate what is expected to be observed in all of the Amethod Public School classrooms.

Below is an overview synopsis of what teachers in the AMPS system are expected to exhibit.

***Domain 1: Purposeful Planning***

- *Lesson Design*
- *Lesson Materials*
- *Objective Driven- Plans and Assessments*
- *Focus on All Learners (Modifications, Differentiation)*

***Domain 2: Effective Instruction***

- *Establishing Learning Expectations and Student Engagement*
- *Use of Instructional Strategies*
- *Pace of Instruction*
- *Assuring All Students Interact with New Knowledge*
- *Addressing the Range of Learners*
- *Urgency*
- *Classroom Setting*
- *Academic Content Mastery and Delivery*

***Domain 3: Data Evaluations & Assessments***

- *Classroom Assessments*
- *Checking for Understanding and Responsiveness to Daily Student Learning*
- *Ability to Analyze Assessment Results*
- *Appropriateness of Response to Assessment Results*
- *Growth on Interim Assessments*

***Domain 4: Classroom Management***

- *Classroom Tone: Strong Voice and Positive Framing*
- *Alignment with School Culture*
- *Classroom Procedures and What to Do*
- *Ability to Refocus a Class and Do It Again*
- *Level of On Task Behavior and 100%*
- *Dealing with Challenging Situations and Students*
- *Relationships with Students*

***Domain 5: Professionalism (Expectations)***

- *Timeliness (School Day, Classes, Meetings)*
- *Ability to Meet Deadlines*
- *Professional Dress and Attitude*

- *Additional Contributions and Responsibilities*
- *Professional Development Participation and Implementation*
- *Relationships with Colleagues/ School*

See Appendix C - AMPS – Instructional Effectiveness Domains & Competencies

#### **Instructional Program Tools**

DCA will give students opportunities to learn academic and life skills from teachers, parents, classmates, and community members. The instructional strategies employed at the school are described below.

- ***Differentiated Instruction & Standards-based Instruction***

All too often, teachers “teach to the middle”, meaning instruction is geared toward the mid-range of academic levels in the classroom. This severely hampers students who are struggling and those who are excelling. In order to maximize the learning opportunities and attainment of content standards in all core subjects for students, Downtown Charter Academy utilizes a variety of differentiated instructional strategies. Instruction is delivered through a variety of different lesson types including an engaging lecture style format, inquiry-based learning, and differing modalities of instruction such as auditory, visual, and multi-media and other technology-based strategies in an attempt to leverage advances in the blended style of academic models for individual student needs. In addition, all teachers collect, analyze and reflect upon student achievement data on a weekly basis to guide the instruction and ensure that all students’ needs are being met. Traditional small group tutoring and reinforcement will continue to be offered to students.

- ***Low Student-Teacher Ratios***

By design, DCA is a small school campus. There are many positive attributes to small campus that include: more attention to students and families more focused academic programs, and a tighter sense of school community. We will seek to limit class sizes to 33 students and will leverage the size through the ongoing use of the Learning Lab and technology components. For students needing intense intervention in math and reading, resource tutors will be provided who will work with small groups in the schools Learning Lab after school programs with an ideal ratio of 10:1.

- ***Individual Learning Plans***

Individual Learning Plans are used as a tool for teachers throughout the year. Students are unique individuals with specific needs, and in order for instruction to be most effective, the particular levels, struggles, and learning needs of students must be taken into account. Therefore, the school creates Individual Learning Plans (ILP) for student's based on assessed needs. The ILP's map out each student's assessed entry point into their respective grade level, academic needs, goals, linguistic needs, and social attributes for the specific student. Parents are an active partner in the ILP process.

*See Appendix D – ILP Form*

- ***Added Time***

DCA offers more than the required amount of instructional minutes recommended by the state for Math and English / Language Arts. This allows for a more in depth and comprehensive study of the subject matter.

This abundance of instructional time in core subjects affords more time for students for content mastery, and leveraged learning through the usage of technologies. More time means more opportunity for differentiated instruction.

- ***Summer Program***

Our Summer Program has two main goals: 1) Support students who need to be better prepare for the next grade in Math and Language Arts. Students come to school for a 3-week intensive small group instruction and skill practice that target their performance gaps. 2) serve as a bridge to incoming students so that by the beginning of the academic year, students know expectations of behavior, homework and academic routines. It is also a time for community building. This methodology has proven to be efficient in helping students adapt to the academic rigor of the school and form relationships with teachers and peers.

## **ANNUAL GOALS**

1. College and Career Readiness for All Students
2. Positive School Culture and Student Engagement
3. Parent Support and Engagement
4. Student Access to Technology

The following program description reveals how these annual goals are being addressed at DCA. Also, the annual LCAP is attached in the appendix and available at [amethodschools.org](http://amethodschools.org) in both English and Spanish. The LCAP further describes actions taken to reach these goals and the financial implication of these actions.

*See Appendix E for DCA LCAP in English*

## **CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM**

*Amethod Public Schools-Scope and Sequence*

*K-8 Common Core State Standards*

The California State Board of Education has established “rigorous world-class” content and performance standards through the adoption of the **Common Core State Standards**. DCA will ensure that students demonstrate mastery of these standards in the core disciplines (English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies/History, and Science).

Every DCA student, teacher, and parent associated with the school will be familiar with the standards for his/her grade level. To achieve this, grade-level appropriate standards shall be clearly articulated and integrated into all lesson plans and classroom activities, and shall be referenced in the homework assigned to students.

***Actions taken to implement the CCSS with fidelity***

1. *Unpack the Standards:* Ensure teachers, and instructional staff know and understand the CCSS for mathematics and ELA / literacy.
2. *Supporting aligned instructional practice:* Ensure tools and programs used to guide instructional practice reflect and prioritize the expectations of the CCSS.
3. *Focused professional development:* Ensure PD and resources spent on learning deepen educators' knowledge of and facility with the CCSS.
4. *Aligned materials:* Review existing state aligned materials and ensure instructional resources met the goals and expectations of the CCSS.
5. *Aligned assessments:* Ensure school interim assessments accurately reflect the expectation of the CCSS. Teachers are encouraged to use previously released test questions to help them align their own in class assessments. AMPS also uses IlluminateEd, allowing teachers to build standards based assessments to regularly track student achievement.
6. *Involved the community:* Engage staff, parents and community members with the intent and plan for the school to incorporate the CCSS.

***English/Language Arts - Common Core State Standards (CCSS)***

The CCSS require that students read more challenging texts during instruction than has been general practice in the past. The reason is that this shift could help students reach more advanced literacy achievement levels. But, research also shows this to be a complex instructional issue and one that will not likely be accomplished successfully without a nuanced and thoughtful approach. Merely adding more challenging texts to the curriculum is not a sufficient or effective response to this requirement.

***Common Core - Necessities for English Language Arts/Literacy***

**1. Building knowledge through content rich nonfiction.**

Building knowledge through content rich nonfiction plays an essential role in literacy and in the standards within the CCSS framework. In 6-12, ELA classes place much greater attention to a specific category of informational text literary nonfiction than has been traditional in the previous state standards. Informational reading primarily includes content rich non-fiction in history/social studies, science and the art.

The standards for literacy in the cross curricular CCSS format aim to ensure that students will be able to independently build knowledge in these disciplines through reading and writing. DCA actively infuses nonfiction texts to the existing literature program established for the AMPS middle school sites.

## **2. Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational**

AMPS adheres to the CCSS standards and places a premium on students writing to sources, using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well defended claims, and clear information. Rather than simply asking DCA students questions they can answer solely from their prior knowledge, deducing, or experience, students are expected to answer questions that depend on their approach of having read the text or texts with care and purpose. Thus, considering that reading standards focus on students' ability to read carefully and grasp information, arguments, ideas and details based on text evidence, AMPS incorporates different interpretation strategies for core and analytic reading as a supplement to the core content program.

The standards also require the cultivation of narrative writing throughout the grades, and in later grades a command of sequence and detail is essential for effective argumentative and informational writing.

## **3. Regular practice with Complex text and its academic language**

Rather than focusing solely on the skills of reading and writing, the CCSS standards highlight the growing complexity of the text's students must read to be ready for the demands of college and careers. While this has always been an embedded part of the AMPS middle and high school curriculum, we have incorporated many more scientific and nonfiction spiraled reads for all grade levels. The CCSS standards aim to build a staircase of text complexity so that all students are ready for the demands of college and career level reading no later than the end of high school, therefore reading comprehension and a focus on academic vocabulary is addressed as well.

It is the objective of DCA is to prepare students to be ready for the advanced and honors leveled courses in high school and beyond; that is the intent of the Common Core curriculum. Why are the middle grades such a critical time in terms of academic preparation? In many ways the middle grades represent a fork in the road on the path to college. It is the time when students are choosing who they want to be in the world and are solidifying their academic path. Well-developed programs and school programs, because they support students at such a critical time in their lives, have a unique opportunity to shape students' futures, as long as they are intentional and comprehensive in meeting the academic, developmental and social needs of their students.

There is a common agreement about the rigorous high school courses students should take in order to prepare for college (e.g., 4 years of English; 4 years of math, culminating in pre-calculus or calculus; 2-4 years of science; etc.), and additionally, there are the Honors and

Advanced Placement courses that are coveted courses by many universities. AMPS Staff have learned from our experiences that the rigorous college-prep classes are heavily dependent on middle school.

A students' chance of enrolling and excelling in advanced high school courses which adequately prepare them for college, are severely jeopardized if training and coursework are not up to par in middle school. Therefore, middle school students need to be prepared to take a college-prep high school curriculum to have a shot at higher learning.

Recent research from ACT found that the level of academic achievement students attain *by eighth grade* has a significant impact on college and career-readiness and that, "...improving high school course rigor may not succeed unless we first increase the number of entering high school students who are prepared to benefit from such rigorous courses."<sup>1</sup>

Data backed effective practices combined together with standard aligned textbooks, added time; support, professional development, and the instructional delivery of well-crafted lessons are the hallmarks of AMPS middle school design components. Included in the AMPS designs are pacing guides, sample lesson plans, instructional standards, teaching strategies and assessments that have been successful at other AMPS campuses.

<sup>1</sup>(ACT, 2008- *The Forgotten Middle*-Iowa City, IA)

**Middle School Curricular Model**

	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
<b>Core Classes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Social Studies: Ancient Civilizations</li> <li>-English 6 /Language Arts (Literature/ Writing)</li> <li>-Math (6<sup>th</sup> Grade Math/ Pre-Algebra)</li> <li>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade Integrated Science</li> <li>- Physical Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Social Studies: Medieval and Early Modern Times</li> <li>-English 7 /Language Arts (Literature/ Writing)</li> <li>-Math (Pre-Algebra/ Algebra 1)</li> <li>-7<sup>th</sup> Grade Integrated Science</li> <li>- Physical Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-History: United States History and Geography</li> <li>-English 8 / Language Arts (Literature/ Writing)</li> <li>Math (Algebra 1 / Geometry)</li> <li>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Integrated Science</li> <li>-Physical Education</li> </ul>
<b>Learning Lab Intervention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-ELD, Language Live</li> <li>-Math Foundations</li> <li>-Resource Assistance</li> <li>-CTY</li> <li>-ILP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-ELD, Language Live</li> <li>-Math Foundations</li> <li>-Resource Assistance</li> <li>-CTY</li> <li>-ILP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-ELD, Language Live</li> <li>-Math Foundations</li> <li>-Resource Assistance</li> <li>-CTY</li> <li>-ILP</li> </ul>
<b>Health Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Relations</li> <li>• Human reproduction</li> <li>• Youth rights</li> <li>• Gender and sexuality</li> <li>• STI/HIV</li> <li>• Body Image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Relations</li> <li>• Human reproduction</li> <li>• Youth rights</li> <li>• Gender and sexuality</li> <li>• STI/HIV</li> <li>• Body Image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Relations</li> <li>• Human reproduction</li> <li>• Youth rights</li> <li>• Gender and sexuality</li> <li>• STI/HIV</li> <li>• Body Image</li> </ul>

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### **AMPS Middle School Literacy Program**

The National Reading Panel Report (2000)<sup>2</sup> and other research summaries emphasized the five essential components of reading—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

In 1995 the California Reading Task Force<sup>3</sup> identified four components that a balanced, comprehensive approach to reading must contain. It states that students need to read varied, challenging grade leveled novels and selections; that every school and district must organize and implement a comprehensive and a balanced reading program that is research-based and combines skills development with literature and language-rich activities. Vocabulary development, exposure to different literary genres, and opportunities to examine interesting and complex issues and challenges embedded in literature are hallmarks of the AMPS's Middle School program.

At DCA, we use the SpringBoard English Language Arts 6-8 Curriculum written by College Board. Over the course of the SpringBoard program, students read and analyze a wide range of texts in genres including poetry, novels, plays, biographies, nonfiction narratives, speeches, and films. Students also learn to write in forms including essays, personal narratives, argumentative texts such as editorials, and research papers.

Downtown Charter Academy offers a standards-aligned, rigorous English Language Arts program. Students read varied and challenging grade leveled literature, including novels, short stories, essays, plays, and poems, as well as informational texts covering a wide range of forms and content areas; they learn to unpack and identify the major elements of texts through text dependent questions, collaboration, discussion, and close reading. DCA students see themselves as writers, continually engaging in the writing process of pre-writing, brainstorming, drafting, revising, and publishing. The ELA curriculum develops speaking and listening skills through rigorous academic discussion, literature circles, student presentations, gallery walks, and other means of student discourse. Students feel empowered to express ideas in a supportive environment where the reading and writing process is respected and repeated often, and where they connect the texts they read to their own culture, background, and experience. To support students in these rigorous goals, they have access to on-staff paraprofessional tutors, as well as their teachers.

### **Reading**

DCA places an emphasis on reading, both in ELA class and independently. Students are expected to read grade level appropriate novels independently throughout the year, in consultation with their teacher. They learn to read actively, journaling or otherwise responding to their novel each time they read. In class, students read a diverse, engaging, challenging set of grade level appropriate texts, including personal narratives, short stories, myths and fables, expository essays and informational texts, argumentative writing, poems, and plays. These texts are chosen with an eye toward diversity of author, time period, country of origin, and

<sup>2</sup> (The National Reading Panel, 2000)

<sup>3</sup> (*The Report of the California Reading Task Force*, 1995- Sacramento, CA)

content or subject matter. Students read with active support, and unpack these texts through discussions, graphic organizers, close reading and annotating, and other collaborative and independent approaches. By reading closely and widely, students develop an understanding of literary devices, structures, forms, and meanings. At DCA, students are explicitly encouraged to connect the texts they read to their own culture, background, and experience, as well as to explore essential questions that interrogate whose stories are heard, and why it is important to be empowered to tell one's own story. Reading is experienced as a process of engagement, questioning, and discussing, not simply as a way to acquire facts or knowledge for a test. Student understanding and reading are assessed through active reading artifacts (journals, annotations), structured literature circle discussions, debates, character mixers, and both formative and summative writing tasks.

#### ***Writing***

Downtown Charter Academy emphasizes writing skills across the academic curriculum. In ELA, this means that students produce a diverse set of written work during middle school. Students see themselves as writers, and are given the opportunity to experience writing in as authentic a framework as possible. Students write both fiction and nonfiction works, including personal narratives, short stories, poems, plays, expository essays, informational articles, argumentative and persuasive letters, research papers, and reflections. Students have the opportunity to read, unpack, and familiarize themselves with both published and student exemplars of their writing task before engaging in the writing process. Students explicitly complete all parts of the writing process - prewriting and planning, brainstorming, drafting, revision, and publication - with an emphasis on the need to repeat parts of the process frequently. All summative writing assignments are written in a workshop environment; students create drafts which receive feedback from both peers and a teacher or paraprofessional tutor. They are then given the opportunity to revise. When possible, students publish authentically - creating a journal of class poems, submitting a persuasive letter to a local paper, or reading a short story to an audience of younger students, for example. Finally, students track their writing throughout the year in order to reflect on their growth as writers and revisit pieces they'd like to revise.

Student writing is assessed according to the CCSS, and each assignment includes a standards-aligned rubric. Teachers design both formative assessments and summative written performance tasks that allow both the teacher and the student to track their progress in different standards-aligned skill areas. Because writing is a process, students are given multiple opportunities to revise and improve their work.

#### ***Speaking and Listening***

Because ELA is essentially the study of how we communicate, speaking and listening standards are included in the CCSS. At DCA, students have the opportunity to participate in rigorous and structured academic discussion regularly, as well as complete summative performance tasks. This allows students to develop and demonstrate important speaking and listening skills. The summative performance tasks (such as debates, presentations, and panel discussions) are assessed according to CCSS aligned rubrics.

### **Language**

At DCA, students are not taught to see grammar and language skills as discrete from the reading, writing, and speaking and listening skills they are developing. Instead, they have the opportunity to learn and demonstrate these skills in authentic contexts. Grammar principals, conventions of English language, and academic, literary, and other vocabulary are taught in context, and students are assessed in authentic practice. Formative and summative assessment rubrics may include language domains in line with CCSS.

### **English Language Development for English Learners**

At Downtown Charter Academy students come with a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, experiences with formal and informal schooling, levels of native language and English literacy, immigrant experiences, and socioeconomic levels, as well as other experiences in the home, school, and community. We support ELs to achieve school success through the CA ELD Standards in conjunction with Common Core Standards and the academic content standards depending on ELs' cognitive development. Students in middle school are engaging in challenging content learning and are "reading to learn" in Purposes, Development, and Structure various content areas. We have seen that ELs benefit from participation in the same instructional activities in content areas like math, history and science. However, we want to be intentional in our support to their language development, so during English, ELs take English in small group instruction that is differentiated based on student need. All students draw upon knowledge of oral vocabulary and structures (e.g., recognition of cognates) to inform their English language learning to some extent, depending on their oral proficiency in the native language and how closely their native language is related to English. Students with established literacy in their native language and content knowledge can transfer these skills and knowledge to English with appropriate instructional support.

We have purchased a curriculum called Language Live, aligned to ELD Standards and CCS which includes a teacher direct instruction and a virtual learning component. For a detailed description of this program, see the following section - *Plan for English Learners*.

### **AMPS Middle School Mathematics Program**

Every student will receive a focused, coherent progression of mathematics learning, with an emphasis on sense-making, connecting representations and proficiency with middle school mathematics curricular standards. All Amethod math classes will ensure that all students have access to an authentic algebra course and preparation for the rigors and goal that all students enroll in the Algebra course by Grade 8. Thus, it is critical that our students be prepared with the mathematical prerequisites for this course.

We currently use Pearson Digits curriculum for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students and Pearson Algebra 1 and Pearson Geometry for students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Both programs offer Digital math tools which allow students to interact with the same types of digital tools they will use on next-generation assessments. This helps students get comfortable using those very same tools well before the high-stakes assessments. A variety of assessment types offers plenty of opportunities for formative assessment practice throughout the year and Question types mirror

those found on next-generation assessments and give students ample practice with the higher cognitive demands of the new assessments.

#### **6 General Overall AMPS Principles of Math:**

1. **Equity** – Math is for all students, regardless of personal characteristics, demographics, gender, background, or physical challenges.
2. **Curriculum** – Math is viewed as an integrated whole, as opposed to isolated facts to be learned or memorized. Teachers are directed to spend equal time on procedural skills, conceptual understanding, and problem solving. Math students should be expected to explain their reasoning and answer in full sentences.
3. **Effective Teaching** – Amethod Teachers should display 4 attributes: deep understanding of math, understanding of individual student development within the scope of the curriculum, effective routines and procedures for teaching mathematics, and a desire to make math engaging and accessible for all students.
4. **Problem Solving** – DCA students will gain an understanding of math through classes that promote problem-solving, thinking, and reasoning. We will view math as the foundational approach to logic and critical thinking.
5. **Continual Assessment** – Constant and ongoing assessment of student performance, growth and understanding via varied techniques (interim assessments, data points, exit tickets, white boards, etc.)
6. **Meaningful Practice** – Students receive daily opportunities for accessing math learning in a variety of ways. This can include guided explanations through direct instruction, individual practice, group work, and inquiry-based tasks. Students receive homework nightly.

DCA teachers have identified the key strands that are essential to the students' ability to gain strong foundations and solid conceptual understanding. AMPS believes that these strands are taught best through a combination of direct instruction of basic skills, hands-on activities to provide a deeper understanding of math concepts by relating them to real world situations and experiences, and differentiated instruction based on the needs of the students as implemented in the AMPS model. With a target population of students from both economically and educationally underserved backgrounds, DCA will implement a program to ensure a solid math foundation is developed for each child and work to take students to an even higher level of mathematical knowledge and skills plateau to put them on the path to advanced high school courses and through college.

The math program is designed to allow all students access to the material from the start of the lesson. We begin classes with intellectually stimulating warm-up exercises that build interest for students. Our veteran teachers have selected, created and refined task-based lessons that require deep mathematical thinking from students. We emphasize rich mathematical tasks that have real world applications. These tasks are “Low-floor/High-ceiling” so that all students can

access the concepts and there are various ways students can extend their learning. We use textbooks as supplemental material to these carefully crafted lessons.

