

# THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL

**CHARTER PETITION FOR FIVE-YEAR TERM (2014-2019)**

**SUBMITTED TO THE SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Original Submission: July 15, 2013**

**Re-Submitted: November 13, 2013**

**APPROVED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ON JULY 9, 2014**

**FOR A FIVE-YEAR TERM (JULY 1, 2014 – JUNE 30, 2019)**

**Material Revision Submitted on February 19, 2015**

THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL  
C/O 4260 54<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92115  
(619) 839-9543  
[INFO@THRIVEPS.ORG](mailto:INFO@THRIVEPS.ORG)  
[WWW.THRIVEPS.ORG](http://WWW.THRIVEPS.ORG)

**Table of Contents\***

Table of Contents*	i
AFFIRMATIONS AND ASSURANCES	vi
ELEMENT 1: THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	10
I. MISSION, VISION AND SCHOOL FOUNDERS	10
A. MISSION	10
B. VISION	11
C. FOUNDERS, BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND PARTNERS	11
II. STUDENTS THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL WILL EDUCATE	16
A. TARGET STUDENT POPULATION	16
1. PROJECTED ENROLLMENT	16
2. SURROUNDING COMMUNITY:	17
A. EXISTING PUBLIC K-8 SCHOOLS	19
III. THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND FRAMEWORK FOR INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN IS ALIGNED WITH OUR TARGET POPULATION	22
IV. THRIVE WILL PREPARE STUDENTS TO BE EDUCATED CITIZENS IN THE 21 <sup>ST</sup> CENTURY	24
A. HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS	27
B. THRIVE WILL ENABLE STUDENTS TO BECOME SELF-MOTIVATED, COMPETENT AND LIFELONG LEARNERS	28
C. TEACHING METHODOLOGIES	29
1. PROJECT-BASED LEARNING	31
2. BLENDED/TARGETED LEARNING	33
a. Blended Learning Curriculum	35
b. Real Time Assessment Data	36
c. Review of Student Achievement Data	37
d. Data Management System: Illuminate	37
3. EXPLORATORY LEARNING	38
4. FAMILY-FACILITATED LEARNING	40
a. Parent Education	40
b. Curriculum and Assessments	41
c. Family Involvement in School Life	41
5. SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING	43
a. Multiage Grouping and Looping	44
b. Community Agreements	44
D. SKILLS TO BE TAUGHT	45
1. ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	45
a. Reading	46
b. Writing	48
c. Speaking	50
d. Listening	50

2.	<i>MATHEMATICS</i> .....	51
3.	<i>SCIENCE</i> .....	52
4.	<i>SOCIAL STUDIES</i> .....	54
5.	<i>ENRICHMENTS/EXPLORATORY</i> .....	55
E.	TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES .....	55
F.	TEACHER CAPACITY: RECRUITMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT .....	56
1.	<i>RECRUITMENT</i> .....	56
2.	<i>TEACHER EVALUATION</i> .....	57
3.	<i>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</i> .....	58
a.	Time Allocated for Professional Development .....	58
b.	Professional Development Topics .....	59
G.	INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES: ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND BELL SCHEDULE .....	60
1.	<i>SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULES</i> .....	60
2.	<i>DRAFT SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR, 2015-2016</i> .....	62
3.	<i>THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL WILL EXCEED THE MINIMUM INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES</i> .....	63
V.	SPECIAL NEEDS: THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL WILL ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF ALL SUB-GROUPS, INCLUDING AT-RISK STUDENTS .....	63
A.	THRIVE’S STUDENT-CENTERED APPROACH WILL BENEFIT ALL STUDENTS .....	63
1.	<i>INITIAL ASSESSMENT</i> .....	64
2.	<i>HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION</i> .....	64
3.	<i>STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM (SST)</i> .....	65
4.	<i>OUTREACH TO STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS</i> .....	65
B.	ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS .....	65
1.	<i>IDENTIFICATION OF ENGLISH LEARNERS</i> .....	66
2.	<i>SUPPORT FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS</i> .....	66
a.	Six Key Strategies for Teachers of English-Language Learners .....	68
b.	Sheltered Instruction / Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE)....	69

3.	<i>RECLASSIFICATION OF ENGLISH LEARNERS</i> .....	70
C.	SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS .....	71
D.	GIFTED AND HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS .....	72
1.	<i>IDENTIFICATION OF GIFTED STUDENTS</i> .....	72
2.	<i>STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT GIFTED STUDENTS</i> .....	72
E.	AT-RISK OF LOW ACHIEVEMENT .....	73
1.	<i>IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WHO ARE AT-RISK AND/OR ACHIEVING BELOW GRADE LEVEL</i> .....	74
2.	<i>STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ACADEMICALLY LOW ACHIEVING STUDENTS</i> .....	74
3.	<i>CLASSROOM MODIFICATIONS FOR LOW ACHIEVING STUDENTS</i> .....	75
4.	<i>TRACKING THE ACADEMIC PROGRESS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS</i> .....	75
F.	STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES .....	76
1.	<i>PLAN FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES</i> .....	76
2.	<i>SEARCH AND SERVE</i> .....	76
3.	<i>ASSESSMENT</i> .....	77
4.	<i>DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW OF IEP</i> .....	78
5.	<i>SPECIAL EDUCATION STRATEGIES FOR INSTRUCTION AND SERVICES</i> .....	80
6.	<i>REPORTING</i> .....	81
7.	<i>DUE PROCESS AND PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS</i> .....	82
8.	<i>SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT</i> .....	82
G.	OTHER SPECIAL POPULATIONS .....	83
VI.	ONGOING MONITORING OF STUDENT PROGRESS TO INFORM IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM .....	84
VII.	INDEPENDENT STUDY .....	84
VIII.	HIGH SCHOOL “A-G” REQUIREMENTS.....	84
IX.	THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL WILL MEET THE STATE’S PRIORITIES .....	84
	<b>Element 2: Measurable Student Outcomes .....</b>	<b>85</b>
I.	STUDENT OUTCOME GOALS.....	86
II.	ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES.....	87
	<b>Element 3: Methodologies for Measuring Student Outcomes .....</b>	<b>88</b>
I.	PROGRESS REPORTS.....	89
II.	MEASURING ACADEMIC PROGRESS (MAPs).....	89
III.	MANDATED STATE ASSESSMENTS .....	89
IV.	ASSESSMENT DESIGN .....	90
V.	USE AND REPORTING OF DATA .....	91
	<b>Element 4: Governance Structure.....</b>	<b>92</b>
I.	NON-PROFIT PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION.....	92
II.	BOARD OF GOVERNORS .....	92
III.	BOARD MEETINGS AND DUTIES .....	93
IV.	SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL.....	94
V.	ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE .....	95
	<b>Element 5: Employee Qualifications .....</b>	<b>96</b>
I.	QUALIFICATIONS OF EMPLOYEES .....	96

A.	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER .....	96
B.	BUSINESS MANAGER.....	98
C.	DIRECTOR.....	99
D.	DEAN OF STUDENTS .....	101
E.	TEACHING STAFF .....	102
F.	INTERVENTION/RESOURCE SPECIALIST AND LITERACY SPECIALIST.....	103
G.	ACADEMIC COACHES .....	104
II.	ASSURANCES REGARDING APPLICABLE LAW.....	104
<b>Element 6: Health and Safety Procedures.....</b>		<b>106</b>
A.	CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS .....	106
B.	FACILITY .....	107
C.	AUXILIARY SERVICES .....	107
D.	IMMUNIZATIONS, TUBERCULOSIS TESTING, AND SCREENING .....	108
E.	INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS.....	108
<b>Element 7: Racial and Ethnic Balance.....</b>		<b>110</b>
I.	OUTREACH TO ACHIEVE RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE.....	110
A.	FEDERAL COMPLIANCE.....	111
<b>Element 8: Admissions Requirements.....</b>		<b>112</b>
A.	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS & PREFERENCES .....	112
B.	ADMISSION PROCESS AND OPEN ENROLLMENT .....	112
C.	PUBLIC RANDOM DRAWING PROCEDURES.....	113
D.	WAIT LIST .....	114
E.	MCKINNEY VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT .....	114
F.	NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND .....	114
<b>Element 9: Financial Audits .....</b>		<b>115</b>
I.	BUDGETS .....	115
A.	BUSINESS MANAGEMENT.....	115
B.	ANNUAL AUDIT .....	115
C.	DISTRICT OVERSIGHT COSTS.....	116
<b>Element 10: Student Suspension and Expulsion Procedures.....</b>		<b>117</b>
I.	DISCIPLINE POLICY.....	117
A.	CAUSE FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION .....	119
II.	PROCESS FOR SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION .....	121
III.	APPEAL OF SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION .....	122
IV.	SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES .....	123
<b>Element 11: Retirement Programs.....</b>		<b>127</b>
<b>Element 12: Public School Attendance Alternatives .....</b>		<b>128</b>