DCA teachers focus deeply on implementing task-based lessons to encourage students to share and explore different solution pathways. When students see that there are multiple ways to think about problems or ideas they move past routine and algorithmic mathematics. This promotes mathematical discourse among the students. Students critique the reasoning of their peers by offering supporting arguments or counterpoints. Students are also explicitly taught how to engage in a respectful and fruitful debate as described in the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics which include standards for mathematical practices in addition to standards in content.

#### *Common Core - Necessities for Mathematics*

- **Focus:** The new standards call for a greater focus in mathematics. They focus deeply on the major work of each grade so that students can gain strong foundations: solid conceptual understanding, a high degree of procedural skill and fluency, and the ability to apply the math they know to solve problems inside and outside the math classroom. In essence, DCA teachers will take advantage of focus to actually pay attention to sense-making in math that is critical for younger students.
- **Coherence:** CCSS intends for students to think across grades, and link to major topics within grades. In other words, standards speak to the idea that math does not consist of a list of isolated topics. The Standards themselves, and therefore any instruction, should build on major concepts within a given school year as well as major concepts from previous school years. Each standard is not a new event, but an extension of previous learning.
- **Linking to major topics:** Instead of allowing additional or supporting topics to detract from the focus of the grade, these topics can serve the grade level focus. For example, instead of data displays as an end in themselves, they support grade-level word problems.
- **Rigor:** In major topics pursue conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application with equal intensity. Rigor is about the depth of what is expected in the standards, and also about what one should expect to see happening in the classroom, in curricular materials, learning, and so on.
- **Conceptual understanding:** The CCSS standards call for conceptual understanding of key concepts. DCA teachers support students' ability to access concepts from a number of perspectives so that students are able to see math as more than a set of mnemonics, discrete, and disconnected procedures.
- **Procedural skill and fluency:** The standards call for speed and accuracy in calculation. Teachers structure homework time for students to practice core functions so that

students have access to more complex concepts and procedures in the classroom. The AMPS middle school curricular design will prove pivotal for this concept.

- **Application:** The standards call for students to use math flexibly for applications. Teachers provide opportunities for students to apply math in context. Teachers in content areas outside of math, particularly science, ensure that students are using math to make meaning of and access content.

In order to address the individual needs of students, accelerating those who are ahead and meeting the needs of those who are behind, DCA will supplement math instruction with critical thinking and problem-solving activities, which assist in developing a greater understanding of math concepts and higher order thinking skills.

We offered an Advanced Math path for students who respond positively to challenging material. The selection for these classes is based on numerous data points including, but not limited to: computer-based benchmark assessments, written assessments in which students describe their mathematical reasoning, and work samples from in-class activities and homework. The math department then reviews the data for each student to make an informed decision about the Advanced Math rosters.

As part of our summer training seminar; we address the following points and samples for effective math teaching in preparation for Algebra I at 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

- **Before lesson**
  - *Review Predictable problem areas*
  - *Prepare questions for deeper analysis of student responses.*
  - *Color code differentiated questions.*
  - *Prepare all necessary materials for efficient time usage during lesson*
- **During Lesson**
  - *Explanation of objectives or informed teaching: precise statements of the goal, rationale for learning the strategy, and information on when the strategy should be implemented.*
  - *Modeling the task*
  - *Prompting - engage students in dialogue that promotes the development of student-generated problem-solving strategies and reflective thinking (students self-evaluate while they are solving problems).*
  - *Students use peers to evaluate student-generated problem-solving strategies as well*
  - *Guided and independent practice – wide range of examples*
  - *Corrective and positive feedbacks*
  - *Direct/Explicit instruction - modeling*
  - *Instructional Variables*
- **Strategy Instruction**
  - *Metacognitive Strategy*
  - *Structured Worksheets; Diagramming*

- *Mnemonics (i.e. PEMDAS)*
- *Graphic organizers*

- **After Lesson**
  - *Reviews*
  - *Exit tickets*
  - *Assessments*
  - *Re-teach*
  - *Individual practice*
  - *Assessments*

#### **AMPS Middle School History/Social Science Program**

The discipline of History/Social Studies (HSS) is crucial for the development of a range of skills and schema, with which our students will question and understand the country, cultures, and world they encounter and inhabit. DCA's HSS program is a rigorous, standards-aligned exploration of the past where students learn history primarily through inquiry, argument, and application. History is taught as an investigative and living discipline, with an emphasis on social justice and culturally responsive curriculum to encourage the full development of our students as agents of positive change in their communities. Throughout their study of history, students learn how to read, write, and think like a historian.

The curriculum used for the Social Science program at Downtown Charter Academy is a comprehensive, standards-aligned, core curricular resource that uses an inquiry-based approach to enhance literacy and critical thinking skills. Courses in this digital social studies textbook include U.S. History, World History, Civics and Government, and World Geography and Cultures. The Tech-book brings historical events, concepts, and phenomena to life for today's students with engaging multimedia resources including interactive text, maps, and timelines, plus videos, photos, audio, and hundreds of primary sources. The streamlined, responsive design provides students with an easy-to-follow, consistent experience, accessible from any device, in any instructional setting. Teachers also have access to exclusive videos, multimedia activities, digital text, more than 3,000 primary sources, model lessons, and assessments. With Social Studies Tech-book, students learn the content and skills needed to question the past, understand the present, and shape the future.

#### **Reading and Writing in History**

Students are exposed to a variety of text in DCA history classes, from primary sources to current event news articles. Using active and close reading strategies such as annotation and bucketing, students are taught to digest complex texts, evaluate bias, and find evidence or information depending on their task. At DCA, students are taught writing explicitly in the History classroom. Focusing on the construction of argument especially, DCA students write weekly if not daily in the classroom. They are taught to use evidence collected from sources to form and defend historical claims, and their writing is assessed according to CCSS for History/Social Sciences-aligned rubrics.

#### **Historical Thinking**

DCA history classrooms place an emphasis on the development of historical thinking skills (as guided by work such as the development of the Big 6 Historical Thinking Skills), through forms such as media analysis, sourcing, and close reading. Students are taught to question texts

they are given, and learn to trust only what they can corroborate with evidence. They are guided to take the perspectives of historical figures in order to understand the contexts of their words and actions, track continuity and change, examine cause and effect, and evaluate the ethics of past actions and words. These are especially put into practice and assessed through inquiry and investigation activities.

#### ***Inquiry/investigation***

The DCA history classroom revolves around activities that allow students to delve into focus or essential historical questions through reading or viewing primary and secondary sources and formulating arguments. While not every class will be an investigation, these will serve as the core of each topic and unit. Students will learn how to evaluate sources, look for corroboration, and contextualize their evidence. They will then use this evidence to build historical arguments for prompts such as what really happened, why it happened, or what were the effects of an event.

#### ***Social Studies Standards/Guidelines from the HSS Framework:***

Students in sixth-grade world history and geography classrooms learn about the earliest humans, the development of tools, the foraging way of life, agriculture, and the emergence of civilizations in Mesopotamia, Egypt, ancient Israel, the Indus River valley, China, Mesoamerica, and the Mediterranean basin. Although the focus is primarily on ancient events and problems, this course gives students the opportunity to grapple with geography, environmental issues, political systems and power structures, and civic engagement with fundamental ideas about citizenship, freedom, morality, and law, which also exist in the modern world. Students practice history as an interpretive discipline. They read written primary sources and secondary sources, investigate visual primary sources, and learn how to analyze multiple points of view, cite evidence from sources, and make claims in writing and speaking based on that evidence.

Patterns that will be explored are:

- The movement of early humans across continents and their adaptations to the geography and climate of new regions
- The rise of diverse civilizations, characterized by economies of surplus, centralized states, social hierarchies, cities, networks of trade, art and architecture, and systems of writing
- The growth of urban societies and changes in societies (due to social class divisions, slavery, divisions of labor between men and women)
- The development of new political institutions (monarchy, empire, democracy) and new ideas (citizenship, freedom, morality, law)
- The birth and spread of religious and philosophical systems (Judaism, Greek thought, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism), which responded to human needs and supported social norms and power structures
- The development and growth of links between societies through trade, diplomacy, migration, conquest, and the diffusion of goods and ideas

The medieval and early modern periods provide students with opportunities to study the rise and fall of empires, the diffusion of religions and languages, and significant movements of people, ideas, and products. During these periods, the regions of the world became more and more interconnected. Although societies were quite distinct from each other, there were more exchanges of people, products, and ideas in each century. For this reason, world history during the medieval and early modern periods can be a bewildering catalog of names, places, and events that impacted individual societies, while the larger patterns that affected the world are lost.

To avoid this, as well as the classically Eurocentric model of medieval study, teachers focus on questions that get at the larger geographic, historical, economic, and civic patterns of the world. To answer these questions, students study content-rich examples and case studies, rather than superficially survey all places, names, and events. Students approach history not only as a body of content (such as events, people, ideas, or historical accounts) to be encountered or mastered, but also as an investigative discipline. Students may analyze concrete objects, such as a porcelain vase or the image of a saint, exchanged or made at sites of exchange. As students investigate the exchanges that took place and the interactions of merchants, bureaucrats, soldiers, and artisans at the site, they learn to consider not only what was happening in one culture but also how cultures influenced each other. They analyze evidence from written and visual primary sources, supplemented by secondary sources, to form historical interpretations. Both in writing and speaking, they cite evidence from textual sources to support their arguments. Students also gain fluency in world geography through maps.

Changes and patterns to follow in 7th grade:

- Long-term growth, despite some temporary dips, in the world's population beyond any level reached in ancient times. A great increase in agricultural and city-dwelling populations in the world compared with hunters and gatherers, whose numbers steadily declined.
- Technological advances that gave humans power to produce greater amounts of food and manufactured items, allowing the global population to keep rising.
- An increase in the interconnection and encounters between distant regions of the world. Expansion of long-distance seagoing trade, as well as commercial, technological, and cultural exchanges. By the first millennium BCE (Before Common Era), these networks spanned most of Afro Eurasia (the huge interconnected landmass that includes Africa, Europe, and Asia). In the Americas, the largest networks were in Mesoamerica and the Andes region of South America. After 1500 CE (Common Era), a global network of intercommunication emerged.
- The rise of more numerous and powerful kingdoms and empires, especially after 1450 CE, when gunpowder weapons became available to rulers.
- Increasing human impact on the natural and physical environment, including the diffusion of plants, animals, and microorganisms to parts of the world where they had previously been unknown.

The eighth-grade course of study begins with an intensive review of the major ideas, issues, and events that shaped the founding of the nation. In their study of this era, students will view American history through the lens of people who were trying—and are still trying—to

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fulfill the promise of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Throughout their eighth-grade United States history and geography course, students will confront the themes of freedom, equality, and liberty and their changing definitions over time. This course will explore the geography of place, movement, and region, starting with the Atlantic seaboard and then American westward expansion and economic development, the Civil War and Reconstruction, and finally, industrialization.

As students learn American history from the late 1700s through the end of the nineteenth century, they will develop reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills that will enhance their understanding of the content. As in earlier grades, students will be taught that history is an investigative discipline, one that is continually reshaped based on primary-source research and on new perspectives that can be uncovered. Students will be encouraged to read multiple primary and secondary sources; to understand multiple perspectives; and to learn about how some things change over time and others tend not to. They should appreciate that each historical era has its own context, and it is up to the student of history to make sense of the past on these terms by asking questions about it.

*Source: California Department of Education: History/Social Studies Framework*

#### **Assessment**

These standards are assessed in a variety of forms. Site-wide, each grade takes History Writing Task (HWTs) assessments (content tailored to be grade-specific) after each semester to assess students' ability to make historical arguments based off of a range of provided primary and secondary sources. These DBQ (Document Based Question)-style assessments are scored on a common rubric so student progress can be tracked across the grades and instruction either that year or in the following grade can be informed.

At DCA, students are not subjected to rote memorization and regurgitation as the way they are assessed in class. Within each class, students' historical thinking and content knowledge is evaluated in a formative and summative methods. Through means such as the Stanford History Education Group's (SHEG) Historical Assessments of Thinking (HATs), teachers formatively assess student thinking and ability to source, corroborate and contextualize sources throughout the year. Units culminate in performance tasks, where students demonstrate both content knowledge and historical thinking through authentic application, whether in the form of a project, essay, presentation or other output. Performance tasks allow students to grapple with essential questions, inhabit the authentic roles of those they study, as well as perform the jobs of historians, politicians, or other occupations that directly correlate with content.

DCA students emerge from their study of History at this school with the tools to be critical thinkers and active, informed citizens. They are prepared for 21st century information and news, armed with a deep understanding of the past and the skills to be successful and positive forces for change in high school, college, and beyond.

#### **AMPS Middle School Science Program**

We believe that effective standards-based Science programs are lacking among many inner-city elementary schools. It has been our experience that students entering the 6<sup>th</sup> grade lack the specific science-based vocabulary and understandings that are necessary to address middle school standards as defined by the State Board of Education. Many students leaving the

elementary schools do not have the understanding of the scientific process that is at the core of scientific thought.

The DCA science program fosters students' sense of curiosity about the natural world and gives them a strong understanding of content knowledge and scientific vocabulary, as well as the tools needed to carry out the scientific method. Students are taught that science is an iterative process that requires them to ask critical questions about the world around them. They are given opportunities to design and execute investigative procedures that lead them to logical, reasoned, and empirically supported conclusions. Additionally, we recognize the interdependence of science, engineering, and technology. The inclusion of practical engineering and technology skills in the NGSS are reflected in that students are routinely given tasks where they are asked to develop, test, and optimize design solutions.

DCA offers an NGSS-aligned integrated science curriculum called KnowAtom that focuses on building content knowledge across scientific disciplines in addition to performance expectations. In 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students learn physical, earth, and life science. We teach the content through a combination of reading, writing and inquiry-based tasks based on the CCSS Reading Standards for Informational Text and the Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. The KnowAtom curriculum has NGSS-designed, grade-specific, K-8 learning progressions. It includes Integrated formative and summative assessments, and Nonfiction reading certified at grade level by The Lexile® Framework for Reading, as well as Online access and digital visuals, tools, and videos that support teachers in their instruction.

We promote inquiry-based learning and create hands-on opportunities for students to engage in the process of scientific investigation and exploration in the classroom. Students learn the process of scientific inquiry through performing labs that require them to demonstrate their investigative skills. As part of the lab procedure, students will engage with their reasoning skills by recording and analyzing data and will be able to draw conclusions that are supported by evidence. Additionally, students have the opportunity to engage with the engineering design process by designing, testing, and refining prototypes to solve real world problems. With a rigorous, interactive, and comprehensive science program, students will learn to be measured and logical in their thinking as well as innovative. The DCA middle school science program will include continual assessment of students' knowledge and understanding as is done with all other content areas.

#### **Physical Education** PE Content Standards

*The five (5) overarching model content standards for middle school students are as follows:*

- **Standard 1:** Students demonstrate the motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
- **Standard 2:** Students demonstrate knowledge of movement concepts, principles, and strategies that apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.

- **Standard 3:** Students assess and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance.
- **Standard 4:** Students demonstrate knowledge of physical fitness concepts, principles, and strategies to improve health and performance.
- **Standard 5:** Students demonstrate and utilize knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts, principles, and strategies that apply to the learning and performance of physical activity.

Middle school physical education programs will concentrate on all areas of physical activity and mental development. In a period of increasing obesity among American youth, where approximately, less than 20% of adolescents participated in physical activity for at least 60 minutes daily coupled with approximately 17% (or 12.5 million) of children and adolescents aged 2-19 years are obese, a rigorous program that emphasizes a healthy lifestyle will be the focus of the program.

Due to these alarming statistics, physical education classes will stress the importance of student participation, through regular Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity (MVPA).

- *Moderate physical activity refers to activities equivalent in intensity to bicycling*
- *Vigorous physical activity produces large increases in breathing or heart rate, such as jogging, aerobics or bicycling uphill;*

*Benefits of regular MVPA for a minimum of 70 % of class time:*

- Increasing MVPA in PE has the greatest potential for increasing health benefits for most students as it generates more energy expenditure; diabetes; contributes to obesity prevention and muscular and bone development; reduces anxiety and stress; improves self-esteem, mood and concentration; and reduces the risk of chronic disease.
- Active and focused PE can contribute to academic performance, improved attendance and positive classroom behavior.
- Reducing risk of childhood disease that afflicts minority children at much higher rates.

### ***Health Education***

We will be compliant with the AB 2601, the bill that includes charter schools in the California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA) requiring middle school students in CA to receive comprehensive sexual health education. We are partnering with Planned Parenthood to make sure that they have access to this important education.

At DCA, we will also offer parent education workshops and professional development training for teachers regarding all the topics related in the Curriculum Model Chart.

### ***Sample Middle School Daily Schedule***

To address and close the achievement gaps, schools need to think outside the box and use time with maximum efficiency. We have no time to waste! The increase in instructional time in core subjects coupled with the short rotations, allow our students to receive a daily program that provides increased instructional time than that mandated by the state of California.

Times	Schedule	Instructional Minutes
8:30 - 8:50	Social Emotional Learning	20
8:50 - 10:02	Math	72
10:02 - 10:05	Transition	
10:05 - 11:17	Science	72
11:17 - 11:20	Transition	
11:20 - 12:32	English/Language Arts	72
12:32-1:02	Lunch	
1:02-1:05	Transition	
1:05 - 2:17	History	72
2:17 - 2:20	Transition	
2:20 - 2:32	Literacy Initiative	12
2:20 - 3:32	PE	60
3:32 - 6 pm	Learning Labs and Enrichment Programs	

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#### ***Direct Instruction***

AMPS values a direct instruction model. Teachers use a variety of lesson types as they deliver new content and material. While lecture-based lessons are a staple of the instructional methods, inquiry-based lessons and facilitation of student-centered activities are used to support student learning.

*The following table highlights the presentation of a new lesson using Direct Instruction.*

<i>Daily review, checking previous day's work, and re-teaching (if necessary)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Checking homework</li> <li>-Re-teaching areas where there were student errors</li> <li>-Student cross checks and Questions</li> </ul>
<i>Presenting new content/skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Objective of lesson or Essential Question clearly written on front board</li> <li>-Provide Preview and overview of new material</li> <li>-Activate prior knowledge established</li> <li>-Proceed in small steps (if necessary), but at a rapid pace</li> <li>-Give-detailed or redundant instructions and explanations</li> <li>-New skills are phased in while old skills are being mastered</li> </ul>
<i>Initial student practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-High frequency of questions and overt student practice (from teacher and materials)</li> <li>-Prompts are provided during initial learning (when appropriate)</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-All students have a chance to respond and receive feedback</li> <li>-Teacher <i>checks for understanding</i> by evaluating student responses</li> <li>-Continue practice until students are firm</li> <li>-Success rate of 75-80% or higher during initial learning</li> </ul>
<b><i>Feedback and correctives (and recycling of instruction, if necessary).</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Feedback to students, particularly when they are correct but hesitant</li> <li>-Student errors provide feedback to the teacher that corrections and/or re-teaching is necessary</li> <li>-Corrections by simplifying question, giving clues, explaining or reviewing steps, or re-teaching last steps</li> <li>-When necessary, re-teach using smaller steps</li> </ul>
<b><i>Independent practices so that students are firm and automatic.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Seat work</li> <li>-Unitization and automaticity (<i>practice to perfect</i>)</li> <li>-Seatwork &amp; Grouping (<i>procedure for monitoring</i>)</li> <li>-95% correct or higher</li> </ul>
<b><i>Weekly and monthly reviews vital.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-re-teaching, if necessary</li> <li>- Quizzes</li> <li>-Exit Tickets</li> <li>-Do Now</li> <li>-White board assessments</li> </ul>

#### ***AMPS Middle School State Aligned Curriculum***

All of the AMPS middle school textbooks and curriculum correlate to the state standards and frameworks for a specific grade level and/or subject as mentioned in the department program sections above.

In addition, the Literature program that is based on a combination between the California Department of Education, CCSS, National Reading Panel and Johns Hopkins University – Center for Talented Youth program suggestions. Every suggested novel has correlated objectives, lessons, tests, leveled questions, writing prompts, assessments, and projects that accompany the specific text. Some adjustments may be made in certain courses as the administrators and teachers make adjustments to adapt to the specific needs of their students as assessments results are analyzed.

#### **PLAN FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ACADEMICALLY LOW-ACHIEVING**

##### *Student Study Team, SST*

The Student Study Team (SST) process was designed to provide support to the student and teacher through collaborative approach. It is based on the premise that “Two heads are better than one” when developing plans for students who are having difficulty in school.

The process is based on the 1997 –re-authorization of IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. SST documentation can meet most Section 504 requirements.

*Student Study Team*, is an interdisciplinary group that uses a systematic process to address learning and/or behavior problems of students

*Process:*

- Referral
- Gathering Information
- Assessment or evaluations data (if necessary)
- Developing and educational plan
- Implementation of the educational plan
- Evaluation of progress
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation

Generally speaking, all referrals should go to the SST referral process. The SST intervention can be bypass for students for whom it would be detrimental or for students whose difficulty is so severe or so unusual as to render the SST as no help. This is a decision made with parent input. English Learners can be referred for an appropriate program but the EL teacher at DCA participates in as a team member. Students who are served through the Individual Learning program (ILP) may be considered for difficulties that would normally warrant an SST study, but the placement in ILP is not considered the basis for an automatic request for SST.