Element 13: Rights of District Employees .....	129
Element 14: Dispute Resolution .....	130
Element 15: Employer Status and Collective Bargaining .....	132
Element 16: Charter School Closure .....	133

## **APPENDICES**

- A: Curriculum Scope and Sequence Samples**
- B: Governance Documents: Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Conflict of Interest Code**
- C: Updated Teacher Signatures in Support of Material Revision**
- D: Original Teacher Signatures, Resumes & Credentials in Support of Petition**
- E: Parent Signatures in Support of Petition**
- F: Letters CCSA, Wiseburn School District, Alvo Institute, Girard Foundation, InSite in Support of Petition**
- G: Grant Award Letters**
- H: Five Year Financial Projections and Cash Flow**
- I: [DRAFT] Health and Safety Plan**

*\*Any text, herein, referring to the San Diego Unified School District, SDUSD, or the District as the chartering authority should be read as “State Board of Education” or “SBE,” or the “California Department of Education” or “CDE” as the oversight agency.*

## AFFIRMATIONS AND ASSURANCES

Thrive Public School will comply with California Education Code sections 42100(b), 47604.33, 47605(b), (c), (d), (g), (l) and (m), 47605.6, 47612.5, and 51747.3(a) and all other applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, ensuring that the school shall:

Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations.

Not charge tuition.

Not discriminate against any student on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, nationality, race, color 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 association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

Admit all pupils who wish to attend the school. Cal. Education Code § 47605(d)(2)(A).

Determine admission by a public random drawing, if the number of pupils who wish to attend the school exceeds the school capacity, with a lottery exemption for existing pupils of the charter school, siblings of enrolled students, and children of staff and founding parents (not to exceed 10%). Cal. Education Code § 47605(d)(2)(B). Preference shall be given to pupils who reside in the San Diego Unified School District, or other preferences permitted by the charter authority that are consistent with the law.

Not enroll pupils over nineteen (19) years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements and shall comply with minimum age requirements for public school attendance. Cal. Education Code § 47610(c).

Not require any child to attend Thrive Public School, nor any employee to work at the charter school.

In accordance with Education Code § 47605(d)(3), if a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduation or completing the school year for any reason, Thrive Public 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 a transcript of grades or report card, and health information.

Be deemed the exclusive public employer of the employees of Thrive Public School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act.

Adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.

Meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code §§ 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or assessments

application to students in non-charter public schools. The school shall certify that its pupils have participated in the state testing programs specified in Education Code section 60600 et seq., as a condition of apportionment of state funding.

Comply in a timely fashion with all reporting requirements, including enrollment, attendance (ADA), standardized testing, and other data and information required.

Ensure that teachers hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools are required to hold under NCLB and other applicable laws. These documents shall be maintained on file at the charter school and shall be subject to periodic inspection by the chartering authority. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to non-core, non-college preparatory teachers.

Comply with the terms of Education Code § 47611 (STRS).

Maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage at all times.

Comply with all applicable laws and regulations relating to charter school facilities.

Agree to standard District requirements and processes regarding supervisorial oversight, funding and services for special education students, inspection and audit requirements as aligned to applicable laws.

Comply with the Brown Act, nonprofit integrity standards, and applicable federal and state laws regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

Be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of the charter school.

Submit a timely renewal application for the charter before the expiration of the initial five year charter term.

The charter school shall consult regularly with its parents, guardians, and teachers regarding the school's educational program.

The charter school shall offer at least the minimum amount of instructional time at grade levels specified in Education Code section 46201 and shall maintain contemporaneous written records of all pupil attendance which shall be made available for audit and inspection in accordance with law.

A charter school that provides independent study shall comply with the same statutory requirements as do other public schools. Only pupils who are residents of San Diego, Imperial, Orange, or Riverside Counties shall be eligible to participate in the charter school independent study program.

A charter school shall not claim state funding for the independent study of a pupil if the school has provided any funds or other things of value to the pupil or his or her parent or guardian that the school does not provide to pupils who attend regular classes or to their parents or guardians. A charter school shall not claim state funding for the independent study of a pupil if the school has provided any funds or other things of value to the pupil or his or her parent or guardian that the chartering authority could not legally provide to a similarly situated pupil in a school within the jurisdiction of the chartering authority.



The petitioner(s) shall provide information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the school, including, but not limited to, the facilities to be utilized by the school, the manner in which administrative services of the school are to be provided, and potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and the County Office of Education.

The petitioner(s) shall provide financial statements that include the proposed first-year operational budget, including start-up costs, and cash flow and financial projections for the first three years of operation.

An annual statement of all receipts and expenditures shall be approved and filed with the chartering authority by September 15.

Annual budget and financial reports shall be submitted to the chartering authority and the San Diego County Office of Education/County Superintendent of Schools:

- a. Preliminary annual budget on or before July 1.
- b. First interim financial report on or before December 15. This report shall reflect changes through October 31.
- c. Second interim financial report on or before March 15. This report shall reflect changes through January 31.
- d. Final unaudited report for the full prior year on or before September 15.

An annual, independent, financial audit report shall be transmitted to the chartering authority, the State Controller, the San Diego County Office of Education/County Superintendent of Schools, and the State Department of Education by December 15.

The petition contains assurances of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for special education students.

1. All eligible students will receive FAPE in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations as well as the policies and procedures of the Local Plan of the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) that funds this charter school.
2. No student otherwise eligible to enroll in the charter school shall be denied enrollment due to a disability or to the charter school's inability to provide necessary services.
3. Facilities used by the charter school do not present physical barriers that would limit an eligible student's full participation in the educational and extracurricular program.
4. The charter school petition shall contain a reasonably comprehensive description of the charter school's educational program as it relates to the provision of special education services, including but not limited to the following:

- a. Implementation of support activities, such as Student Success Teams, prior to referrals for special education assessment.
- b. Procedures for ensuring that students are referred, assessed, and served in a timely manner.
- c. A full continuum of placement options that includes specialized instruction and related services.

Comply with all regulations, reporting and processes associated with Charter School Accountability Plans under the Local Control Funding Formula. Ed. Code § 47606.5.

---

Dr. Nicole Tempel Assisi  
Founder/CEO and Lead Petitioner

## ELEMENT 1: THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

*“A description of the educational program of the school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an ‘educated person’ in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in the program shall include the objective of enabling students to become self-motivated, competent, and life-long learners.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(i).*

*“A description, for the charter school, of annual goals, 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.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii)*

*“The fact is that given the challenges we face, education doesn’t need to be reformed - it needs to be transformed. The key to this transformation is not to standardize education, but to personalize it, to build achievement on discovering the individual talents of each child, to put students in an environment where they want to learn and where they can naturally discover their true passions.” – Sir Ken Robinson, [The Element](#) (2009).*

### I. MISSION, VISION AND SCHOOL FOUNDERS

#### A. MISSION

Thrive Public School will innovate, adapt and expand the concept of a 21<sup>st</sup> century school by leveraging technology and collaboration to provide a rigorous and highly individualized K-8 academic program for diverse students in central San Diego. The foundation of our program is the concept of Aristotle's *Phronesis*: it is not enough to have knowledge; we must know what to do in context and with thoughtful deliberation. Thrive will be a new paradigm for public education that *Engages Learners and Personalizes Learning* to help all students be College-Prepared, Career-Inspired and Community-Minded. To do this we will:

- **INNOVATE** and model the Common Core through an authentic student-centered, mastery-based approach that integrates Project-Based Learning, Blended/Targeted Learning and a “whole child” approach via Exploratory Learning to ensure students gain “real world” understanding of content and learn *how* to learn;
- **ADAPT** by ensuring that our highly qualified educators have the time, resources, skills and support to meet individual student needs based on data, inquiry and ongoing reflection to offer a truly personalized program for each and every student, including multiage grouping, looping and team teaching to best meet students’ needs;
- **EXPAND** the concept of school to incorporate Community Based learning, Family-Facilitated Learning, and Social/Emotional Learning as students work both individually and collaboratively, adapt to new challenges, and employ solid decision-making and self-regulation in the pursuit of ambitious goals.