Students that are referred for evaluation for special education consideration should meet the following criteria:

- That reasonable classroom interventions of sufficient duration have been carefully attempted, without success, and,
- That the cause of the problem is suspected to be a disability that cannot be resolved without education services.

Our goal and expectation are the same for every student in our campuses. We assure that students of every subgroup and demographic be enrolled in a rigorous program with challenging curriculum and be provided an instructional program that holds high expectations for all. Struggling students' who perform below less than site specific average grade for levels in the initial interim assessment score will be provided with the necessary supplemental instructional support to strengthen their academic growth. An ILP may be initiated as needed for struggling students.

Downtown Charter Academy will establish a series of interventions that will offer a myriad of support services driven by proportional increases in direct instructional time.

In addition to daily instruction, programs such as before school, after school, noncore tutoring (small & individual) programs will be offered according to student needs. Students who continue to struggle through specific subjects receive extra assistance will enter intervention programs such as but not limited to; summer sessions, intercession tutoring, and increased noncore one to one sessions.

*See Appendix F – Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Overview*

#### **Individual Learning Plan (ILP)**

The Amethod Schools Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is a valuable tool for our schools, teachers, and families to use in differentiating and individualizing instruction to help Amethod School sites attain the goal of eliminating difficulties, frustrations, and even excuses and raising student achievement for every individual student. An ILP is intended to offer a simple to understand tool for individualizing instruction, promoting a team approach, and effort in raising the academic achievement of at-risk students.

An ILP is a student specific program or strategy that takes into consideration the student's strengths, weaknesses, needs, and most commonly- excuses. It is a tool that allows the school staff to plan, monitor, manage, and evaluate student achievement by identifying student needs and applying interventions based on student needs and a surround style of services and resources.

Teachers and leaders consider an Individual Learning Plan for all students whose achievement in more than two core classes falls below passing levels. ILP's include assessment information, measurable goals that are realistic yet ambitious for an 8 week period, classroom modifications, curriculum focus, and explicit goals and their corresponding practices for tutors to accomplish with each student in the series or after school interventions.

This tool is used in our attempt to support student needs in essential skills, and abilities. The ILP is also a necessity in demanding school systems such as ours that requires students to work in a demanding academic program. An ILP typically looks at student strengths and weaknesses based on summative and past formative assessment data and sets individual goals, needs, and outlines. The interventions are implemented to attain goals, set a timeline, responsibilities, and finally, evaluate progress attained at a predetermined assessment date.

#### *First Phase*

Teachers attempt small in class modifications such as preferred seating, cloze notes, etc., before implementing the ILP in the general education classroom. Teachers assess student progress with formative assessments and formative based assessments (end of chapter quizzes, etc.) and establish a *Data Point*. Students, who continue to struggle in the classroom through the initial instructional programs, receive additional support in the classroom.

As DCA moves towards the addition of technology components to the Learning Lab, students will be offered online tutoring programs in class as the leveraged class style. Adjustments that

may be established after this initial phase include adjustments in duration, and frequency of direct instruction. Teachers may meet with smaller groups more often for longer periods of time and may adjust instructional strategies and materials as needed for modifications.

#### *Second Phase*

Students goals laid out in the initial ILP for the general education classroom are set. If a student is identified as significantly below grade level in the first round of assessments, they are given a revised ILP directing their work in an additional period each day during Learning Lab time that offers small group tutoring time as an intervention through the usage of an intern, or highly qualified tutor. During this time, they work directly on the specific skills they are lacking or teachers cross refer students to different classes for grade level remediation. As DCA moves towards the addition of technology components to the Learning Lab, students will be offered online tutoring programs in class as the leveraged class style or within the Learning Lab time.

Intervention is provided with a very specific 6-8 week plan combining suggestions from the classroom teacher used to get a student to meet their target at the end of 8 weeks. Interim assessments are given every 8-9 weeks and will capture the progress towards set goals of every individual student as measured against the work assigned. If the student still is not making adequate progress, the Site Director may form a Student Study Team Process and revise the Individualized Learning Plan.

#### *Third Phase*

If the student fails to make progress in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 interventions after 2 interim cycles (12 weeks), they enter into a more comprehensive assessment process for further diagnostics and recommendations. A Student Study Team (SST) must be established by the Site Director to seek a team response to needed interventions. At this phase, a home visit may be implemented by the SST members as needed.

#### ***Intervention Overview (Learning Lab)***

DCA has expanded on the concept of tutoring and supplemental assistance and developed and implemented the usage of the Learning Lab as a place where students can receive small group tutoring, supplemental and preparatory instruction, computer adaptive assistance, technology and homework help. The lab will be ongoing throughout the day, including before and after school and will be led provided by the onsite Lab Coordinator, instructional assistants, and peer tutors. The following describes a few of the programs that will be a part of the Learning Lab.

Program	Description

<i>Math Tutorial</i>	Students struggling in Math receive intervention through small group and personalized attention from an identified teacher and or volunteer tutor assistant. Utilizing a group tutorial structure, students receive a more individualized instructional setting.
<i>Special Needs/ Academic Success</i>	Designated Special Education students will be provided extra support to reflect the needs outlined in the IEP and in all of their academic courses through one-on-one instruction, group support and guided instruction. The sessions will last 30-55 minutes 4 days a week or as recommended in their IEP.
<i>Computer Tutoring (Individualized Online Programs)</i>	Amethod Schools will continue to implement a blended model of education, where technology is effectively integrated in every classroom and program, where students rotate on and off workstations throughout the day. Students who are not utilizing online content receive the kind of small-group and individualized instruction that will meet their diverse learning needs. Students will learn in groups of up to 17 in the core subject areas of reading, writing, math, science, and history. The students positioned at the computers will engage in personalized, adaptive programs, which tailor instruction to the appropriate level for each participant.
<i>Homework Club</i>	Students who are struggling with a particular class or simply want more support in a subject can attend homework club, which is offered for an hour every day after school and run by a credentialed teacher, paraprofessionals, and/or college interns.
<i>One to Ones</i>	If a student continues to struggle after the second phase assessments (see below), they are assigned a one to one time to work with an identified tutor during noncore instructional time. Concept mastery is the target goal for these students.
<i>Intersession Groups</i>	Some students will require much more ongoing support; as such our schools provide an extended school year in the form of interim time off intercessions for students. Teachers and administrators meet with families to discuss the program as needed.

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## PLAN FOR ACADEMICALLY HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS

### *Center for talented youth program - CTY*

Downtown Charter Academy expects all students to reach high standards of success. For those students who excel academically, DCA will offer supplemental programs and opportunities for students through partnerships with colleges and programs.

Amethod Public Schools has partnered with Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth Program (CTY) for over a decade and has sent many high achieving students to attend and study at university campuses in a three-week residential program- most of whom receive scholarships.

### ***Pre-advanced placement math***

Moreover, DCA will also offer in house programs such as a Pre-Advanced Placement Math and Honors English Program that will prepare students who are academically ready to enter high leveled high school programs such Advanced Placement and Honors courses. These students will be challenged to work through advanced coursework that is more commonly presented to high school students. High performing students will also have an opportunity to enroll in an accepted online course offered on site through academic partners such as Johns Hopkins University. We will also have established a partnership San Francisco State University to offer college leveled courses to high achieving upper grade students at DCA. The courses will include a critical thinking, and college readiness courses.

### ***After school program for all***

The DCA after-school program seeks to expand learning by providing students with resources to explore potential areas of interest in three categories during critical non-school hours: athletics, arts, and academics. Serving close to eighty percent (80%) of our student body, the program is funded primarily by ASES (After School Education and Safety) and Oakland Measure G1 grants, allowing us to provide a safe and nurturing environment to our students after school.

At present, the program offers courses in eighteen subjects, which students are free to enroll in and change between three times every year: basketball, soccer, rugby, volleyball, cross country, art, dance, drama, music production, choir, publishing, gardening, Mandarin, computer science, robotics, gaming, baking and science. Students who enroll in the program are required to select at least one club from each category and stay for a minimum of two hours every day. Nutritious snacks are available as well, at no charge to families.

The program also provides tutoring services to students in need. The school aims to tightly align after-school resources with normal-day programs and serve as an extension of what we provide students based on individual needs. Based on the belief that all children are capable of reaching high standards, the program will continue to look forward and think of ways to seek out funding and opportunities that benefit our students.

### ***Tutoring program***

DCA has a staff of five tutors for both English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. The tutoring program at DCA is works to support students performing below grade level, making sure students get on track to meet grade standards. Teachers and tutors work closely to provide students with the additional needed instruction.

Students are chosen based on performance needs, or if they would benefit from extra practice. Testing scores, quality of participation, assignments, and grades are all taken into consideration. We are working with growth mindset, and we consider DCA Tutoring program a tremendous resource and opportunity for our students and we maintain a continuous communication with parents on progress and commitment.

## **PLAN FOR SERVING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Charter School shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act (IDEA), and any other applicable civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Furthermore, the Charter School will comply with AB 602, El Dorado County Charter SELPA (SELPA) guidelines, and all California laws pertaining to special education students.

***Special Education Students***

The Charter School recognizes its responsibility to enroll and support students with disabilities who can benefit from its programs and who otherwise qualify for enrollment. The Charter School will operate as its own local educational agency (LEA) and is a member of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA in conformity with Education Code Section 47641(a). The Charter School pledges to work in cooperation with the SELPA to ensure that a free and appropriate education is provided to all students with exceptional needs.

In the event the Charter School seeks membership in a different state-approved SELPA, the Charter School will provide notice to the District, the SELPA, and the California Department of Education before June 30th of the year before services are to commence.

***Services for Students under the IDEA.***

The following description regarding how special education and related services will be provided and funded is being proposed by the Charter School for the sole purpose of providing a reasonably comprehensive description of the special education program in the Charter Petition, and is not binding on the District. The specific manner in which special education and related services will be provided and funded shall be set forth in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), delineating the respective responsibilities of the Charter School and the SELPA.

The Charter School shall provide special education instruction and related services for special education students enrolled in the Charter School in accordance with the IDEA, Education Code requirements, and applicable policies and practices of the SELPA. The Charter School will follow SELPA policies and procedures, and shall utilize SELPA forms in seeking out and identifying and serving students who may qualify for special education programs and services and for responding to record requests and parent complaints, and maintaining the confidentiality of pupil records.

The Charter School agrees to promptly respond to all SELPA inquiries, to comply with reasonable SELPA directives, and to allow the SELPA access to Charter School students, staff, facilities, equipment and records as required to fulfill all obligations under this charter petition or imposed by law.

***Search and Serve***

The Charter School will follow SELPA child-find procedures to identify all students who may require assessment to consider special education eligibility and special education and related

services in the case that general education interventions do not provide a free appropriate public education to the student in question.

Students possibly in need of special education can be screened from already available data (i.e. school tests, teacher observations, grades, etc.) regarding the student's progress or lack of progress within the general program.

For students who are identified as needing interventions, a Student Study Team (SST) composed of the student, the student's parent or guardian, the Site Director, and a Charter School faculty member will be responsible for identifying the student's needs and developing a plan to enable that student to be successful, including, but not limited to, the appropriate individual tutoring schedule, classroom modifications, strategies and techniques to enhance that student's ability to be successful. If the Student Study Team finds that the pre-intervention plan is not sufficient to meet the student's needs, they will recommend that student for a formal special education assessment. The Charter School may also choose to refer a student for services through the provisions of a Section 504 Plan, if appropriate. Parents will be informed that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them.

#### ***Interim and Initial Placements of New Charter School Students***

If a student enrolls at the Charter School with an existing IEP, the Charter School will notify the SELPA consistent with SELPA policies.

The Charter School shall comply with Education Code Section 56325 with regard to students transferring into the Charter School within the academic school year. In accordance with Education Code Section 56325(a)(1), for students who enroll in the Charter School from another school district within the State, but outside of the SELPA with a current IEP within the same academic year, the Charter School shall provide the pupil with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the previously approved IEP, in consultation with the parent, for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days, by which time Charter School shall adopt the previously approved IEP or shall develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state law.

In accordance with Education Code Section 56325(a)(2), in the case of an individual with exceptional needs who has an IEP and transfers into the Charter School from a district operated program under the same special education local plan area of the Charter School within the same academic year, the Charter School shall continue, without delay, to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP, unless the parent and the Charter School agree to develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state law.

For students transferring to the Charter School with an IEP from outside of California during the same academic year, the Charter School shall provide the pupil with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the previously approved IEP in consultation with the parents, until the Charter School conducts an assessment pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Section 1414 of Title 20 of the United States Code, if determined to be necessary by the Charter School, and develops a new IEP, if appropriate, that is consistent with federal and state law.

***Referral and Assessment***

The term “assessments” shall have the same meaning as the term “evaluation” in the IDEA, as provided in Section 1414, Title 20 of the United States Code. The Charter School will determine what assessments, if any, are necessary and arrange for such assessments for referred or eligible students in accordance with applicable law. The Charter School shall obtain parent/guardian consent to assess Charter School students.

The referral process is a formal, ongoing review of information related to students who are suspected of having disabilities and show potential signs of needing support or special education related services. The referral for assessment process will include examining student screening information and making a decision about whether or not to conduct a formal assessment. The parent of any student suspected of needing or qualifying for special education services may also make a referral for evaluation. Any such referrals will be responded to in writing by the Charter School within 15 days. Parents will be informed that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them.

If the Charter School concludes that an assessment is appropriate, the parent will receive a written Assessment Plan within 15 days. The parent will be given at least 15 days to provide written consent to the Assessment Plan. Assessments will be done only upon receipt of written parent permission. The assessment will be completed and an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting held within 60 days of receipt of the parent’s written consent for assessment, consistent with applicable law.

Upon completion of the assessment, an IEP team will be assembled to review the results of the assessment and determine the student’s need for special education. The Charter School will be responsible for scheduling, coordinating and facilitating the IEP meeting. Educators qualified to interpret test results will present the assessment data at the IEP meeting. Parents will be provided with written notice of the IEP meeting, and the meeting will be held at a mutually agreeable time and place.

Every student who is assessed by the school will have an IEP that documents assessment results and eligibility determination for special education services.

***IEP Meetings***

The Charter School shall arrange and notice the necessary IEP meetings. IEP team membership shall be in compliance with state and federal law. The Charter School shall be responsible for having the following individuals in attendance at the IEP meetings: the Site Director and/or the Charter School designated representative with appropriate administrative authority as required by the IDEA; the student’s special education teacher; the student’s general education teacher if the student is or may be in a regular education classroom; the student, if appropriate; and other Charter School representatives who are knowledgeable about the regular education program at the Charter School and/or about the student. The Charter School shall arrange for the attendance or participation of all other necessary staff that may include, but are not limited to, an appropriate administrator to comply with the requirements of the IDEA, a speech therapist,

psychologist, resource specialist, and behavior specialist; and shall document the IEP meeting and provide notice of parental rights.

#### ***IEP Development***

The Charter School understands that the decisions regarding eligibility, goals/objectives, program, services, placement, and exit from special education shall be the decision of the IEP team, pursuant to the IEP process. Programs, services and placements shall be provided to all eligible Charter School students in accordance with the policies, procedures and requirements of the SELPA and State and Federal law.

#### ***IEP Implementation***

The Charter School shall be responsible for all school site implementation of the IEP. As part of this responsibility, the Charter School shall provide parents with timely reports on the student's progress as provided in the student's IEP at least as frequently as report cards are provided for the Charter School's non-special education students. The Charter School shall also provide all home-school coordination and information exchange. The Charter School shall also be responsible for providing all curriculum, classroom materials, classroom modifications, and assistive technology.

#### ***Non-Public Placements/Non-Public Agencies***

The Charter School shall be solely responsible for selecting, contracting with, and overseeing all non-public schools and non-public agencies used to serve special education students.

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#### ***Special Education Strategies for Instruction and Services***

The Charter School shall comply with the federal mandate of the "least restrictive environment", meaning that the school will make every attempt to educate special education students along with their non-disabled peers.

#### ***Non-discrimination***

It is understood and agreed that all children will have access to the Charter School and no student shall be denied admission nor counseled out of the Charter School due to the nature, extent, or severity of his/her disability or due to the student's request for, or actual need for, special education services.

#### ***Staffing***

The Charter School is committed to assuring all IEPs are properly implemented and all students requiring services are adequately taken care of. All special education services at the Charter School will be delivered by individuals or agencies qualified to provide special education services as required by the California Education Code and the IDEA. The Charter School will be responsible for the hiring, training, and employment of site staff necessary to provide special education services to its students, including, without limitation, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and resource specialists. The Charter School shall ensure that all special education staff hired or contracted by the Charter School are qualified pursuant to SELPA policies, as well as meet all legal requirements. The Charter School shall further be responsible for the hiring, training, and employment of itinerant staff necessary to provide

special education services to Charter School students, including, without limitation, speech therapists, occupational therapists, behavioral therapists, and psychologists.

The goal of the Charter School is to employ at least one full time teacher who possesses a Special Education Credential. This teacher, along with the Site Director of the Charter School, will be the primary Charter School representative tasked with assuring that all aspects of the IEP and any possible 504 plans are properly implemented. All teaching staff at Downtown Charter Academy, DCA, will also be involved in assuring that all IEPs and 504 plans are properly implemented.

In addition to the above special education staff, the Charter School may also seek related services (e.g. Speech, Occupational Therapy, Adapted P.E., Nursing, and Transportation) from the SELPA, subject to SELPA approval and availability. The Charter School may also provide related services by hiring credentialed or licensed providers through private agencies or independent contractors.

#### ***Notification and Coordination***

The Charter School shall follow SELPA policies as they apply to all SELPA schools for responding to implementation of special education services. The Charter School will adopt and implement policies relating to all special education issues and referrals.

#### ***Due Process Hearings***

The Charter School may initiate a due process hearing or request for mediation with respect to a student enrolled in the Charter School if it determines such action is legally necessary or advisable. In the event that a parent/guardian files a request for a due process hearing or request for mediation, the Charter School shall defend the case.

#### ***Complaint Procedures***

The Charter School shall adopt policies for responding to parental concerns or complaints related to special education services. The Charter School shall receive any concerns raised by parents/guardians regarding related services and rights, and the Charter School's designated representative shall investigate as necessary, respond to, and address the parent/guardian concern or complaint. Parents or guardians also have the right to file a complaint with the District and/or California State Department of Education if they believe that the school has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing special education.

#### ***Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act***

The Charter School shall be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 and the ADA. The facilities to be utilized by the Charter School shall be accessible for all students with disabilities. The Charter School recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program of the Charter School. Any student, who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity including but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodation by the Charter School.

A 504 team will be assembled by the Site Director and shall include the parent/guardian, the student (where appropriate) and other qualified persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and accommodations. The 504 team will review the student's existing records; including academic, social and behavioral records, and is responsible for making a determination as to whether an evaluation for 504 services is appropriate. If the student has already been evaluated under the IDEA but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under the IDEA, those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team, which will evaluate the nature of the student's disability and the impact upon the student's education. This evaluation will include consideration of any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program and/or activities. The 504 team may also consider the following information in its evaluation:

- Tests and other evaluation materials that have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel.
- Tests and other evaluation materials including those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need, and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.
- Tests are selected and administered to ensure that when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level, or whatever factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills.

The final determination of whether the student will or will not be identified as a person with a disability is made by the 504 team in writing and notice is given in writing to the parent or guardian of the student in their primary language along with the procedural safeguards available to them. If during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information indicating possible eligibility of the student for special education per the IDEA, a referral for assessment under the IDEA will be made by the 504 team.

If the student is found by the 504 team to have a disability under Section 504, the 504 team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations or services are needed to ensure that the student receives a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). In developing the 504 Plan, the 504 team shall consider all relevant information utilized during the evaluation

of the student, drawing upon a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, assessments conducted by the Charter School's professional staff.

The 504 Plan shall describe the Section 504 disability and any program accommodations, modifications or services that may be necessary.

All 504 team participants, parents, guardians, teachers and any other participants in the student's education, including substitutes and tutors, must have a copy of each student's 504 Plan. The site administrator will ensure that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that he/she review the 504 Plan with a long-term substitute. A copy of the 504 Plan shall be maintained in the student's file. Each student's 504 Plan will be

reviewed at least once per year to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, needed modifications to the plan, and continued eligibility.

*See Appendix G - AMPS 504 Plan Overview*

***Special Education Strategies for Instruction***

DCA will comply with the federal mandate of the “least restrictive environment,” meaning that the school will make every attempt to educate special education students along with their non-disabled peers. DCA will mainstream all of its students as much as is appropriate according to each individual IEP, offering a comprehensive inclusion program that includes specialized tutoring through DCA’s extended day and year. Each student’s IEP requires different kinds of modifications for instruction and services, therefore the educational strategies of the IEP will be built around the student’s needs and how these fit within the general educational program of the school. The instruction outlined in each student’s IEP will be delivered by personnel qualified to do so.

***Professional Development for DCA Staff***

The School Director, regular and special education teaching staff, as well as other appropriate organizational faculty and staff members will attend professional development and/or training meetings necessary to comply with state and federal special education laws, including those sponsored by the District or SELPA.

The school also intends to seek professional development opportunities for its’ staff through potential trainings facilitated by the Sacramento State University Office of Education, OUSD, Alameda County Office of Education, Alient University (Hofstetdler School of Education), El Dorado Office of Education- Charter SELPA and recommended private companies.

Student discipline and procedures for suspension and expulsion will be in compliance with discipline procedures set forth in the IDEA and consistent with federal and state law.

Discipline procedures will include positive behavioral interventions. DCA is responsible for keeping daily attendance for each student by reporting and certifying attendance monthly on district forms, and filing them with the District.

**PLAN FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS**

The English language learner (EL) student population continues to grow more rapidly than the student population as a whole, especially in California. Therefore, it is vital that schools address the needs of this growing demographic and provide a program that is responsive to the culture and needs of the English Language Learner population. DCA will meet all legal requirements for English Learners as they pertain to annual notification of parents, student identification, EL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications, reclassification, and monitoring, training, and standardized test requirements. DCA will exercise the autonomies afforded by Education Code 47600 (Charter Schools Act of 1992), as it establishes methodologies and practices, all within the law, that may be different than those of the school district in which it operates.

Downtown Charter Academy implements policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding EL student programs and family home language translations. Most

assuredly, DCA will hold high expectations for English Language Learners (EL) population, and will assure that a rigorous and supportive academic program is offered to all students. Structurally, Amethod School campuses run a full-inclusion program for our EL students. EL students will not be in bilingual instruction classes at DCA. From the first day of school, English Learner students will be immersed in English, with the support they need to learn the language and develop the grammatical framework and vocabulary needed to begin developing as readers and writers.

Although it is difficult to categorize a student into a single English Language Development (ELD) stage, they are helpful for thinking about the different scaffolding necessary to provide for students according to their proficiency descriptors:

- Emerging: Students at this level typically progress very quickly, learning to use English for immediate needs as well as beginning to understand and use academic vocabulary and other features of academic language.
- Expanding: Students at this level are challenged to increase their English skills in more contexts and learn a greater variety of vocabulary and linguistic structures, applying their growing language skills in more sophisticated ways that are appropriate to their age and grade level.
- Bridging: Students at this level continue to learn and apply a range of high-level English language skills in a wide variety of contexts, including comprehension and production of highly technical texts. The “bridge” alluded to is the transition to full engagement in grade-level academic tasks and activities in a variety of content areas without the need for specialized ELD instruction.

However, as explained below in *Language Live* curriculum, ELs at all levels of English language proficiency fully participate in grade-level tasks in all content areas with varying degree. Teachers target distinct skills and strategies that include oral language comprehension and production. Thus, some of the *Language Live* blocks focus on oral language development and comprehension activities. This is made possible through the over 72 daily minutes in the classroom that can be segmented into individualized or small group instruction. Through this small group, a student is able to receive specific language instruction and they are able to further develop their language proficiency through re-tells, explicit vocabulary lessons, and a small group focus on letters, word patterns, spelling, blends, sounds, etc.

#### *Home Language Survey*

For all students, DCA will administer the home language survey upon a student's initial enrollment to the school.

At Downtown Charter Academy, we will administer ELPAC to: (1) newly enrolled students whose primary language is not English, as an initial assessment; and (2) students who are English learners (ELs) who have not been reclassified as fluent English proficient (RFEP), as a summative assessment. We will do it to inform our instructional support to English Learners and to satisfy the federal law which requires all LEAs a statewide English Language Proficiency (ELP) test.

#### *Language Live Curriculum for English Learners*

English Learners at DCA students receive their English class in a small group setting according to their English level of proficiency. We have purchased a curriculum program called Language Live which provides students with a foundation in the English language as well as equips them with the necessary skills and strategies needed to succeed in math, history, and science, which are all taught in English. Using a combination of digital and teacher-led intervention, the Language Live curriculum meets students where they are in their academic learning and takes them where they need to be to excel in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. The blended online and teacher-led instruction gives students many opportunities to improve both their reading comprehension and writing skills.

The content of the program is culturally inclusive and relevant and students show interest in the themes and Units. This instructional support is done on daily basis in another classroom during the regular English lessons for the rest of the students. In this way, students feel successful and receive the instruction at their level.

DCA English Language students will work towards being reclassified as Fluent English Proficient speakers and be prepared with the skills in English Language Arts and mathematics to meet California State Standards for their appropriate grade level through the usage of strategies such as Specially-Designed Academic-Instruction in English (SDAIE), an instructional approach designed to increase the level of comprehensibility of the English language in the content area of the class and through the Learning Labs or Intervention Period.

#### ***Certifications***

DCA will provide teachers who have received the CLAD (Cross Cultural Language and Academic Development), BCLAD, CTEL (California Teachers of English Learners) or any other California Commission on Teaching Credentialing (CCTC) recognized alternative certification.

#### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Finding the time and resources for ongoing professional development is an ongoing problem for public schools, especially considering the budgetary climate of California public schools. One innovative solution is to offer teacher training and professional development from within. This approach is especially critical for smaller organization with even smaller budgets. A key aspect of the Amethod Public School system has been the implementation of an in-house professional and Instructional Leadership Team that has enabled Amethod schools to mentor new teachers who may be enrolled in state approved credential program concurrently to also receiving in house assistance and information from seasoned or veteran Amethod Public School faculty and administration. By capitalizing on the expertise of members from within the Amethod School teaching teams, we offer a professional development tailored to a specific school's culture and needs.

With the implementation of features such as grade level meetings, department meetings, Film Sessions, Math Huddles, webinars etc.; teachers are encouraged to be more self-reflective in their content delivery and continue to practice and develop their craft.

The Instructional Leadership Team composed of teachers and administrators meet ongoing through the regular year to discuss the topics and resources that will be focused on during the initial summer training sessions. Instructional leaders also discuss other school wide policies that need revisiting prior to the trainings.

#### ***Professional Growth Plan***

Professional Growth Plans (PGP) are critical to growing, training, and keeping the right people within the organization. Through the PGP process individual team members are invited to identify strengths and areas for development through self-evaluation and feedback. This process highlights the key competencies associated with various roles. Once team members have discussed where they are in relationship to the teaching competencies, they commit to action steps that will increase effectiveness and guide our push towards greater student achievement. PGP's maximize the impact through a reflective process and provide a setting for consistent, on-going feedback.

Weekly plans are kept by teachers. The plans are submitted to Site Directors for review and reflection. Through this reflective process, teachers can plan their anticipated plans of action for the subsequent week. Such discourse will also assist in the guide of teacher and grade level meetings.

Measurable targets are the driver of the PGP that it ensures that the teacher, site director, and central staff are able to remain focused on the annual goal and current progress towards these academic goals, thus, making professional development decisions that will have the greatest positive impact on ensuring that the AMPS Core Value of *Students First* is realized.

The first component of the plan is to set immediate personal, class, school and organizational goals to accomplish first within a priority.

At Amethod Public Schools, we believe that deep engagement in the Professional Growth Plan process will increase each school leaders' efficacy and their impact on scholar achievement. By completing their own process, they will reflect an identify strengths, growth areas, and concrete, actionable goals with your coach or director. Through the reflective Film Session series; it is our intention to have teachers gain a real time perspective of their teaching style and classes through self-reflected and leader guided analysis of video. The film will offer a clearer sense of where they are and what they must change, work on, or keep continuing to grow and develop. This process is an opportunity for to formally connect with teachers, directors, and coaches.

Consequently, planning established checkpoint meetings to assure urgent goals are on track, is the first section of the PGP. Within the first weeks of school operations, trends and needs begin to emerge, and longer-term plans are set at every level of the organization. Each of these tasks has a stated completion date, measurable points, and a person responsible to oversee the tasks. For an experienced teacher who has mastered planning, classroom management, and delivery, they are then more able to focus on the leadership skills such as creating in house workshops and seminars for less experienced staff.

*See Appendix H for Initial Goal Setting and PGP Overview*

### **Summer Sessions**

Professional development begins after the end of the school year and prior to the start of school, typically in August. The summer session sets the firm foundation for the staff, especially new teachers, with an understanding of the cultural expectations of the school, classroom management techniques, how to properly assess their student achievement and progress. By granting them additional time to familiarize themselves with the curricula and scope and sequence of instructional objectives and standards for the year, teachers will enter the regular school year much more prepared and comfortable with the curriculums.

### **Yearlong Planning**

Within our curricular model, each Friday is a minimum day, set aside from 1 to 4pm reserved for professional development as needed. The professional development sessions are primarily organized by the Site Directors through collaboration with staff and the organizational Instructional Leadership Team.

### **Lesson Planning**

Lesson planning is a vital instructional practice within Amethod school sites. AMPS system focuses on instructional practices combined together with objective driven goals in mind to design and deliver well-crafted lessons that explicitly arrange content to meet the needs of all students.

Traditional approaches of organizing learning activities and then developing assessments does not support learning for understanding. The Common Core State Standards are based on anchor standards that indicate college and career readiness at the end of 12th grade, and are backward mapped through the grade levels.

Therefore, AMPS faculty focuses on the big ideas of each topic. They ask what is essential for students to learn, and once these big ideas are established, the next step is to design assessments that will provide evidence of student learning and mastery of those objectives. After that, and only then, will they be in a position to design and sequence learning activities that will lead students to an understanding of the concepts.

This three-stage approach to planning curriculum is referred to as *backward design*, and it follows the process described below.

- Stage 1: Identify Desired Results
  - What should students know, understand, and be able to do?
  - In Stage 1, consider the goals, examine content standards, and review curriculum expectations.
- Stage 2: Determine Acceptable Evidence
  - What assessment evidence will we accept as evidence of student understanding?
  - In Stage 2, consider a variety of evidence, including both formative and summative assessments. Teaching for understanding means assessing for understanding.

- Stage 3: Plan Learning Activities
  - What sequence of learning activities will lead students to an understanding of the big ideas?
  - In Stage 3, consider the knowledge and skills that students will need to know to perform effectively. Identify the materials and resources that will best meet the goals set out in Stage 1.

***Effective Weekly Lesson Plans:***

- I. Establish goals that are based on the Common Core Standards.
- II. Establish objectives that lead to mastery of CA Common Core Standards.
- III. Describe the knowledge a student must acquire to master CA Common Core Standards.
- IV. Describe the skills a student must develop to master CA Common Core Standards.
- V. Describe the performance tasks a student must complete to master CA Common Core Standards.
- VI. Describe learning activities that will lead to success on performance tasks that show mastery of CA Common Core Standards.

*See Appendix I for Lesson Plan Template*

***BTSA – Beginning Teacher Support***

BTSA Induction is a necessary step in fulfilling the requirements for the California Clear Multiple Subjects, Single Subject, and Education Specialist credentials. Most credential programs can cost 10-20k and the BTSA programs can cost upwards of \$3,000 - \$5,000 per year (\$6,000 - \$10,000 total).

Amethod Public Schools (AMPS) has partnered with various institutions to help provide pathways to attaining the proper licensing to teach. Because we believe strongly in investing the skills and professional growth of our team members, we also offer a tuition reimbursement program to offset the costs.

**AMPS Partnerships**

Institutions/Programs	Details
<a href="#">Reach Institute</a>	Online and in person formats and enrollments are only for summer start. Receive intern credential in August after summer per-service.
<a href="#">Alliant</a>	Online format and enrollments every 8 weeks. Financial aid available

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CSU East Bay	Online and in person formats and enrollments are only for summer start.
Brandman University	Online and in person formats and enrollments are continuous through the year.
Cal Teach	Designed for those who either wish to become a multiple subject teacher but are unable to attend a traditional, classroom-based teacher education program (Student Teaching Option), or for those who are already teaching without a credential.

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#### ***Amethod Shared Networks (Google Drive/ IlluminateEd/Dropbox)***

Amethod School staff, faculty, and administrators use a shared network for secure sharing of research, training summaries, and resources such as lesson plans with one another. The adoption of this feature enables multiple people in different locations to collaborate simultaneously on the same documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and drawings with other staff in real-time. Google Drive also enables staff in different locations to collaborate and sharing of materials, lessons, resources, and trainings between staff from the Richmond and Oakland campuses.

IlluminateEd, is the student information system used by Amethod Public Schools. IlluminateEd is a student information system designed specifically for K-12 schools. It has several features including state reporting, scheduling, grade book, attendance, and parental access. Amethod school site families may receive access their child's grades, school announcements, assignments, schedules, and teacher comments once the site is fully rolled into the program. Teachers use IlluminateEd to take attendance, enter grades, post assignments, and view assessment information, and communicate with parents and students. Administrators use IlluminateEd to generate reports including transcripts, discipline logs, class population, demographics, grade point averages, assessment reports, and required state and federal reports. The California State Longitudinal Database System (CALPADS) is functionally compatible with the IlluminateEd program.

#### ***Continuous Instructional Observations and Coaching***

At AMPS, we believe in deliberate practice: teachers become excellent at their craft through experience and practice. Deliberate practice—a focus on the concrete and specific teaching skills necessary to maximize impact in the classroom.

Teachers participate in 3 observation-feedback practice cycles a month. They receive expert feedback, apply that feedback, and do it again to build their skills. These observations and feedback are offered by the Site Leader and Dean of Instruction using the AMPS Instructional Effectiveness Domains and Competencies. Teachers discuss what it means to have a growth mindset and appreciate the opportunity to continuous feedback, and dedication.

Leaders observe, coach, and mentor teachers by analyzing videos of them practicing or videos selected to target their instructional needs. They're pausing, rewinding, and replaying the video to give pinpoint feedback. They're suggesting approaches that come directly from the most successful schools in the United States.

There are also opportunities during the year for teachers to observe colleagues who have developed skills that they need to improve.

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## **ELEMENT II: MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES**

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**Governing Law** – “The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the Charter School charter school, “Pupil Outcomes,” for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the charter school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the charter school’s educational program.

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California Education Code. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all pupil subgroups served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subdivision (a) of Section 52052. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served by the charter school. – Ed. Code § 47605(b)-(c)(5)-(B)

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DRL: “The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.” – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(C)

#### **Increases in Student Academic Achievement, Overall and by Subgroup**

In accordance with SB 1290, DCA Education Code section 47605(c)(5)(B), Charter School’s pupil outcomes will be set related to increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all numerically significant subgroups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (c) of section 47607. The pupil outcomes shall align with state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school. Charter School’s LCAP goals will serve as the goals for this section unless Charter School’s LCAP goals do not include increases in student academic achievement by subgroup, in which case such goals should be included below.

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DCA’s pupil outcomes, related to increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all Charter School hereby grants authority to the State of California to provide a copy of aggregated (by school, numerically significant subgroups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of section 17607, shall be aligned with state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, are as follows:

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See the following section.

DRL: “[By July 1, 2015, and annually thereafter]: DCA shall update the goals and actions identified in the charter to provide the following, as set forth in Education Code section 47606.5(a):

- A review of the progress towards the goals included in the charter, an assessment of the effectiveness of specific actions toward achieving those goals, and a description of the changes, etc.) test results directly to the specific actions the charter school will make as a result of the review and assessment.
- Listing and description of the expendituresDistrict. Test results for the fiscal prior year in implementing the specific actions included in the charter as a result of the reviews and assessments, classified using the California School Accounting Manual.”

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DRL: “Under Education Code section 17607.3, if the charter school fails to improve outcomes for 3 or more pupil subgroups (or, if less than 3, all pupil subgroups) in 3 or 4 consecutive school years, the following shall apply:

- The chartering authority shall provide technical assistance to the charter school using an evaluation rubric adopted not provided directly to the District by the State Board.
- The Superintendent may assign, at the in a timely manner, will be provided by the Charter School to the District, upon request of the chartering authority and approval of the State Board, the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence to provide advice and assistance to the charter schools, no later than September 1 of each year.
- The chartering authority shall consider for revocation any charter school to which the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence has provided advice and assistance, and has made findings that: 1) the charter school has failed, or is unable, to implement the recommendations of the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence; or 2) that

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*the inadequate performance of the charter school, based upon the evaluation rubric, is so persistent or so acute so as to require revocation of the charter."*

[A copy of the Charter School's 2025-28 Local Control and Accountability Plan is attached to this agreement as Exhibit 1 and helps inform the Charter Renewal's description of its measurable pupil outcomes.](#)

The school will continue to meet all statewide standards and conduct all required state mandated student assessments as required by the charter school legislation, Education Code § 47605(c)(1). The school will also continue to adhere to Senate Bill No. 1290 that will require those pupil outcomes to include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both school-wide and for all groups.

The School shall also meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required pursuant to Education Code Section 60605, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments (This includes CAASPP, ELPAC, CAAs and any other state requirements). The school will meet the requirements for renewal if it meets the requirements of Section 47607(b) of the Education Code.

The school's outcomes are aligned with the school's mission, curriculum, vision, and expectations of the school and organization. The academic program is designed to challenge all students to a high level of academic expectation and to best prepare students for entry to high performing high schools of choice. Students will demonstrate the following core academic and social skills, which have been developed to align with the California State Curriculum Standards, and organizational beliefs.

The assessment methods and tools used are those required by state or federal law, those required by external agencies such as (California Department of Education, State Board of Education, and NCLB) and those created/ adopted by the organization. To best serve our communities, we will examine and re-visit the list of student outcomes continuously to provide opportunity to update the mission, objectives, to adapt to any changes at the local or state level.

#### ***Expected Outcomes***

*Our approach and method of instruction is designed to help all students to reach the following student outcomes:*

##### *Academic Achievers who.....:*

1. Produce quality work across the curriculum
2. Are extremely knowledgeable of literature and can use different genres of material in writing responses
3. Compute and solve advanced math problems
4. Are knowledgeable about educational pathways and career choices
5. Are equipped with the necessary skills to succeed in high school

##### *Effective Communicators who....:*

1. Demonstrate skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing in a variety of situations
2. Collaborate, work effectively, and manage interpersonal relationships within diverse groups
3. Read and respond accurately and analytically to text questions

4. Express themselves effectively through writing

*Critical Thinkers who....:*

1. Know how to access information and integrate knowledge
2. Identify and use resources effectively to gather, communicate, and evaluate information
3. Demonstrate the thinking skills of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in a logical manner.

*Life-long Learners who....:*

1. Are open to discover, develop an enthusiasm and interest for learning
2. Are adaptive to a wide array of professional and cultural settings
3. Are goal-oriented, understand the importance of hard work and continual goal setting

*Socially Responsible Citizens who....:*

1. Are aware and understand the relevance of different cultures in society
2. Are leaders within their families, contribute to the improvement of life in their school and community
3. Demonstrate personal responsibility and integrity

**MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES**

Our method for instruction is founded upon a data driven, and objectively based philosophy. Using data-based methodology, our school sites focus on one foundational question; *are the students learning?* The different data reviews and analyses will reveal student, teacher, and class/subject matter success or lack thereof. Our method requires that school leaders focus on fact-based data results and oriented assessments rather than qualitative opinion-based assessments and to address gaps in the educational program needs aggressively. The academic progress of students will be tracked through various assessment types and methods throughout the school year.

The School shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required pursuant to Education Code Section 60605, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. Downtown Charter Academy staff oversees the administration of all applicable state-mandated assessments such as CAASPP, ELPAC, NWEA, and Physical Fitness Test (PFT).

Downtown Charter Academy will continue to focus on the stated Measurable Pupil Outcomes (MPO) as the guarantees and reassurances to all of the DCA stakeholders. Therefore, as with other Amethod Public School sites, the MPOs are our targets and taken seriously.

The following table details the Measurable Pupil Outcomes for DCA.