## B. VISION

Our vision is to establish a school that values:

**Outcomes for tomorrow today:** We will create opportunities for students to succeed beyond academic proficiency to self-actualization, fostering self-regulation in order to maximize long-term academic achievement and global citizenship.

**Ambitious and multi-dimensional teaching and learning:** Our classes will be academically rigorous, engage students, and emphasize application of knowledge. Tools and modalities will match the learning and meet the needs of our diverse population.

**Engaging and supporting families:** Working with families in authentic, mutually beneficial ways, we will value parents as partners in the educational process and provide families with tools and resources to facilitate family learning opportunities outside of school.

**Supportive environment:** We will create a safe environment where all community members can collaborate, learn and become the best version of themselves.

**Effective leaders and operations:** We will implement a clear strategic plan, harness the energy and resource of Thrive and continuously review and adjust practices to assure goals are met.

**Collaborative and engaged staff:** Our high quality staff will be selected through a rigorous process; all staff will work together continuously to improve school through strong professional development and access to tools and resources that impact student and organizational success.

## C. FOUNDERS, BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND PARTNERS

Thrive Public School is being founded by an accomplished and experienced team of San Diego educators and partners, including the High Tech High Graduate School of Education. Our Founding CEO and Director is working in preparation for the opening of our school to ensure the school is ready for students on day one. Several members of our team, including our Founder/CEO, have previously launched and/or managed highly successful charter schools and are familiar with the myriad tasks to be completed, and confident in our team's ability to develop and operate a success new school.

### Dr. Nicole Tempel Assisi, Founder and CEO

Thrive Public School is the realization of a dream for Dr. Assisi, an accomplished education reform leader who has been selected to participate in Charter School Growth Fund's prestigious Entrepreneur in Residence program to help launch Thrive. After starting her teaching career in San Diego Unified School District, Dr. Assisi went on to serve as a founding team member for three of California's most acclaimed charter operators: High Tech High, Camino Nuevo Charter Academy and most recently the Da Vinci Schools in Los Angeles, where she served both as Founding Principal for three of the four schools (two high schools simultaneously launched in 2009, and then a K-8 school opened in 2011) and then as Director of New School Development. Under her leadership, Da Vinci earned widespread recognition for their rigorous and innovative programs, including funding from Hewlett, Gates, Belkin, Northrop and others. Dr. Assisi has served as a professor for both UCLA's Charter School Policy, Finance, and Administration Certificate Program and the Charter and Autonomous School Leadership Academy at Cal

State Dominguez Hills. She also is a frequent speaker on innovation in education and charter management at statewide and regional conferences. Dr. Assisi holds a Doctorate degree in Urban Education from the University of Southern California Rossier School of Education and two Masters' degrees from the University of San Diego and Point Loma Nazarene University.

Our Founding Board of Governors includes experts in education, charter management, child development, non-profit management, business, law and more. These individuals include:

***Dr. Donna Elder, Department Chair of Educational Leadership and Teacher Education, National University – San Diego, Board President***

Dr. Elder is the Department Chair of Educational Leadership and Teacher Education at National University and a highly experienced educational leader. Dr. Elder was the Principal of the Corinne A. Seeds University Elementary School at UCLA (now known as the UCLA Lab School), and served as a superintendent for 15 years in the San Bruno School District, the Orchard School District and the Luther Burbank School District. She worked as a classroom teacher for 18 years at the elementary, middle and high school level; served as a Principal in the Palo Alto Unified and Duarte Unified School Districts; and served as the interim Executive Director of a charter school. She is a frequent speaker and author on teacher effectiveness and coaching, as well as instructional methodologies. Among numerous professional associations, Dr. Elder served as the President of the International Association of Laboratory and University Affiliated Schools. Dr. Elder received her Bachelor of Science Degree from Washington State University, a Master's in Education, Curriculum and Instruction from Texas A&M University, an Administrative Credential from Whittier College and her doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of La Verne.

***Stanley V. Heyman, President, Heyman & Associates, Inc., Board Treasurer/CFO***

Mr. Heyman is the President of Heyman & Associates, Inc., a San Diego-based certified public accounting and consulting firm which provides services to corporations, partnerships, individuals and trusts. He has extensive experience assisting companies from inception to enhancing their growth and profitability in a multitude of areas as well as litigation support services. Mr. Heyman has been a speaker and teacher over the years at local and national seminars as well as an Adjunct Professor in the Master's Program in Taxation at the Anderson School of Management at the University of New Mexico. He holds a Bachelor of Science and a Master's degree in Finance and Accounting from the University of Denver and has been active in professional and civic affairs, including the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, California Society of Certified Public Accountants, Community Foundation Estate & Tax Planning Council, and San Diego Estate Planning Council. In addition, Mr. Heyman has also been a past Chairman of the San Diego Regional Board of the Anti-Defamation League and past chairman of the board of his synagogue.

Prior to forming Heyman & Associates, Inc., Mr. Heyman was co-partner with the firm Eisenberg & Heyman, a certified public accounting and financial consulting firm located in San Diego. Previously, he was the partner-in-charge of the tax department for the San Diego office of Coopers & Lybrand, an international accounting and consulting firm, and partner-in-charge of the tax department for Touche Ross & Co. in Albuquerque, New Mexico and Denver, Colorado.

***Kerry Flanagan, Chief of Staff, California Charter Schools Association***

Kerry Flanagan serves as the chief of staff of the California Charter Schools Association, a membership organization supporting California's 1,130 charter schools serving more than 500,000 students. Kerry began her career in public education in 1991 as a secondary education teacher in Virginia. She then worked as an education consultant supporting various reform efforts in traditional urban and

suburban public school districts in California, Arkansas, Louisiana, Michigan and Florida. Kerry worked at San Diego City Schools for several years in various positions where she was responsible for strategic planning, organizational development and the authorization and oversight of the district's charter schools. She served as the chief of staff for her last 1.5 years with the district. Kerry received her B.A. in Secondary Education, Social Studies from Virginia Wesleyan and a M.A. in Political Science from San Diego State University.

**Ben Boyce**

Ben Boyce comes from a long line of educators, which surely fuels his passion to educate the public on the most challenging issues facing San Diego and our state. He holds a management position with one of San Diego's top public affairs firms, bringing to his clients more than a dozen years of experience helping many of California's top businesses and public agencies achieve their objectives by building consensus and seeking creative solutions.

Ben has led several successful land development outreach programs in both Northern and Southern California, helping clients to win approvals for more than 15,000 homes across the state. His strategic outreach programs and materials have helped water and wastewater providers effectively communicate with more than 6 million Southern California ratepayers. He has been recognized with more than 20 awards for his efforts, including top outreach program in the state and the nation's best website for a government utility.

Ben has also successfully managed crisis communications for several public-agency and private-sector clients, and has advocated on behalf of his clients in a number of daily newspapers, trade publications and broadcast interviews. His efforts to support residents of a crumbling apartment complex were recognized as Orange County's 2008 crisis PR of the year. Ben is active in the San Diego and Orange County business communities. He serves on the Board of Directors of the San Diego County Taxpayers Association and was previously a founding director of Community Roots Academy charter school in Aliso Viejo. He also served two terms on the Board of Directors of the Orange County chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.

**Thomas Aurelio Davis, *Consultant to Board of Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS) and the California Association of Latino Superintendents and Administrators (CALSA)***

Thomas Aurelio Davis has over thirty years of experience in education. After receiving his B.S. degree in Biology at the University of San Diego in 1974, he taught secondary school Life Science, Biology, Bilingual Science and Spanish courses in both private and public school systems in the San Diego area for fifteen years. In 1988, Tom co-wrote and managed an Eisenhower Grant from the Department of Education to help restructure the science curriculum in the Sweetwater Union High School district's ten middle schools. That experience led to his moving into the K-12 instructional software and service business. Since 1990, Tom has worked for a number of companies in various capacities, selling and marketing educational software and service solutions. In 2005, Tom formed a consulting business, (Net4EdAccess, LLC) which focuses on connecting business to education, executive school superintendent searches, the achievement gap and providing solutions for school systems in the following areas: English Language Learners, Students with Special Needs and Students At-Risk of Dropping Out. Tom currently serves as a consultant to the Board of both the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS) and the California Association of Latino Superintendents and Administrators (CALSA). Tom is also a Board member of Computers 2 San Diego Kids, a San Diego non-profit working to bridge the digital divide with low income families and those less fortunate. He has also worked on behalf of the National Migrant Education Association and their Bi-National Conference. Tom is married and has three children.