SUBJECT	MEASURABLE OUTCOME	METHODS OF ASSESSMENT
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<b>MATH</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 75% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders will score proficient / advanced.</li> <li>Students will demonstrate adequate progress towards meeting grade standards in mathematics.</li> <li>100% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be enrolled in Algebra I or higher.</li> <li>At least 65% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders will pass the Algebra I by 3<sup>rd</sup> year after renewal.</li> <li>The schools overall ELL subgroup will score higher than the overall district ELL subgroup average by the third year after renewal.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>CAASPP</i></li> <li>• <i>NWEA</i></li> <li>• <i>School Placements and Enrollment</i></li> <li>• <i>CAASPP test</i></li> <li>• <i>ELPAC Summative Assessment</i></li> </ul>
<b>ENGLISH/ LANGUAGE ARTS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 73% of 8th graders will score at least proficient/advanced in ELA by the 3<sup>rd</sup> year after renewal.</li> <li>At least 75% of students at every grade level will perform at school's passing rate on the school's final interim assessment battery.</li> <li>The schools' overall ELL subgroup scores will be higher than the overall district ELL subgroup average.</li> <li>All students will perform at a higher percentage of Proficient and advanced percentages in ELA than that of neighboring middle schools.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>CAASPP test</i></li> <li>• <i>NWEA</i></li> <li>• <i>SBAC Assessment and ELPAC</i></li> <li>• <i>Standards Based Curriculum assessments</i></li> </ul>
<b>SCHOOL WIDE</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The School shall meet or exceed a 96% attendance rate.</li> <li>The School shall exceed the overall percentage of proficient or above proficient students who are enrolled</li> </ol>	

	<p>in the school of attendance for the area in which the school is located by the third year after renewal.</p> <p>3. Suspension at a rate lower than the District's average [accounting for similar demographics and grade levels served].</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>California Department of Education (CDE) Similar School Ranking.</i></li> </ul>
<b>SCIENCE</b>	<p>1. At least 70% of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will pass the CAST Science section by the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.</p> <p>2. 100% of students will meet or exceed the state curriculum requirement for middle school science</p> <p>3. The schools ELL student subgroup will exceed the overall percentage of the district's ELL subgroup proficient/advanced percentage by the second year of operation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>AMPS requirements</i></li> <li>• <i>CDE Requirements</i></li> <li>• <i>State Board of Education adopted standards and Frameworks for middle school.</i></li> <li>• <i>California State Tests</i></li> </ul>
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES/ HISTORY</b>	<p>1. Project Based Assessments</p> <p>2. History Writing Tasks - Document Based Questions, DBQ</p> <p>3. Social Service Initiative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Teachers' Rubric for Group and Individual work</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers' rubric for writing and information</i></li> <li>• <i>Impact, Participation, Involvement, and Outcomes Rubric</i></li> <li>• <i>Grade Point Average</i></li> </ul>

#### ***Non-Academic Outcome Goals***

DCA also believes all students, regardless of demographic, socio-economic status, or any other sub grouping, need to become contributing members of our society. Students will need skills that are transferable to areas outside of their day to day life. As our part in assuring that students are prepared for the larger circles of society, our schools also expect students to achieve success in non-academic areas as well.

During their tenure at Downtown Charter Academy, all students will develop specific social skills necessary to succeed at different levels and within various aspects including but not limited to:

- *Making and maintaining eye contact;*
- *Shaking hands in a proper manner;*
- *Addressing adults and peers appropriately and respectfully; and*
- *Understanding where and when responses are appropriate.*

All students will develop academic skills needed to be successful in subsequent schools, including but not limited to:

- *Research techniques;*
- *Reading for a variety of reasons;*
- *Note-taking skills;*
- *Organization skills;*
- *Effective written and oral communication; and*
- *Critical thinking skills.*

All students will develop the character traits and skills that will allow and encourage them to become concerned and active citizens of their schools and communities. AMPS values include but are not limited to:

- *Persistence;*
- *Teamwork;*
- *Diligence;*
- *Adaptability;*
- *Responsibility;*
- *Perseverance*

*In addition to Amethod Public Schools inclusive mission, culture and values, students at DCA form their character and learn to build positive relationships through a behavior management support system:*

### **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports**

#### **What is PBIS?**

PBIS is an evidence-based system of prevention and intervention practices that was designed to support the emotional, social, and behavioral development of all students through teaching, modeling, and positive reinforcement.

#### **What does that mean at DCA?**

We believe that student character development is an integral part of the overall educational experience. In short, we want to prepare our students not only for academic success, but for life outside of the classroom as well. We hope to accomplish this by creating a safe and positive environment that fosters respect and strong interpersonal relationships between all members of our learning community.

**What does that look like?**

We have identified 4 core values that we have integrated into our classroom curriculum and are directly tied to our student incentive system. We believe it is better to “proactively” reward students for desired behaviors rather than “reactively” hand out consequences for unacceptable ones.

**DCA Core Values - BRIC**

Bravery	Respect	Integrity	Compassion
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have the courage to stand up for what's right</li> <li>2. View failure as an opportunity for growth</li> <li>3. Step outside your comfort zone and act boldly</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Treat others as you would like to be treated</li> <li>2. Follow directions from ALL staff</li> <li>3. Let your actions honor your school, community, and family</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take responsibility for your own actions</li> <li>2. Be honest, loyal, and trustworthy</li> <li>3. Do the right thing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use positive and encouraging words towards each other</li> <li>2. Celebrate diversity</li> <li>3. Care for your fellow humans regardless of perceived differences</li> </ol>

**Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum**

DCA has adopted a new SEL curriculum known as ***School-Connect***. This program contains 3 modules aimed at optimizing the middle school experience and supporting social and emotional growth.

Module 1 - Creating a supportive learning community  
 Module 2 - Developing self-awareness and self-management

## Module 3 - Building relationships and resolving conflicts

All students will spend at least 80 minutes per week in SEL classes.

### **Community time**

- Monthly “BRICtuals
- School-wide competitions and events
- Multicultural fair
- Weekly morning announcements

### **BRIC system for individual and group incentives**

#### **Karats**

- Teachers will give “karats” to students who demonstrate desirable behavior or an improvement in behavior (above baseline) related to the core values. These expectations will be different for each student... meeting them where they are at on the BRIC spectrum.
- Karats are not a physical reward but should be verbally acknowledged when given out. They will be tracked by grade level on a Google sheet (found in the *DCA PBIS* folder)
- There is no quota on the number of karats to give out each day but please remember that this is a tool to reward and encourage positive behaviors and should be used whenever possible.

#### **BRICs - Individual Awards**

- Every two weeks, teachers will meet with their grade level partners and use the Karat tracker to identify 8 students who best exemplified the 4 core values (2 for each Value). These students will be awarded with “BRICs” which will earn them school recognition, an invitation to the bi-weekly reward (pizza lunch, ice cream, etc.), and an invitation to a larger event or field trip at the end of the semester.

#### **Solid Gold (SG) - Class Reward**

- Each month, homeroom classes who collectively reach the minimum number of Karats to achieve “Solid Gold” status, will receive a special class award (free dress, Popsicle party, etc.)
- Students who received at least one Karat in the month are eligible to participate in the reward. Students who did not, will have the opportunity to do a “Character Reflection Assignment” in order to participate
- There is no limit to the number of classes who can achieve SG status each month. And there is no limit to the number of times a class may achieve SG status

- The number of Karats required for SG status will vary each month based on the number of school days and increased expectations for student citizenship
- The SG threshold for September will be 60 Karats

#### ***Continuous Student Achievement Improvement Template***

Amethod Public Schools believes in a continuous improvement model for all of our stakeholder groups. The organization reviews data and programs in an attempt to better the student experience at our campuses.

*The following table summarizes an overview of topics in this model.*

	Measure	Analysis	Action Plans
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Tests</li> <li>• Classroom projects and grades</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Retention Rate</li> <li>• Disciplinary Actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare with similar schools and to all California schools</li> <li>• Identify root causes of performance increases or decreases in each area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create plan for improvement in low performing areas</li> <li>• Set targets for next academic year</li> <li>• Improvement required annually (after first three years of school)</li> <li>• Create plan for improvement in low performing areas</li> <li>• Set targets for next academic year</li> </ul>
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Observations &amp; Evaluations</li> <li>• Student performance</li> <li>• Teacher Satisfaction surveys</li> <li>• Teacher Retention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify strengths &amp; opportunity areas for each teacher</li> <li>• Compare previous scorecards</li> <li>• Analyze staff retention to identify breakdowns (<i>recruiting, staff development, etc.</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create plan for improvement in low performing areas</li> <li>• Set targets for next academic year</li> </ul>
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student performance</li> <li>• Teacher performance</li> <li>• Fiscal management</li> <li>• Community Engagement (Recruitment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare with previous years, across similar schools</li> <li>• Measure Academic Data</li> <li>• Enrollment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create plan for improvement in low performing areas</li> <li>• Set targets for next academic year</li> </ul>
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance at individual schools</li> <li>• Employee Retention</li> <li>• New schools opened</li> <li>• Fiscal Management</li> <li>• organization /systematic change influenced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare with previous years and targets set by Board</li> <li>• Board Evaluations</li> <li>• Fundraising Goals</li> <li>• Trainings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create plan for improvement in low performing areas</li> <li>• Set targets with Board for next academic year</li> </ul>

### ELEMENT III: OUTCOME MEASUREMENT

*DRL: "Pursuant to the transition to California's Common Core and the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System, DCA will establish baseline performance in the first year of testing administration and will demonstrate growth in performance each year thereafter."*

*DRL: "If DCA does not test with the District, DCA hereby grants Application of Education Code section 47607.3*

Under Education Code section 47607.3, if Charter School meets certain criteria outlined in section 47607.3(a), the following shall apply:

Depending on circumstances specified in section 47607.3, either the county superintendent of schools or the chartering authority, *to the State of California to shall* provide *a copy of all test results directly to the District as well as the technical assistance to the charter school*.

- *Test results for the prior year, if not provided directly to the District using an evaluation rubric adopted by the State, will be provided by the charter school to the District no later than September 1 of each year." Board.*
- *The entity providing technical assistance may request assistance from the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence, which may, after consulting with the Superintendent and with the approval of the State Board, provide advice and assistance to the charter school.*
- *The chartering authority shall consider for revocation any charter school to which the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence has provided advice and assistance, and has made findings that: 1) the charter school has failed, or is unable, to implement the recommendations of the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence; or 2) that the inadequate performance of the charter school, based upon the evaluation rubric, is so persistent or so acute so as to require revocation of the charter.*

It is our organizational belief that data, particularly ongoing data and assessments, are necessary components to the proper judiciousness of schools. At Amethod Public Schools we use objective data as a way to measure the success of the program. Our methods and data analysis have proven to improve our program because we use them to intentionally shape our instructional program, curriculum, and professional development.

Aligned with a firm belief in accountability, and in order to uphold the promises in our Charters, Amethod Public Schools have rigorous assessment and goal-setting programs to measure students' proficiency levels and ensure that each student is making progress toward becoming a grade proficient student at the least. Students are assessed regularly from the time they enter the school through graduation and all staff monitor their progress closely using State mandated assessments, interim assessments aligned with Standards, and different modalities of informal assessments and evaluations.

#### ***Student Assessments***

On January 1, 2014 California Education Code section 60640 established the CAASPP System of Assessments. The CAASPP System replaced the Standardized Testing and Reporting

(STAR) Program, which became inoperative on July 1, 2013. The CAASPP System encompasses the following assessments and student participation requirements. Information about the content and format of each test is also provided.

The CAASPP results give us a key measure of how well students are mastering California's challenging academic standards in English language arts/literacy and mathematics. The skills called for by these standards—the ability to write clearly, think critically, and solve problems are critical to success in college and 21st-century careers.

The 2017 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) System includes online and paper-based summative assessments:

***Online Summative Assessments***

## **Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments**

The summative assessments are comprehensive, end-of-year assessments of grade-level learning that measure progress toward college and career readiness. Each test in English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics is comprised of two parts: (1) a computer-adaptive test and (2) a performance task, administered within a selected testing window available at 66 percent of the instructional year for grades three through eight, and grade eleven.

The summative assessments are aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for ELA and mathematics. The tests capitalize on the strengths of computer adaptive testing—efficient and precise measurement across the full range of achievement and timely turnaround of results.

### ***Paper-pencil Tests***

#### **Standards-based Tests in Spanish (STS) Optional**

The STS for Reading/Language Arts (RLA) consists of multiple-choice tests in Spanish that assess RLA in grades two through eleven. Local educational agencies had the option of administering the STS for RLA to Spanish-speaking English learners (ELs) in grades two through eleven who either were receiving instruction in Spanish or had been enrolled in school in the United States for less than 12 months after April 15, 2016.

#### ***California Alternate Assessments (CAAs)***

The California Alternate Assessments (CAAs) are online tests for students with individualized education programs (IEPs) that designate the use of an alternate assessment to measure student progress on alternate achievement standards, called Core Content Connectors (Connectors). The Connectors make the test more accessible for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The CAAs are administered to each student individually.

CAA items and tasks represent three different levels of complexity. Students' responses to the first set of test questions determine the complexity of the items that follow. At DCA, we make this battery of assessments to students with IEP who need it.

#### ***CAASPP Reporting Subgroups***

To inform policy, curriculum, and programming, at DCA, we use the disaggregated reports available for subgroups of students on the basis of the following criteria:

- All Students
- Disability Status
- Economic Status
- English-Language Fluency

- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Parent Education
- Migrant
- Ethnicity for Economically Disadvantaged
- Ethnicity for Not Economically Disadvantaged

#### ***The English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC)***

ELPAC is the successor to the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). ELPAC Blueprints and task types were adopted by the State Board of Education on September 14, 2017. Beginning in 2017–18, the ELPAC is the required state test for English language proficiency (ELP) that must be given to students whose primary language is a language other than English.

State and federal law require that local educational agencies administer a state test of ELP to eligible students in kindergarten through grade twelve (ages 3–21). The ELPAC is aligned with California's 2012 English Language Development Standards, ELD, and is comprised of two separate ELP assessments:

1. Initial ELPAC—an initial identification of students as English learners
2. Summative ELPAC—an annual summative assessment to measure an English learner's progress in learning English and to identify the student's ELP level

As stated by the California Board of Education, no single assessment can provide teachers with all the feedback they need to tailor instruction to meet the needs of their students. The Summative ELPAC blueprints and task types were approved and adopted by the State Board of Education on September 14, 2017. The measures adopted by Downtown Charter Academy and AMPS are the NWEA, used as interim assessments, they provide an opportunity to measure the skills of all students against the same academic standards, and the results provide information that we use to improve teaching and learning. Given online, the tests are computer-adaptive, allowing a more precise measurement of each student's skills.

#### **Student Participation**

All eligible students in six through eight (6–8), whose primary language is a language other than English, will take the test to determine whether they are ELs, within 30 calendar days after they are first enrolled in our school or 60 calendar days prior to instruction, but not before July 1. We will also administer the Summative ELPAC annually to students identified as ELs until they are RFEP.

#### **Content and Format**

The ELPAC assesses public school students in K–12 in the following four domains in English:

- Listening

- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

It is aligned with the English language development standards adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE).

In order to promote fluency and literacy in English to students at the Emerging and Developing levels on ELD Standards, students will receive, phonemic awareness, decoding practice, vocabulary development, interactive/direct teaching, and word mini-lessons during tutoring and small group sessions either within the classroom setting in groups, or through before, during and after school through the varies approached and programs of the DCA Learning Lab.

***Reclassification Procedures, Criteria for Student Reclassification from English Learner to Fluent English Proficient (RFEP):***

Given that the summative ELPAC became operational on February 1, 2018. As per the guidelines offered by CDE, Downtown Charter Academy uses the ELPAC results to determine whether or not a student has met the English language proficiency criterion, in addition to existing Reclassification Criteria that includes:

1. Assessment of English language proficiency (ELP), using an objective assessment instrument, including, but not limited to, the state test of English language development; and
2. Teacher evaluation, including, but not limited to, a review of the student's curriculum mastery; and
3. Parent opinion and consultation; and
4. Comparison of student performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance in basic skills based on the performance of English proficient students of the same age.

As per California regulations (5 *California Code of Regulations*, sections 11303 Reclassification and 11308 [c][6] Advisory Committee) Downtown Charter Academy reclassification criteria will be reviewed by the Family Staff Team, FST, that serves as the advisory committee on programs and services for English Learner, ELAC.

When an EL student demonstrates adequate oral and academic English skills, a recommendation for reclassification can be made. Each former LEP student who has been reclassified to FEP has demonstrated English-language proficiency comparable to that of the average native speakers and can participate equally with average native speakers in the school's regular instructional program; in accordance with Education Code Section 52164.6.

The participation of the classroom teacher, parent(s) and site administrator/designee is required in the reclassification process. Reclassification procedures utilize multiple criteria in determining whether to classify a pupil as proficient in English including, but not limited to, all of the following:

**STEPS for Reclassification Procedures:** Criteria for Student Reclassification from English Learner to Fluent English Proficient (RFEP):

**1. Assess English Language Proficiency**

The Assessment of language proficiency using an objective assessment instrument including, but not limited to the ELPAC is reviewed.

- *Use most recent ELPAC data.*
- *Student must score Level 4*
- *No more than one subtest (Listening or Speaking or Reading or Writing) is intermediate.*

**2. Compare Student's Performance in Basic Skills**

Comparison of the pupil's performance in the Smart Balanced summative assessments scores from, at minimum, past (3) years on the CAASPP. Students must score level 3 in at least 2 domains in ELPAC and a proficient in the next four years for Reclassification.

- *Use most recent available test data. (If recent test data is not available, wait until later date if within ELPAC test date, or the following year to consider for reclassification*
- *Student's scores Proficient or above on CAASPP-ELA;*

**3. Obtain Teacher Evaluation: Check most Recent English Language Arts Grade**

The Participation of the pupil's classroom teachers and any other certificated staff with direct responsibility for teaching or placement decisions of the student is required to evaluate curriculum progress and/or mastery.

- *Grade for most recently completed semester or quarter is C or better.*
- *English teacher is satisfied that student's mastery of English listening, speaking, reading and writing approaches that of native speakers.*
- *English teacher signs the reclassification form.*

**4. DCA Parents Participate in the Reclassification Process**

One of duties of the Family Staff Team is to act as the English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) and fulfill all the duties as required by law. Parental opinion and consultation is achieved through notice to parents or guardians of the language reclassification and placement including a description of the reclassification process and the parents' opportunity to participate, and encouragement of the participation of parents or guardians in the school's consultation during the reclassification process.

- *Provide notice to parents and guardians of their rights to participate in the reclassification process.*
- *Encourage parents/guardians to participate in the reclassification process and attend a face-to-face meeting.*
- *Conduct face-to-face meeting with interested parents.*

- *DCA will notify all parents of its responsibility for ELPAC testing and of ELPAC results within thirty days of receiving results from publisher. The ELPAC will be used to fulfill the requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act for annual English proficiency testing.*

#### 5. Reclassify Student Fluent English Proficient

- *Place dated reclassification form signed by the English teacher in the student's file.*
- *Include all students reclassified after March in the R-30 Language Census of the following March.*
- *Reclassify students throughout the year as new data becomes available. (Repeat Steps 1-5)*
- *August, after CAASPP data is published.*
- *January, after ELPAC data is published.*

#### 6. Monitor the Academic Progress of RFEP Students for two years

- *If student's scores Below Basic or Far Below Basic on CAASPP-ELA, an intervention program is initiated as appropriate*
- *If student's English Language Arts grade falls below C, an intervention is initiated as appropriate*
- *Evidence of monitoring is entered onto the Student Reclassification Form in the student cumulative file.*

*See Appendix J - Leveled ELD Strategies for English Learners*

#### About NWEA

NWEA is a research-based assessment that precisely measure growth and proficiency, and provide insights to help tailor instruction. At DCA, we test all students 4 times per year. The first one as a Benchmark and the other three as a way to measure student progress and needs.

#### The RIT Scale

The RIT scale is a consistent, precise tool that we use to have an accurate measurement of each student's academic growth. It provides valid and reliable data to support students at their levels.

*The following chart summarizes the assessments currently used at Amethod Public School in general, and Downtown Charter Academy in particular:*

Subject	Description
Placement Exams	<p>All incoming students are given placement exams in order to determine proficiency levels in math, writing, and reading. Comparable tests are given at the end of the year to measure progress.</p> <p>The ELPAC Initial Assessment to new students who have not taken the test previously or who are new to the country.</p>

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<b>Summative Assessments (California Standardized Tests)</b>	<p>The Smart Balanced Summative Assessments of the CAASPP examinations are given one time at the end of the school year to evaluate students' performance against the defined set of State Board of Education content standards and they are the least flexible of the assessments implemented at our schools. AMPS PATH Academies view the state exams as a vital piece of information to summarize the schools overall goal. We focus our curriculum on the standards that will be evaluated on this exam. Each grade level has a pacing guide the sets out the blueprint for the specific grade levels to be prepared.</p> <p>ELPAC Summative Test once a year during the spring to evaluate English Proficiency.</p>
<b>School Wide Interim Assessments</b>	<p>These assessments fall between formative and summative assessments. All AMPS PATH Academies will use the interim assessments to assess student mastery of standards, norm teaching practices across schools, and drive teacher reflection and improvement of practice.</p> <p>The NWEA Assessments, described above, are used as Interim assessments serve the following purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) evaluate students' knowledge and skills relative to a specific set of academic goals, within a 6- 8 week time frame,</li> <li>(2) Are designed to inform decisions at both the classroom and beyond the classroom and school level.</li> </ul> <p>Unlike our formative assessments, the results of interim assessments will be aggregated and reported at a broader level throughout the sites. In essence, these assessments serve a variety of purposes, including interventions, re-teach periods, and predicting a student's ability to succeed on the large-scale CAASPP summative assessment battery.</p>
<b>Formative Assessments (Traditional Classroom Assessments)</b>	<p>Used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning, and to improve student achievement of intended instructional outcomes. The assessment is embedded within the learning activity and linked directly to the current unit of instruction and curriculums.</p> <p>Formative assessments are used in providing corrective feedback (grades, progress reports, etc.) or indicating areas of further instruction. Amethod School sites also use these averages for peer grade leveled comparisons Quizzes, essays, projects and exams are delivered regularly in classes.</p>

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#### Analysis Cycles (Data Dives)

Amethod Public School teachers and administrators engage in on-going analysis cycles where at the conclusion of an interim assessment cycle, a school leader led meeting known as *Data Dives* puts assessments into practice and connects to student learning outcomes. Teachers and leaders will review data every six weeks through the Interim assessment Data Dive Meetings. These are conferences between administrators, teachers and instructional leaders in which results gathered from the last interim assessment are analyzed and discussed. Unlike traditional post-observation conferences, analysis meetings offer insight into months of student learning.

Data Dive meetings also work to increase accountability by providing school leaders with a concrete record of class achievement. The meetings are integral to changing from a culture focused on what students were taught to a culture focused on what students actually learned.

Teachers will reflect on patterns of interim and focus on the following:

- Identify patterns of underperformance;
- Identify patterns of high performance;
- Identify “Spotlight Student” cohorts (*who are not making adequate progress*);

The goal of the Data Dive meeting is to impact teacher practice and student practice, all in the goal of excelling student achievement. Leaders can have individual conversations as needed, but in the meeting with the group adhere to the underlying practice below:

1. *What's the data telling you? (Overall Goal)*
2. *Praise for standard mastered. (By class, subject, grade)*
3. *Surfacing concern areas (Test in hand analysis/side by side)*
4. *Action Planning/Action Plan evaluation*

See Appendix K for Analysis Cycle -Data Dive Overview

AMPS makes a conscious effort to use student assessment data to inform decisions related to planning and developing of instructional strategies at school wide, classroom, and individual student level. Ongoing assessments of student and school performance are integral in the planning, implementation and adjustment of instruction in the Amethod School system.

The school will continue to use data to identify strengths and weaknesses in student, teacher, class, grade specific and school wide performance.

Aligned with a firm belief in student achievement, offers a rigorous assessment and data review program to measure and increase students' proficiency levels and ensure that each student is making progress toward concert mastery at the Downtown Charter Academy site.

Amethod Public School Interim Assessments are scheduled and calendared at the start of every year. The tests consist of a mixture of multiple choice, and open-ended questions. The assessment questions are shared with the teachers prior to the exam date. This is to inspire a faculty shared objective approach to the assessments, and also to demonstrate by example to all staff that test cramming is unnecessary when the curriculum is appropriate.

See Appendix L for AMPS Assessment Calendar and Overview

#### **Action Planning**

After implementing effective assessments and engaging in deep, nuanced analysis, schools and leaders face the most daunting task of all: putting their plans into practice. Although it is based on gathering information, data-driven instruction is worthless unless that information is actually employed in the classroom. When action is implemented effectively, students can perceive how their learning has improved.

Immediately following analysis, teachers should draw up action plans that describe how they will apply the insights they have gained. Although they may vary greatly, effective action plans all share a fundamental principle: they are explicitly tied to conclusions from analysis and are designed to put such conclusions into practice.

#### **Reporting Data**

Downtown Charter Academy Middle School will maintain sufficient staff and systems including technology, required to ensure timely reporting necessary to comply with the law and to meet all reasonable inquiries from District and other authorized reporting agencies. Administration will decide how they will report student progress to: (1) students and parents, (2) the chartering agency, (3) the broader public, and (4) teachers and school board members. Options for reporting data include progress and report cards, presentations, narratives, student involved conferences, annual reports, informational brochures, the school website and annual stakeholder meetings.

#### **IlluminateEd**

Scores from all student assessments can be uploaded into Amethod Public School's information management system (IlluminateEd) so that students' progress within particular subjects and across all subjects can be monitored at any given time. Every Amethod Faculty member will have access to the IlluminaateEd program.

#### **Grade Reports (Sample)**

Each Amethod Public School site adheres to a grading policy that is uniform for the specific school. In order to assure teacher and student fidelity to high grading standards, Downtown Charter Academy implemented a flat ten (10) point grading scale (no pluses or minuses). The school leader will review the policy and adapt a grading scale to meet the needs of the specific site. Students will receive Progress Reports, Grading Period Reports, and Semester Report Cards showing their earned grades that will be communicated using the following scale:

- A** Students receiving an **A** have demonstrated **mastery** of at least 90-100 of the subject standard that has been taught.
- B** Students receiving a **B** have demonstrated mastery of at least 79-89 of the subject standards that have been taught.
- C** Students receiving a **C** have demonstrated the minimum mastery requirement of 68-78 of the subject standard.
- D** Students Receiving a **D**, 57-67 have deficits that require additional attention and student effort. Thus, a student receiving a **D** is not passing the given class.

**F** Students receiving an F 56 & below, have MAJOR grade deficits that require a change in approach, more focus, assistance, and increased effort. The families or parents of students receiving at least (1) F at the end of the first grading period will be contacted to discuss the grade.

#### Progress Reports

Students and families will have real-time access to their grades through the Parent and Student Portal on IlluminateEd. In addition to having online access, students will receive a progress reports and reports cards indicating the student's progress in every subject. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to review progress reports with their student and to contact the school to make an appointment if there are questions or concerns. If a student is not meeting the minimum mastery requirements for a course (68), the parent/guardian and student may be required to attend a conference with the student's teacher and Site Director to develop a plan to support the student's academic progress. Progress reports require a parent signature and must be returned to the classroom teacher to avoid any consequence.

### ELEMENT IV: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

**Governing Law:** [Ref. California Education Code §5477605(b) and Ref. Criteria for Review: CCR 5 §11967.5.1(j)(4). “The governance structure of the charter school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the charter school to ensure parental involvement

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California Education ” – Ed. Code Section § 47605(b)(c)(5)-(D)

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#### DRL: “Operation by or as a Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation

As an independent charter school, Charter School, operated as or by its nonprofit public benefit corporation, is a separate legal entity and shall be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of Charter School. Charter School shall comply with the provisions of Education Code section 47604(b)(1) and shall not operate as, or be operated by, a for-profit corporation, a for-profit educational management organization, or a for-profit charter management organization. A for-profit educational management organization and a for-profit charter management organization are entities that manage or operate a charter school.

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Charter School shall ensure that, at all times throughout the term of the Charter, the bylaws of its governing board and/or nonprofit corporation are and remain consistent with the provisions of this Charter. In the event that the governing board and/or nonprofit corporation operating Charter School amends/amend the bylaws to change the number of governing board members, Charter School shall provide a copy of the amended bylaws to the OUSD Office of Charter Schools (“OCS”) within 30 days of adoption.

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Charter School shall send to the OCS copies of all governing board meeting agendas at the same time that they are posted in accordance with the Brown Act. Charter School shall also send to the OCS copies of all board meeting minutes within one week of governing board approval of the minutes. Timely posting of agendas and minutes on Charter School’s website will satisfy this requirement.

The District reserves the right, but is not obligated, to appoint a single representative to the Charter School governing board pursuant to Education Code section 17604(b).

Charter School will respond to Public Records Act requests in a timely manner and in compliance with the California Public Records Act (Government Code section 6250 *et seq.*)

#### Indemnification of District

Charter School through this Charter *and/or a separate Memorandum of Understanding*, agrees to defend, and indemnify and hold harmless the District, its officers, directors, employees, attorneys, agents, representatives, volunteers, successors and assigns (collectively *hereinafter* "District" and "District Personnel") from and against any and all actions, suits,

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claims, demands, losses, costs, penalties, obligations, errors, omissions, or liabilities that may be asserted or claimed by any person, firm or entity arising out of, or in connection with, Charter School's performance under this Agreement or the Charter, the condition or use of its facilities, or any acts, errors, negligence, omissions or intentional acts by Charter School, its Governing Board, administrators, employees, agents, representatives, volunteers, successors and assigns.

#### LEGAL AND POLICY COMPLIANCE

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and District policy as it relates to charter schools, as they may be amended from time to time.

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal and state reporting requirements, including but not limited to the requirements of CBEDS, CALPADS, and Education Code section 17601.33.

Charter School shall comply with the Brown Act and the Public Records Act.

#### NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT

##### Governing Board Operation

Charter School shall follow Education Code section 47604.1, and comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act (Government Code section 54950 *et seq.*); the California Public Records Act (Government Code section 6250 *et seq.*); Government Code section 1090 *et seq.*; and the Political Reform Act (Government Code section 81000 *et seq.*) Charter School shall also comply with the provisions of Education Code section 47604.1(c) with respect to the location of its meetings, and broadcasting its meetings on a two-way teleconference where required.

Charter School shall publicly post all governing board meeting agendas in accordance with the Brown Act. Charter School shall keep accurate records of all governing board meetings, whether they were canceled, rescheduled, or held, and make board meeting documents, including board meeting minutes, available to the public either upon request or by posting on the charter school's website.

Charter School acknowledges the District's statutory right to appoint, at the District sole discretion, a single representative of the District's choosing to the Charter School governing board pursuant to Education Code section 47604(c).

##### Required Notifications to the District

Charter School shall notify the OCS in writing of any citations or notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside regulatory or investigative agencies, lawsuits, changes in corporate or legal status (e.g. loss of IRS 501(c)(3) status), or other formal complaints or notices, regarding any aspect of Charter School's operations, within one week of receipt of such notices by Charter School. Unless prohibited by law, Charter School shall notify the OCS in writing of any internal investigations within one week of commencing investigation. Charter School shall notify the OCS within 24 hours of any dire emergency or serious threat to the health and safety of students or staff. This 24-hour notification applies to any allegations of serious misconduct related to student safety or child abuse by any student or adult that occurred on campus.

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**STUDENT RECORDS**  
**Charter School Records**

Upon receiving a records request from a receiving school/school district, Charter School shall transfer a copy of the student's complete cumulative record within ten (10) school days in accordance with Education Code section 49068. Charter School shall comply with the requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 3024, regarding the transfer of student special education records. In the event Charter School closes, Charter School shall comply with the student records transfer provisions in Element 4615. Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 49060 *et seq.*, regarding rights to access student records *and*, and Education Code section 49069.3 and 49069.5 regarding transfer of records for youth in foster care.

**DRL:** "DC4Charter School acknowledges that pursuant to Article XVI section 8.5(e) of the California Constitution, sections 2(e), 6, and 8 of Proposition 98, and sections 33126.1(b), 35256(c), and 35258 of the Education Code require schools, including DC4Charter School, to provide certain information in certain formats in certain ways to the general public and specifically to parents of students at DC4Charter School and of the District. DC4Charter School further acknowledges that it has the obligation to provide all of such information to the District that is required by these referenced authorities in a timely manner so that the District may meet its obligations under those authorities as well. To the extent that there is information that the District has, but that DC4Charter School does not have that DC4Charter School needs in order to meet its obligations, the District shall provide the same to Charter School in a reasonably timely manner upon request.

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*needs in order to meet its obligations, the District shall provide the same to DCA in a reasonably timely manner upon request under Education Code section 47604.3."*

*DRL: DCA will maintain sufficient staff and systems including technology, required to ensure timely reporting necessary to comply with the law and to meet all reasonable inquiries from District and other authorized reporting agencies."*

*DRL: DCA Charter School* in accordance with Education Code Sectionsection 47604.3, shall promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries from the District, including but not limited to, inquiries regarding financial records, from the DistrictLetters of Inquiry, and Notices of Concern, and shall consult with the District as needed regarding any such inquiries. DCA Charter School acknowledges that it is subject to audit by OUSD if OUSD District. If the District seeks an audit of DCA # Charter School, the District shall assume all costs of such audit. This obligation for the District to pay for an audit only applies if the audit requested is specifically requested by the District and is not otherwise required to be completed by DCA Charter School by law or charter provisions."

*DRL: "Members of DCA's Governing Board, any administrators, managers or employees, and any other committees of the School shall at all times comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards and OUSD's Charter School policies and regulations and applicable State and federal law regarding ethics and conflicts of interest so long as such policies and regulations are not in conflict with any then existing applicable statutes or regulations applicable to charter schools."*

*DCA and/or its non-profit corporation will be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of the charter school."*

*Add the following text and remove any text to the contrary:*

*DRL: "To the extent that DCA is a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, DCA has agreed to meet all of the programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and other applicable federal grant programs. DCA agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of ESSA and other applicable federal programs.*

*DCA also understands that as part of its oversight of the school, the Office of Charter Schools may conduct program review of federal and state compliance issues."*

#### Charter School Ombudsperson

Charter School shall ensure that, at all times throughout the term of the Charter, a neutral party, "Ombudsperson", is identified to serve as an independent resource, assisting families and community members in investigating and addressing complaints, conflicts, and other school-related issues. This individual's name and contact information should be clearly articulated in the Charter School's student and family handbook or distributed widely.

#### Legal Status- Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation

Downtown Charter Academy is an independent charter school. It is governed by Amethod Public Schools, a 501(c)(3) non-profit benefit California Corporation. Downtown Charter Academy and Amethod Public Schools are governed by a corporate Board of Directors (Board

or Board of Directors) in accordance with its adopted corporate bylaws, which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter. Ultimate responsibility for the governance of Downtown Charter Academy rests with Amethod's Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will be responsible for major strategic and policy decisions related to the schools and will also need to ensure Downtown Charter Academy's financial sustainability.

*See Appendix M - AMPS Bylaws*

Pursuant to California Education Code Section 47604(c), the Oakland Unified School District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of Downtown Charter Academy or Amethod Public Schools for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by Downtown Charter Academy or Amethod Public Schools.

Since Amethod Public Schools is a non-profit corporation, it can be sued as an independent entity and would be responsible for any debts incurred by the school.

#### ***Board of Directors***

Downtown Charter Academy and Amethod Public Schools are governed by a corporate Board of Directors (Board or Board of Directors) in accordance with its adopted corporate bylaws, which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter. Potential members of the Amethod Public Schools Board of Directors are nominated by an existing board member and vetted through a nominating committee composed of current Board members. The Board frequently discusses additions to its membership based on the need to add additional functional expertise and/or balance representation of the communities served by Amethod Public Schools. Once nominated, the Board undergoes a thorough review process including a nominee's professional background, community involvement, and commitment to Amethod Public Schools mission.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47604(b), OUSD may appoint one representative to participate on the Board of Directors of Amethod Public Schools.

#### ***Amethod Public Schools- Board of Directors***

[Rodolfo Ornelas, Board Chair 2025-2029](#)

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Rodolfo Ornelas is an accomplished educational leader and consultant dedicated to fostering equity and instructional excellence in K-12 education. He has been instrumental in reshaping learning environments to ensure all students receive high-quality educational opportunities.

He specializes in coaching school leaders, fostering collaborative teams that prioritize culturally responsive teaching, and improving teacher collaboration and student outcomes through professional learning communities. His work spans Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), discipline policies, and equity-based instructional practices, where he has successfully led professional development for educators and advised district leaders on policy alignment. Additionally, he has supported schools through accreditation processes such as WASC and LCAP development, contributing to systemic improvements in educational equity and student success.

Rodolfo has served as a high school teacher, assistant principal, and principal prior to joining Oakland Unified School District's Network 3 Team supporting Principals and site leadership.

Rodolfo holds a BA from the University of California, Davis and a MS in Educational Studies from Johns Hopkins School of Education. He also holds a California Administrative Services Credential and Clear Teaching Credential.

[Jorge Lerma, Board Member 2025-2029](#)

Jorge Lerma served on the Oakland Unified School District Board of Education from 2023 to 2025.

elected by the voters of District 5 in Oakland, California. His primary assignments were budget and finance, serving as one of three financial advisors involved in policy and decision-making regarding all OUSD financial determinations and Charter Schools. He participated in designing the presently existing strategic plan for promoting diversity in hiring at OUSD.

Born and raised in Oakland, Mr. Lerma, bilingual and bicultural (Chicano), graduated from Oakland High School and the Peralta College system. He received his Elementary School Credential from UC Berkeley and a Master's in Administration and Supervision from CSU East Bay.

Mr. Name	Current Professional Title / Organization	Board Role	Focus / Expertise
Nick Vaea	Lawyer—Law Offices of Nicolas C. Vaea	At Large	Legal
Karely Ordaz-Salto	Special Assistant to Mayor Libby Shaff—Oakland Mayor's Office	Chair	Political
Suzanne Larsen	Senior Director—PRO Unlimited Global Solutions	At Large	Human Resources
Hernan Vargas	Consultant—Affine Finance	Treasurer	Finance
Dyana Curreri Ermatinger	Assistant Director, Foundation and Corporate Relations—Mills College	Secretary	Fundraising
Mina Wilson	Principal Consultant, Center for Health Systems Improvement, Care Management Institute—Kaiser Permanente	Vice Chair	Systems Management; Parent of AMPS Student

Lerma has served as an Early Childhood, Elementary, and High School teacher, as well as an administrator and principal in Oakland. He is a strong advocate for equity and quality education from preschool through college. He now focuses on advancing evidence-based reading and literacy programs for struggling students. He believes all educational models—district, charter, private, faith-based, or home study—have a role in serving Oakland's diverse students and families. His priority is that every option offered be high-quality and rooted in equity.

Lerma, a lifelong educator, recently authored and served as Co-Chair of Oakland's Children's Initiative (Measure AA), overseeing funding for First Five and Oakland Promise programs.

He co-founded Centro Infantil de LaRaza and La Escuelita School, and for over 25 years, he has co-organized the OUSD Latino Honor Roll program to celebrate student achievement. Currently, he serves as a principal on special assignments, supporting schools facing leadership transitions, financial distress, and academic challenges. He also co-chairs the Latino Educational Network.

(LEN) and its sister program, “Maestros del Pueblo”.

**Peter Hanley, Board Member 2025-2029**

Peter brings extensive leadership experience in evaluation, strategic planning, budgeting, and project management, especially in education reform and economic development, to any endeavor. He was elected five times to the San Mateo Union High School District board, serving five times as president through 2022. Peter was also President of the San Mateo County School Boards Association and a member of the California School Boards Association’s policy making body. For seven years, he was executive director of the American Center for School Choice. He has also worked in management roles for Hewlett-Packard, Syntex Corporation, and The Economist Group of London.

In addition, he has been working in the charter school world since 2001, founding the Oakland Charter School Collaborative at the California Charter Schools Association, the Bay Area Charter School Athletic Conference (BACSAC), and serving as a founding board member and VP of the Community School for Creative Education, an urban Waldorf charter school in Oakland. He first joined Amethod Public Schools in 2013, serving as board chair three times over five years as Amethod opened three schools in Richmond. He rejoined the board in January 2020 as chair again until June 2021.

Peter holds a BA degree in political science from the University of Oregon and an MA in international affairs with a specialty in international economics from The George Washington University. Previously, he has lived and worked in Russia and China. He is currently BACSAC’s part-time Finance Manager.

**Margie DiGiorgio, Board Member 2025-2029**

Margie DiGiorgio is a dedicated educational leader with a career spanning over two decades, and has consistently demonstrated a commitment to academic excellence and innovative program development. Her current role is as Chief Academic Officer & Director of Independent Learning at Griffin Technology Academies in Vallejo, CA.

She has worked in a variety of settings including traditional district schools, both middle and high school, charter schools, site-based learning schools, and independent study schools, which supported students across all grade levels. Her roles of service include classroom teacher and administration.

Margie has served as a classroom instructor in the content area of mathematics. In this capacity, she taught a range of math courses, developed intervention courses, collaborated on curriculum planning, and participated in school-wide activities with other department leaders and administrators.

She holds a preliminary administrative services credential and a Master’s in Mathematic Education.

Beyond her direct teaching and administrative roles, Margie has actively engaged in leadership positions, including serving on the boards of Antioch Charter Academy, Clayton Valley Charter High School and G.R.I.O.T. Mentoring.

**Davis Leung, Board Member 2025-2029**

Davis Leung is an operational and financial professional with broad experience in many aspects of management, including C-level leadership, accounting, auditing, financial management, Human

Resources, marketing, and contract and grant management. He has owned his own consulting company for the past 8 years and through that role has also served as COO and President for various tech firms. Previous to running his own firm, Davis worked for a land development company and served as its Senior Vice President of Administration, while simultaneously serving as the President for its subsidiary. Other roles that Davis has served in include leadership positions at the YMCA and Jewish Family and Children's services as well as an accountant for Deloitte.

From 2016 - 2020, Davis served as a Board member and then as Board Chair at Urban Montessori Charter School. During that time, Davis helped lead the organization through facilities searches and a Head of School search. Throughout his term, he was the finance chair and supported the school with ongoing financial management.

#### **Elizabeth "Liz" Martinez, Board Member 2025-2029**

Elizabeth "Liz" Martinez, COO of a well-established Bay Area public charter school, is a first-generation college graduate from UC Berkeley and St. Mary's College. With over 15 years of experience, Liz effectively transforms educational organizations, building strong teams and driving positive change through strategic risk management, process improvement, and policy implementation.

A certified coach, she helps develop individual contributors into talented leaders. Her expertise spans HR, finance, data systems, student services, operations, and compliance.

Originally from South Central L.A., Liz realized her dream of attending UC Berkeley. In her free time, she enjoys live music, watching Disney movies with her family, and hiking with friends. She's also a big fan of pizza, particularly from 2-for-1 Pizza in L.A. and Zachary's in Berkeley.

Liz is deeply committed to providing free and high-quality education to all children, driven by principles of honesty, integrity, and a direct approach to communication.

See Appendix N for Board Resumes

#### ***Board Roles and Responsibilities***

The Board approves budgets for all AMPS sites and approves major school site and Amethod Public School policies. The Board may initiate and carry on any program or activity or may otherwise act in a manner which is not in conflict with or inconsistent with or preempted by any law and which are not in conflict with the purposes for which schools are established. The Board may also establish committees such as personnel, instructional, or specific committees as recommended and requested by the Board President and members. The Board may execute any powers delegated by law to it and shall discharge any duty imposed by law upon it and may delegate to an employee of the school or Amethod Public Schools any of those duties. The Board however, retains ultimate responsibility over the performance of those powers or duties so delegated. Such delegation will be in writing; specify the entity designated; describe in specific terms the authority of the Board of Directors being delegated, any conditions on the delegated authority or its exercise and the beginning and ending dates of the delegation; and require an affirmative vote of a majority of Board members.

#### ***Board Meetings***

The entire Amethod Public Schools Board of Directors meets at minimum seven times a year. All Board meetings are open to the public. Meeting notices and agendas will be made available and posted to the public prior to Board meetings (both online posting as well as physical

posting for public viewing). For all regular meetings, an agenda will be posted 72 hours in advance on the organization's website, [www.amethodschools.org](http://www.amethodschools.org), as well as on the main entrance of its corporate offices at 2101 Livingston St., Oakland, CA 94606, and at each school site. Meeting minutes and Board actions are recorded and copies are available for public viewing on the organization's website.

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#### ***Public Operating Principles***

Downtown Charter Academy will continue to comply with all laws applicable to charter schools. Members of AMPS Board, any administrators, managers or employees, and any other committees of the school shall at all times comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards and OUSD's Charter School policies and regulations regarding ethics and conflicts of interest so long as such policies and regulations are not in conflict with any then-existing applicable statutes, legislation, or regulations applicable to charter schools.

DCA will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations, will not charge tuition, and will not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability or any perception thereof.

The school will maintain in effect general liability insurance, as well as insurance policies to cover Board errors and omissions protection. The Governing Board will operate procedurally consistent with the adopted by-laws of the organization and follow the approved procedures for changes and amendments. The school will operate autonomously from the district, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services as negotiated between the District and the school.

The Board of Directors will be the responsible agent for accountability requirements applicable by law and for the Charter itself, as well as policies regarding staff and board responsibilities, conflict of interest, personnel, budget development and approval. The school calendar and the selection of the school's administrative leadership are also the responsibilities of the Governance Board. The Governance Board is responsible for establishing subcommittees and delegating authority as needed.

***Conflict of Interest (Summarized)***

The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect Amethod Public Schools (the Organization)'s interest as applicable to a California public charter school, and the definitions contained in the Political Reform Act of 1974, the regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission, specifically California Code of Regulations Section 18730, and any amendments or modifications to the Act and regulations are incorporated by reference to this Code.

*See Appendix O for AMPS Conflict of Interest Policy*

***Governance Training***

New members to the Board of Directors must attend a Board meeting and an Amethod Public School Governance orientation prior to serving on the Board. The Board will receive proper training annually. Some of the topics for the training sessions are:

1. *Brown Act*
2. *Parliamentary Procedures*
3. *Conflict of Interest*
4. *Delineation of Roles and Responsibilities*
5. *Strategic Planning and Thinking*
6. *Legal and Financial Responsibilities*
7. *Effective Board-Staff Relations*
8. *Creating Effective Committees*
9. *Effective Board Self-Assessment*

*The above list is a sample and is not meant to be exhaustive.*

***Family Participation***

As required by Education Code § 47605, the school will use a range of methods to consult with and receive parental/family input. Parents who fulfill current desired expertise identified by existing board members may also be recommended to the Amethod Public Schools board of directors. Family participation methods are in use for existing Amethod Public School parents and include focus groups, surveys, parent/teacher conferences, orientation meetings, town halls, events, and phone / internet communication.

- *Informational Meetings:* DCA will hold meetings for parents to address matters such as financial aid for college, parent and student college session, and other informational meetings.
- *Town Halls:* Through partnership with other local organizations, Amethod Public Schools implements Town Hall parent information sessions for families. Sample discussions have included School Measurements, gang prevention, and cyber bullying.
- *Orientations:* DCA conducts an all campus Orientation meeting at least once per year. This meeting is mandatory for all new and incoming student families. Administration and Teachers are in attendance and available for introductions and information.
- *Website and Phone Communication:* Teachers have web pages on the School website server that will have their class schedules, grades, assessment data, attendance reports, syllabus and other assignments posted. Parents/family members may also log on to Illuminate Education to view their child's information that may include attendance, grades, and interim assessments. All community and family members can call the main phone line to make an appointment with the Site Director and teacher in regards to concerns.
- *Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences:* Parent/student/teacher conferences will be scheduled upon request of a teacher or a parent. These conferences may occur at any time during the year, but will be clustered at the end of grading periods.
- Each AMPS site has an established Family Staff Team (FST). The FST is the body that interacts with the Board of Directors and helps shape the school's yearly goals and Local Control Accountability Plan, which is ultimately approved by the Board.

#### ***Complaint Procedures***

DCA will continue to use the established formal complaint policy, the Internal Resolution Service (IRS), to address community concerns that are not resolved through informal conversations. The school will not, at any time, refer complaints to the district, and will address matters at the school and organizational level consistent with the nature of charter legislation. However, parents and families may approach the local authorizer, school district to file a complaint should they wish to do so.

The school's distinct complaint procedures include clear information about the response timeline of the school, the official complaint representative, the office making final decisions regarding complaints, and appeals process. The procedures will also identify an ombudsperson for situations in which the school leader is the subject of the complaint. The complaint procedures are clearly articulated in the school's family handbook that is distributed widely.

#### **UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (UCP) OVERVIEW**

The Governing Board recognizes that the school is primarily responsible for complying with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs as they

pertain to charter schools. The school shall investigate complaints alleging failure to comply with such laws and/or alleging discrimination and shall seek to resolve those complaints in accordance with the school's uniform complaint procedures, (5 CCR 4620).

The school shall follow uniform complaint procedures when addressing complaints alleging unlawful discrimination against any protected group as identified under Government Code 11135: including actual or perceived sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability, or age, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics in any school program or activity that receives or benefits from state financial assistance, (5 CCR 4610).

Uniform complaint procedures shall also be used when addressing complaints alleging failure to comply with state and/or federal laws in consolidated categorical programs, career technical and technical education and career technical and technical training programs, and special education programs (5 CCR 4610).

#### ELEMENT V: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS

Governing Law CA Education Code 47605 (b) (5) (E) the "The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed #by the charter school." – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(E)

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#### DRL: "EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

##### Equal Employment Opportunity and Nondiscrimination

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. Charter School shall not discriminate against applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, military and veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by California or federal law. Equal employment opportunity shall be extended to all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including recruitment, selection, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall, and dismissal from employment. Charter School further acknowledges that it shall not retaliate against any employee for engaging in protected activity, exercising a protected right, or initiating or pursuing any claim, proceeding, charge or complaint based upon an allegation of discrimination.

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#### ESEA/ESSA AND CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS

##### Teacher Credentialing Requirements

Charter School shall adhere to all State and federal requirements that are applicable to teachers and paraprofessional employees. Charter School shall ensure that all teachers meet applicable state requirements for certificated employment, including the provisions of Education Code section 47605(l). Charter School shall maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and make them readily available for inspection.

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*As part of the Fall Information Update, Charter School will notify the District in writing of the application deadline and proposed lottery date. Charter School will ensure that all application materials will reference these dates as well as provide complete information regarding*

*application procedures, key dates, and admissions preferences and requirements consistent with approved charter.'*

#### OBLIGATION TO REPORT TO CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON TEACHER CREDENTIALING

##### Reporting Educator Misconduct to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Charter School shall comply with Education Code section 44030.5 with respect to reporting the change in employment status to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing where the change of employment status is a result of an allegation of misconduct, or while an allegation of misconduct is pending, and with Education Code section 44939.5 regarding the reporting of egregious misconduct.

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#### EMPLOYMENT OF FELONS

##### Employment of Felons

The Charter School shall comply with the provisions of Education Code section 44830.1 and 45122.1 with respect to the submission of fingerprints to the Department of Justice and the employment of persons convicted of violent or serious felonies.

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#### Process for Staff Selection

In general, the school will recruit driven, qualified, and enthusiastic individuals to serve in all of the school's or organization's capacities. All prospective employees are required to successfully complete a DOJ fingerprinting background check, TB screening, and reference checks, to ensure the health and safety of the school's faculty, staff, and pupils. In addition, prospective employees are carefully screened to ensure they have the qualifications for employment as determined by law governing charter schools.

DCA involves all stakeholder groups in the school to identify the best teachers to deliver our instructional program. An extensive body of research shows that teacher quality is one of the most important factors related to increasing student achievement. Teachers who are committed, engaged and skillful in their approach to instruction have a powerful, long-term impact on their students' lives.

AMPS has identified teacher recruitment as an organizational priority and has developed a full human resources department in the back office to help reach our recruiting goals.

*The key factors of success in recruiting are:*

- Dedicated human resources staff in the back office
- Centralizing all of the processing of new employees in the back office
- Good internal communication between the back office and school sites
- Casting a wide net for candidates using traditional and innovative outreach strategies
- Responsiveness to candidates – timely return of calls and clear explanation of next steps to prospective candidates
- Rigorous evaluation and selection process

The AMPS central office employs a broad range of outreach tactics, from cultivating individual networks to implementing print and on-line advertising campaigns. A wider pool of candidates will ultimately result in a higher quality of teachers hired.

*Primary outreach strategies include:*

- Information sessions at colleges and graduate schools
- Partnerships with colleges and universities such as UC Berkeley, St. Mary's and Aliant University
- Partnerships with organizations such as Teach for America, Fortune School and Cal Teach
- Advertisements through organizations
- Newspaper and on-line advertising such as Craig's List, Edjoin.org and Teacherjobs.org
- Utilize the network of colleagues from our existing teaching staff

#### ***AMPS Career Path***

The AMPS Career Path is designed to promote quality instruction, reward teachers who use data to drive instruction, and retain the best possible talent. This innovative approach to teacher development allows for teachers to be compensated in a merit-based system. AMPS Career Path teachers are also given a variety of professional development opportunities, from attending conferences and trainings, to facilitating training sessions at their own sites. DCA has directly benefited from this homegrown talent pipeline, as the current Dean of Instruction reached that position of leadership by following the steps on the Career Path.

*See Appendix P for Career Path Application*

#### ***Leader Selection***

The Site Director is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the school and for leading the school's success, and Amethod Public Schools takes extensive care to select the most qualified and dedicated person.

The Director (Site Director) is the instructional, cultural, managerial, and community leader of the school. The Site Director sets the vision for the school and ensures that the school is a high-achieving college preparatory environment where all students finish their tenure at or above grade level. The Site Director serves as the manager of all teachers, and also coaches classroom teachers directly in coordination with their Deans, which includes conducting observation cycles, modeling lessons, and providing support and resources aimed at increasing teacher effectiveness and leadership.

The Site Director is a member of the interviewing and selection committee for other school staff and will work with Management Team to establish a Program Plan Model.

#### *Assigned tasks include the following:*

- Accountable for students' overall academic performance.
- Manage school revenues and expenses to stay within agreed upon budget.
- Available for contact with parents, students and staff to discuss student progress and problems after class, evenings or on weekends (via cell phone or in person).
- Maintain work hours extending beyond school hours for other professional duties or functions such as staff meetings, etc.
- Maintain professional standards and a school environment that is productive, safe and focused on organizational and school mission.
- Participate in school wide and individual professional development.

- Participate in other events aimed at promoting or developing Amethod Public Schools and its schools (i.e. student recruitment).
- Foster a rigorous and college preparatory environment that ensures high levels of student achievement annually through the relentless use of data to drive and refine instruction.
- Develop classroom teacher practice and leadership through direct observation, coaching, and training.
- Promote collaborative problem solving and open communication between teachers, students, and families.

*See Appendix Q for Site Director Job Qualifications and Description*

**Teacher Selection**

Prospective teachers must exhibit a strong passion and desire to teach in an intense and challenging environment with a structured, fast-paced pedagogical program. All prospective staff must be willing to teach beyond the typical school day, on some weekends, and until the job of educating our students is complete. All prospective hires must also be willing to go through our ongoing professional development workshops, enter a credential program (or be credentialed) and believe in the mission of the organization.

Downtown Charter Academy hires faculty based on content mastery, academic excellence, academic ability, performance reviews, and we prefer individuals who exhibit a go-getter enthusiasm during the interview process. We will continue to use our simple yet productive method of staff recruitment that includes the collection of transcripts, reference checks, writing sample, and an extensive interview process that includes the delivery of a sample lesson.

**Teacher Job Description**

Teachers at Downtown Charter Academy School shall be required to hold a California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) certificate, permit, or university internship permit as required by district, non-charters for core, college prep classes. The school will confer with the California Commission on Teaching Credentialing (CCTC) for any clarifications regarding credentials as needed. The school staff may also be required to participate in random drug testing as required by Governance Board.

*See Appendix R for Teacher Qualifications and Job Description*

*See Appendix S for Dean of Instruction Qualifications and Job Description*

*Assigned tasks will include the following:*

- Effectively instruct students in assigned content area(s) as prescribed by Amethod's academic content standards through lecturing, demonstrating, and using audio-visual aids and with the overall goal of engaging student learning.
- Work as part of teaching team and within content areas planning and aligning curricula to ensure that instruction follows curriculum guidelines or requirements of state and school.
- Set clear short-term and long-term goals to drive instruction.

- Develop and submit weekly and long-range unit plans containing standards, essential questions, assessments and lesson plans; assign lessons and review homework.
- Consistently administer tests to evaluate pupil progress, record results, and issue meaningful reports to inform parents of progress. Create and implement student intervention plans when necessary.
- All teachers will be CLAD certified or a CCTC recognized equivalent.

#### *Administration Assistant*

The Administrative Assistant will be responsible for daily operations at the campus. The Site Operations Coordinator will report to the Site Director.

A partial list of qualifications includes the following.

#### *Required knowledge, skills, and abilities*

- Strong organizational skills;
- Strong time management skills;
- Ability to work both independently and with a team;
- Fluency in Spanish is highly desirable.

#### *Required educational level*

- A.A. degree or equivalent work experience

#### *Required experience*

- 3 plus years in administrative support position preferable;
- Experience in school front office preferable;
- Proficient with Microsoft Office.

#### *Responsibilities include:*

- Recording attendance;
- Primary responsibility for input of Free and Reduced Lunch information into the student database;
- Managing the office;
- Overseeing purchases of materials;
- Managing the schedules;
- Serving as first point of contact

#### **Anti-discrimination Statement**

DCA believes that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. It does not discriminate against qualified applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, or any other characteristic protected by California or federal law. Equal employment opportunity shall be

extended to all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including recruitment, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall, and dismissal from employment.

## **ELEMENT VI: HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS**

**Governing Law** *"The procedures that the charter school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include require all of the requirement that following:*

- (i) That each employee of the charter school furnish the charter school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237.
- (ii) The development of a school safety plan, which shall include the safety topics listed in subparagraphs (A) to (J), inclusive, of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 32282.
- (iii) That the school safety plan be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year by the charter school." – Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(F)

### Site Safety Plan

Charter School shall develop a school safety plan, which shall include the topics set forth in Education Code section 32282(a)(2), and which shall be updated by March 1 every year. Charter School shall include any additional topics added through amendment of Education Code section 32282 or any other legislation.

### Pupil Safety

#### Immunizations, Health Examinations, and Health Screenings

Charter School shall comply with all federal and state legal requirements related to student immunization, health examination, and health screening, including but not limited to screening for vision, hearing, and scoliosis, to the same extent as would be required if the students were attending a non-charter public school. Charter School shall maintain student immunization, health examination, and health screening records on file.

*— California Education Code Section 47605(b) (5) (F)*

### DRL: "HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PLAN"

Charter School shall have a comprehensive site specific Health, Safety and Emergency Plan, including but not limited to the acquisition and maintenance of adequate onsite emergency supplies, in place prior to beginning operation of Charter School each school year. Suicide Prevention Policy (Grades 7-12)

Charter School shall adopt, at a regularly scheduled meeting, a policy on pupil suicide prevention in Grades 7 through 12 inclusive, that meets the requirements of Education Code section 215, if it serves any of those grade levels. The policy shall be developed in consultation with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention

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experts and shall, at a minimum, address procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention, and shall specifically address the needs of high-risk groups, including, but not limited to, all of the following: Youth bereaved by suicide; Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance use disorders; Youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth.

#### Employee Training

Charter School shall ensure that all staff members receive annual training on Charter School's health, safety, and emergency procedures, including but not limited to training on blood borne pathogens, and shall maintain a calendar for, and conduct, emergency response drills for students and staff. Charter School shall also ensure that its employees receive the required sexual harassment training under Govt. Code 12950.1.

Charter School shall provide all employees, and other persons working on behalf of Charter School who are mandated reporters, with annual training on child abuse detection and reporting, which shall occur within the first six weeks of each school year, or within the first six weeks of a person's employment if employed after the beginning of the school year, in accordance with the requirements of AB 1432 (2014), Education Code section 44691.

Charter School shall stock and maintain the required number and type of emergency epinephrine auto injectors onsite and provide training to employee volunteers in the storage and use of the epinephrine auto injector as required by SB 1266 (2014).

Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 49475 regarding concussions/head injuries with respect to any athletic program (as defined in Education Code § 49475) offered by or on behalf of Charter School.

Charter School shall periodically review, and update and/or modify as necessary, its Health, Safety and Emergency Plan, and keep it readily available for use and review upon CSD request.

#### FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Charter School, including its employees and officers, shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Education Code section 49060 et seq. at all times.

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## CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CLEARANCES AND FINGERPRINTING

### Employee Screening Requirements

#### Criminal Background Clearances and Fingerprinting

Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Education Code sections 44237, [44830.1](#), and [45125.1](#). Charter School shall designate and maintain at all times at least one Custodian of Records duly authorized by the California Department of Justice.

Charter School shall maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that (1) Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for employment all employees prior to employment; (2) Charter School has obtained certification from each of its contracting entities/independent contractors that the entity/contractor has conducted required criminal background clearances for its employees prior to provision of school site services and/or any contact with students and has requested subsequent arrest notification service; and (3) Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for service all volunteers not directly supervised by staff and who may have contact with students. Charter School shall also ensure that it requests and receives subsequent arrest notifications from the California Department of Justice for all employees and volunteers not directly supervised by staff. Upon request, Charter School shall provide a copy of Department of Justice confirmation of Custodian of Records status for each Custodian of Records.

*Charter School shall comply with the requirements set forth in Education Code section [44939.5](#) regarding the reporting of egregious misconduct committed by certificated employees.*

## IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

### Tuberculosis Screening

Charter School shall require all employees, and any volunteer or vendor/contracting entity employee who may have frequent or prolonged contact with students, to undergo a risk assessment and/or be examined and determined to be free of active tuberculosis (TB) within the period of 60 days prior to employment/service, in accordance with Education Code section [49406](#). Charter School shall maintain TB clearance records and certifications on file.

*Charter School shall comply with all federal and state legal requirements related to student immunization, health examination, and health screening, including but not limited to screening for vision, hearing, and scoliosis, to the same extent as would be required if the students were attending a non-charter public school. Charter School shall maintain student immunization, health examination, and health screening records on file.*

### SAFE PLACE TO LEARN ACT

*Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Safe Place to Learn Act, Education Code section 234 et seq.*

### COMPETITIVE ATHLETICS

*Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 221.9 with*

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*respect to the disclosure requirements regarding competitive athletics, and shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 33470.1 et seq. with respect to any athletic*

*program that it offers, as well as Education Code section 19175 et seq. with respect to institution of a concussion protocol.*

**GUN FREE SCHOOLS ACT**

*Charter School shall comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act.*

**TOBACCO USE PREVENTION**

*Charter School shall enact policies to prohibit the use of Tobacco near its school site in accordance with the provisions of California Health and Safety Code section 101495. "*  
**SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY (GRADES 7-12)**

*Charter School shall adopt, at a regularly scheduled meeting, a policy on pupil suicide prevention in Grades 7 through 12 inclusive, pursuant to Education Code section 215.*

**TRANSPORTATION**

*The Charter School shall meet the requirements of Education Code section 39831.3 with respect to any transportation services provided to or from school or a school activity.*

**DATA PRIVACY**

*Charter School shall take the required steps to protect the data privacy of its pupils, including but not limited to complying with the requirements of Education Code section 19073.6 with respect to any maintenance of any information obtained from social media in its pupil records.*

**OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

*Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 33133.5 with respect to notifying pupils of the appropriate telephone number to call to report child abuse or neglect, and Education Code section 51900.6 with respect to the age appropriate content in sexual abuse and sexual assault awareness and prevention.*

**Procedures for Background Checks**

Amethod Public Schools has an identified *Custodian of Record* whose task is to review and monitor background checks for all staff and consultants hired by the Amethod Public Schools organization. The school shall comply with the provisions and procedures of Education Code 44237, including the requirement that as a condition of employment each new employee and volunteers must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. No employee shall be permitted to commence work at the campus until clearance has been obtained from the Department of Justice maintained by the identified Amethod Public Schools that has been cleared by the Department of Justice to receive records. Records of student immunizations shall be maintained, and staff shall follow requirements for periodic TB screening as required by law. All staff will be required to produce documents for U.S. employment authorization, and to follow all mandated

child abuse reporting laws. Random drug testing may be implemented for staff throughout the year to ensure safety of students.

Downtown Charter Academy has implemented health, safety and risk management policies similar to that of other Amethod Public School sites. DCA shall implement comprehensive set of health, safety and risk management policies that will address, at a minimum, the following:

- Policies and procedures for responses to disasters and emergencies including fire and earthquakes;
- Policies relating to blood-borne pathogens;
- A policy requiring that instructional and administrative staff to receive training in emergency response, including first aid, first responder training or its equivalent;
- Compliance with all health and safety laws and regulations that apply to non-charter public schools, including those regarding auxiliary services (food services, transportation, custodial services, hazardous materials, etc.) and those required by CAL OSHA, the California Health and Safety Code, and EPA;
- Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines;
- A policy establishing DCA as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workspace. The policy will adhere to Title IV of the Safe Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act to ensure that the campus is kept safe and are tobacco, drug and alcohol free.

#### ***Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters***

All non-certificated and certificated staff are mandated reporters, as defined by law are obligated to report all known or suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect. Mandated reporters shall not investigate any suspected incidents but rather shall cooperate with agencies responsible for reporting, investigating and prosecuting cases of child abuse and neglect.

#### ***Comprehensive Sexual Harassment Policies and Procedures***

The School is committed to providing a campus that is free from sexual harassment, as well as any harassment based upon such factors as race, religion, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability.

The School will implement the developed comprehensive policy to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about sexual discrimination or harassment at the School (including employee to employee, employee to student, and student to employee misconduct).

#### ***Immunizations***

All students enrolled and staff are required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Section 6000- 6075. Student immunizations shall be required as a condition of attendance to the same extent as they are required in local non-charter public schools, records of student immunizations shall be maintained, and faculty and staff shall follow requirements for periodic TB (as described in Education Code section 49406) Screening.

#### ***Blood borne Pathogens***

The School shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with blood borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the work place. The school shall implement the board approved written infectious control plan designed to protect employees and students from possible infection due to contact with blood borne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and Hepatitis B virus (HBV) at DCA. Whenever exposed to blood or other bodily fluids through injury or accident, staff and students shall follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

#### ***Drug Free/Alcohol Free/Smoke Free Environment***

The school shall function as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.

#### ***Medication in School***

The Amethod Schools has adopted a policy regarding the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines at school that adheres to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school that stipulates that designated school personnel may distribute oral medications if the school receives **if:**

- (1) A written statement from such physician detailing the method, amount, and time schedule by which such medication is to be taken, and*
- (2) A written statement from the parent or guardian of the pupil indicating the desire that the school assist the pupil in the matters set forth in the physician's statement,*
- (3) The parent or guardian signs a waiver of release of liability for dispensing the medication.*

#### ***Facility Safety***

The facilities to be utilized by Downtown Charter Academy must be in compliance with applicable State and local Building Codes in accordance with Education Code 47610. The School shall comply with Education Code Section 47610 by utilizing facilities that are compliant with the California Building Standards Code. The School agrees to have site inspected by the local Fire Department regularly. The School shall conduct fire drills as required under Education Code Section 32001 and in conjunction with the District (*if at District facilities*).

All Amethod Schools are required to have active safety plans on file as required by California Ed Code and staff will be trained annually on the safety procedures outlined in the plan. If DCA finds a facility for the school and it is not a district facility, the school will hire its own contractors and the appropriate resources necessary in order to perform the maintenance and operations functions required at its facility.

DCA shall occupy facilities that comply with the Asbestos requirement as cited in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40CFR part 763. AHERA requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.

If DCA fails to submit a certificate of occupancy or other valid documentation to the District verifying that the intended facility in which the school will operate complies with Education Code Section 47610, not less than 30 days before the school is scheduled to begin operation pursuant to the first year of this renewal term, it may not commence operations unless an exception is made by the Office of Charter Schools and/or the local planning department or equivalent agency.

If DCA moves or expands to a separate building during the term of this charter, DCA shall provide a certificate of occupancy or other valid documentation to the District verifying that the intended facility in which the school will operate complies with Education Code Section 47610, to the District for each facility at least 30 days before school is scheduled to begin operations in the facility or facilities. DCA shall not begin operation in any location for which it has failed to timely provide a certificate of occupancy to the District, unless an exception is made by the Office of Charter Schools and/or the local planning department or equivalent agency.

Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in this charter, the interpretation, application, and enforcement of this provision are not subject to the Dispute Resolution Process.

#### ***Food Service***

The school may decide to offer a food service program and contract for food services (with another private foodservice provider) in the same manner consistent with other charter schools and food service providers.

#### ***Nursing***

The Administrative Assistant will be trained in basic techniques such as CPR and nursing for minor issues. If there is any serious injury and/or illness, the appropriate local paramedic or hospital will immediately be contacted. Even before the school's opening, the local health care facility will be contacted to create policies regarding such instances. The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff will be similar to what other Amethod Public School sites implement. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in §44237. Ed. Code §47605 9b) (5) (F)

#### ***Vision/Hearing/Scoliosis***

DCA shall adhere to Education Code Section 49450 *et seq.* as applicable to the grade levels served by the school.

#### ***Emergency Handbook (Policies)***

The school will adopt and implement a comprehensive set of health, safety and risk management policies in case of emergencies or natural disasters. The handbook is used to inform staff, parents, and community as a whole to our procedures of such cases will be and is posted on our website. The following health and safety policies were developed in consultation with the school's governance board, legal counsel, and insurance providers and facility:

- First Aid and CPR certificates for key staff members.

- A requirement that all enrolling students and staff provide immunization records to the extent required for enrollment in non-charter public schools.
- Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies, such as fires and earthquakes.
- Policies for the prevention of contact with blood-borne pathogens.
- A policy requiring that instructional and administrative staff receive training in emergency response, including “first responder” and CPR training or its equivalent.
- Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines.
- Evidence that the school is housed in a facility that is approved by the state or local fire marshals.

See Appendix T for Heath and Safety Handbook

#### **Emergency Preparedness**

Policies and procedures are maintained for issues such as fires, earthquakes, compliance with health and safety laws and other emergency responses. Such procedures are tailored for each school site and maintained on site. Employees will be trained annually on the policies and procedures in the emergency plan.

#### **The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records, which can be in writing, print; or in the form of a video, or audio recording, film, microfilm, or microfiche. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Generally, the school must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. The school will use best judgment in accordance with the law on a case by case basis in regards to student information and written requests. Moreover, schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance.

#### **ELEMENT VII: RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE**

**Governing Law**—“The means by which the charter school will achieve a balance of racial and ethnic balance among its pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, including redesignated fluent English proficient pupils, as defined by the evaluation rubrics in Section 52064.5, that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted;”—Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(G).

CA Education Code 47605 (b)-(5)-(G).

DCA shall strive to achieve a student population from within different neighborhoods within Oakland, and the greater OUSD area that recognizes and values the schools' mission and vision. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into the charter school. DCA uses Enroll Oak to cast the widest net possible and make enrolling as easy and transparent as possible.

As previously noted, students will be considered for admission without regard to ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, race, gender identity or achievement level. Recruitment strategy will be carried out throughout various communities to provide families with the opportunity to participate in the school. Downtown Charter Academy will work with various community organizations, churches, stores, merchant associations, Bay Area charter schools, and non-charter schools to strive to recruit a student population reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the Oakland Unified School District.

**The application process is comprised of the following:**

- Completion of a student application, which includes basic student and family identification information for the purposes of entry into public random drawing.
- Upon selection for admission pursuant to public random drawing, the registration process will include the following:
  - *Student enrollment form which contains student name, address, and other identifying and demographic information*
  - *Proof of immunization*
  - *Home Language Survey*
  - *Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form*
  - *Proof of minimum age requirements, e.g. birth certificate*

***Recruiting and Marketing***

The school acknowledges that recruitment of students is the responsibility of the charter school. The AMPS marketing team targets multilingual communities through a multi-faceted outreach strategy through the use of social media, and internet features. Moreover, AMPS employs a FT Community Coordinator who canvasses the area with families and volunteers. In compliance with federal law, the recruitment efforts of the school to target all populations within the area, regardless of race, disability, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity. The school will continue to explore as many avenues of outreach as possible to guarantee a broad spectrum of exposure during its recruitment process.

The school will implement a recruitment strategy that includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following elements or strategies which focus on achieving and maintaining a racial and ethnic balance among students that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of Oakland Unified School District.

***The school will reach out to students and parents through a variety of methods, including:***

- Attending OUSD option fairs;
- Meeting with local Athletic Teams and leagues;
- Hosting open houses at the school;

- Press releases and other communications with local news media;
- Posting of notices or banners in libraries and other public buildings and spaces, as well as with local businesses and religious institutions;
- Attend community functions and fairs;
- Work with local leaders in the immediate community to promote school;
- Working with community organizations to reach families in the local area;
- Word of mouth among parents in the community; and
- Speaking or distributing flyers at local churches, recreation centers, and groups working with families

Outreach efforts and materials will be provided in Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Lao, Mien and Mandarin languages as needed. General information sheets, and other key documents, including the school vision and mission statement will be provided in the multiple languages as well.

The charter school shall maintain an accurate accounting of the ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled in the school, along with documentation of the efforts the school has made to achieve racial and ethnic balance in accordance with the charter petition and standards of charter legislation.

#### ELEMENT VIII: STUDENT ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

*Governing Law—“Admission Requirements, if applicable*

California policies and procedures, consistent with subdivision (e) of Education Code Section 47605(d)(1) – Ed. Code § 47605(e)(5)-(H)

DRL: “DOCUMENTATION OF ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT PROCESSES  
Documentation of Admissions and Enrollment Processes

Upon request, Charter School will notify the District in writing of the application deadline and proposed lottery date. Charter School will ensure that all application materials will reference these dates as well as provide complete information regarding application procedures, key dates, and admissions preferences and requirements consistent with approved charter.

Charter School shall maintain complete and accurate records of its annual admissions and enrollment processes, including but not limited to documentation of implementation of lottery and waitlist criteria and procedures in accordance with the terms of the Charter, and a record of all written communications with parents related to admissions. These records shall be made available to the District upon request.

As indicated in the affirmations included at the beginning of this petition, Charter School shall also comply with the following all requirements of related to admissions preferences found in Education Code section 47605(d)(2)(B)(i)-(iv).

(i) Each type of preference shall be approved by the chartering authority at a public hearing.

(ii) Preferences shall be consistent with federal law, the California Constitution, and Section 200.

(iii) Preferences shall not result in limiting enrollment access for pupils with disabilities, academically low achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced price meal program,

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foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

(iv) Preferences shall not require mandatory parental volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment.

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#### HOMELESS AND FOSTER YOUTH

To ensure equitable access, the Charter School affirms that the implementation of admissions preferences shall not result in limiting enrollment opportunities for any student subgroup. Specifically, the Charter School will not design, apply, or enforce any lottery or admissions preference in a manner that excludes or restricts access for pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, foster youth, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. In addition, no admissions practice will discriminate against pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, or any other protected status.

The Charter School will actively monitor admissions and lottery procedures to ensure compliance with these requirements and will provide transparent documentation of how preferences are applied. The intent of these policies is to preserve open access for all students while ensuring alignment with both state and federal law, including Education Code section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii).

#### Homeless and Foster Youth

Charter School shall adhere to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.

Charter School shall provide specific information, in its outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings, that notifies parents that Charter School is open to enroll and provide services for all students, and provides a *standard District* contact number for access to additional information regarding enrollment. Charter School shall comply with all applicable provisions of Education Code sections 48850 – 48859 with respect to foster children and homeless youth.

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#### NON DISCRIMINATION

##### Non-Discrimination

Charter School shall not require a parent/legal guardian/student to provide information regarding a student's disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, legal or economic status, primary language or English Learner status, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code, or any other information that would violate federal or state law, prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment. Charter School may request, at the time of, and as part of, conducting its lottery process, the provision of information necessary to apply specific admissions preferences set forth in this Charter.

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Charter School shall not request or require submission of a student's IEP, 504 Plan, or any other record or related information prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment.

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#### PARENT ENGAGEMENT

As indicated in the affirmations included at the beginning of this petition, pursuant to Education Code section 47605(e)(4)(A), Charter School shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the charter school for any reason.

### Parent Engagement

Charter School shall not require a parent or legal guardian of a prospective or enrolled student to perform volunteer service hours or attend an orientation event, or make payment of fees or other monies, goods, or services in lieu of performing volunteer service, as a condition of his/her/their child's admission, continued enrollment, attendance, or participation in the school's educational activities, or otherwise discriminate against a student in any manner because his/her/their parent cannot, has not, or will not provide volunteer service to Charter School.

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### Enrollment Policy

It is the policy of DCA to be nonsectarian in its programs, curriculum, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. DCA shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, race, or disability.

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The Charter School shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the Charter School. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into the Charter School. The Charter School will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools. Admission, except in the case of a public random drawing, shall not be determined by the place of residence of the pupil or their parent/guardian within the state.

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~~a public random drawing, shall not be determined by the place of residence of the pupil or his or her parent or legal guardian within the state.~~

DCA will comply with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act for homeless children and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. All students will be given equal access to the Charter School, including students with disabilities. The Charter School will not discriminate against any student based on disability status.

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All students will be given equal access to the Charter School, regardless of disabilities, and the Charter School will not discriminate against any students based on his or her disabilities.

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## Enrollment Process

### Recruitment and Outreach

Formal recruitment of incoming students begins ~~in the~~ each Fall ~~each~~ year for the following school year. The Charter School will have an open application period extending from November through February. During this time, the Charter School will advertise, attend outreach events, and host open houses to inform families in the community about the opportunities and expectations for prospective students and parents.

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In alignment with Amethod's commitment to equitable access, DCA will conduct targeted outreach to elementary schools with high percentages of students with disabilities, with the goal of expanding the proportion of students with disabilities we serve. Outreach efforts will also include Spanish-language materials and translation services, ensuring accessibility for families whose primary language is not English.

## Enrollment Process

The Charter School shall require students who wish to attend ~~the Charter School~~ to complete an application form. After admission, students will be required to:

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## Public Random Lottery

Applications will be accepted during ~~a publicly advertised the~~ open enrollment period each year ~~for enrollment in the following school year. Following the open enrollment period each year, If~~ applications ~~shall be counted to determine whether exceed capacity in any grade level has received more applications than availability. In the event that this happens, the Charter School will hold a public random lottery to determine admission for the impacted grade level drawing~~, with the exception of ~~existing~~ currently enrolled students, who are guaranteed admission.

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In addition to the general lottery preferences, DCA will provide a one-time admissions preference in the following school year 2026-27 for students displaced from Oakland Charter Academy as a result of the school's closure. This preference reflects Amethod's commitment to continuity of education and ensures that families directly impacted by the closure are offered the opportunity to enroll at DCA without disruption. After the initial enrollment cycle, this temporary preference will expire.

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and all future lotteries will follow the standard preference order described above

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B), admission preferences shall be given to the following students in the following order:

1. Year 1 (2026-27) only: Students displaced from Oakland Charter Academy due to the school's closure

2. Siblings of existing students at the Charter School

3. Students who are enrolled in the immediate prior grade level of another Amethod Public Schools charter school

4. Children of the Charter School's teachers and staff (not to exceed 10% of the Charter School's total enrollment)

5. Students experiencing homelessness, as defined under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

6. Residents of the District

7. All other students

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The Charter School will ensure that the public random drawings as listed above

are lottery procedures remain consistent with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)

and applicable federal law and

non-regulatory guidance; however, should the Should preferences require modification in order to

meet requirements of the Federal Expansion Grant requirements, such modifications may be made at

the Charter School's discretion without any need to materially reviserevising the charter as long as

such modifications are consistent with the law and, provided written notice is provided by the

Charter School given to the District.

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At the conclusion of the lottery, all students ~~who were~~ not granted admission due to capacity ~~shall~~ will be ~~given the option to put their name~~ placed on a wait list ~~according to their draw in the lottery. This order drawn. The wait list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the current school year. In no circumstance will a "wait list" does not~~ carry over to the ~~following~~ next school year.

The lottery rules, deadlines, dates and times will be communicated in the application form and on the Charter School's website.

Neither student nor other family members are required to be present at the random selection drawing to secure a spot. The families of students that are selected to attend the Charter School by the lottery will be notified by phone and mail and asked to confirm enrollment within two weeks of notice.

## Lottery Procedures

The Charter School will conduct the lottery ~~in the each~~ spring for fall enrollment in the fall of that year. The lottery is conducted via the Schoolmint System, using the SchoolMint platform, in partnership with the EnrollOak Common Enrollment Process.

All lotteries shall take place on the same day in a single location. Lotteries will be conducted in ascending order beginning with the lowest applicable grade level. There is no weighted priority assigned to the preference categories; rather, within each grade level, students will be drawn from pools beginning with all applicants who qualify for the first preference category and shall continue with that preference category until all vacancies within that grade level have been filled. If there are more students in a preference category than there are spaces available, a random drawing will be held from within that preference category until all available spaces are filled. If all students from the preference category have been selected and there are remaining spaces available in that grade level, students from the second preference category will be drawn in the lottery, and the drawing shall continue until all spaces are filled and preference categories are exhausted in the order provided above.

## Waitlist Ranking Management

The student waitlist ~~Waitlist ranking~~ will be assigned by the Schoolmint System, SchoolMint system. The ~~database~~ list will be made ~~publicly available~~ as soon as ~~practically possible~~, ~~both~~ ~~practicable~~ online at Amethod Public Schools website and ~~and~~ posted ~~in public~~ locations ~~publicly~~ at the school site. Letters and follow up phone calls to families ~~Families~~ on the ~~waiting list~~ ~~waitlist~~ will ~~also~~ be made. All lottery databases will be kept on file by ~~contacted~~ in the Charter School or at Amethod Public Schools headquarters.

During the school year if event of vacancies ~~should~~ arise, the Charter School will notify families on the wait list to see if they ~~would~~ like to enroll. Typically, ~~3~~ ~~three~~ separate calls on 3 different outreach attempts are made over ~~seven~~ days are made, with accompanying documentation; if families do not respond within 7 days, they are removed from the wait list and the; if no response is received, the next family is ~~on~~ the waitlist will be contacted.

## ELEMENT IX: ANNUAL AUDIT

*Governing Law:* ~~"The manner in which an annual, independent financial audit shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering~~

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**authority** — *California Education, ” – Ed. Code Section § 47605(b)(5)(I) – ”*

**DRL:** “In order to ensure the necessary oversight and review of mandated reports for which the authorizer must determine fiscal health and sustainability, the following schedule of reporting deadline to the District will apply each year of the term of this charter:

- o On or before July 1, an annual update required pursuant to Section 17606.5.
- o September 1 Final Unaudited Financial Report for Prior Year
- o December 1 Final Audited Financial Report for Prior Year
- o December 1 First Interim Financial Report for Current Year
- o March 1 Second Interim Financial Report for Current Year
- o June 15 Preliminary Budget for Subsequent Year”

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An annual independent financial audit of the books and records of the Charter School will be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(b) (5) (I) and 47605(m). The books and records of the Charter School will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and as required by applicable law, the audit will employ generally accepted accounting procedures. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller's K-12 Audit Guide.

The Board of Directors will select an independent auditor through a request for proposal format. The auditor will have, at a minimum, a CPA and educational institution audit experience and will be approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars.

The annual audit will be completed and forwarded to the District, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The Chief Executive Officer, along with the audit committee, if any, will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Charter School Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board will submit a report to the District describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the District along with an anticipated timeline for the same. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel ("EAAP") in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit of the Charter School is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.

#### ELEMENT X: SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES

**Governing Law: CA Education Code 47605 (b) (5) (J); "The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled:**

**DRL: "The Charter School's student discipline from the charter school for disciplinary reasons or otherwise involuntarily removed from the charter school for any reason. These procedures, at a minimum, shall include an explanation of how the charter school will comply with federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements as follows: that is consistent with all of the following:**

(i) For suspensions of fewer than 10 days, provide oral or written notice of the charges against the pupil and, if the pupil denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges and an opportunity for the pupil to present his or her/the pupil's side of the story.

(ii) For suspensions of 10 days or more and all other expulsions for disciplinary reasons, both of the following:

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