In addition, Thrive already has partnered with several prominent organizations in education reform, including:

**Charter Schools Growth Fund, Entrepreneur in Residence ([chartergrowthfund.org](http://chartergrowthfund.org)):** Thrive's Founder and CEO, Dr. Nicole Tempel Assisi, has been selected to participate in this prestigious incubator program. Charter Schools Growth Fund (CSGF) is a non-profit venture capital fund working to transform K-12 education by investing in innovative charter school networks that offer outstanding educational options for underserved students. Its Next Generation School initiative supports entrepreneurs developing next generation schools in the charter sector. Many of these schools will blend learning by combining online learning technology with the key tenets of successful bricks-and-mortar CMO's, creating personalized learning experiences for students, and delivering dramatically better results.

**Next Generation Learning Challenges ([nextgenlearning.org](http://nextgenlearning.org)):** Thrive was selected as one of 20 initial grantees in Wave IV of this highly competitive national grant program, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Thrive received an initial planning grant of \$100,000, a launch grant of \$150,000 and matching funds to help fund critical start-up costs in the next year of planning and development. NextGen Learning Challenges (NGLC) are designed to accelerate educational innovation through applied technology to dramatically improve college readiness and completion in the United States. To date, the program has awarded more than \$40 million in grants to 75 grantees. This multi-year program provides investment capital to expand the use of proven and emerging learning technologies, collects and shares evidence of what works, and fosters innovation and adoption of solutions which will dramatically improve the quality of learning in the United States, particularly for low-income students and students of color. NGLC is managed by EDUCAUSE in partnership with the League for Innovation in the Community College, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the International Association for K-12 Online Learning. Funding for Wave IV was provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

**High Tech High Graduate School of Education, School Leader Fellowship ([hightechhigh.org](http://hightechhigh.org)):** Thrive is expected to participate in the pilot Fellowship program. The Fellowship will be an intensive, year-long residency, course work and new school development. The fellowship will also include ongoing support as the Director opens the school. Thrive's CEO also will participate in a leadership cohort. The HTH Graduate School of Education currently offers teacher credentialing, school leadership and teacher leadership Master's in Education programs, and a variety of professional development offerings focused especially on innovative, authentic, and rigorous project-based learning environments. High Tech High operates eleven highly recognized charter schools in San Diego.

**Illuminate Education, Inc. ([illuminateed.com](http://illuminateed.com)):** Dr. Assisi is currently collaborating with Illuminate, a leading provider in student data and assessment management, to create an "On-Track Dashboard" that will provide Thrive with actionable, real-time data from Thrive's various instructional programs. This new dashboard will expand on Illuminate's existing systems that include grading/report cards, attendance, special education tracking, discipline and more in a comprehensive data management system that includes a parent portal for parents and students to access information. The new dashboard system will allow Thrive's educators to track individual, class, sub-group and other groupings, tied directly to our specific curriculum and assessments, and identify quickly where extra supports are needed, assign coaching to teachers, and help drive instructional decision-making.

**California Charter Schools Association (calcharters.org):** Dr. Assisi has long had a close collaboration with the staff of the California Charter Schools Association (CCSA). CCSA is a membership and professional organization that, among many other things, provides individualized support throughout every phase of new charter school development, including technical assistance, workshops, web resources and templates, and location-specific guidance and advocacy support.

**The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation** Since 1999, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation has invested more than \$600 million to significantly improve student achievement in urban areas through strong leadership to support great teachers, school district efficiency to push more resources to the classroom, and more options for parents seeking high-quality public education for their children. They focus on improving urban school districts because urban districts serve one of every four American children. These districts represent the greatest opportunity to dramatically improve student achievement. They also invest in specific areas where they believe they can provide value to the field, based on their view that: to become effective, efficient organizations that serve students well, American school districts and schools need strong, talented leadership; every person and every dollar in school district central offices and schools must be focused-efficiently and effectively-on students, and districts must be held accountable for results; all students do better when they are supported by a great teacher; every child should have the opportunity to attend a high-quality public school; and best practices should be shared.

**The Girard Foundation** The Girard Foundation is a private, grant-making foundation established in 1986. The mission is to foster innovation in K-12 education, with the goal of improving student outcomes in San Diego County. The Foundation supports projects and programs that: demonstrate new, more effective methods of teaching and learning; improve the ways schools operate; are designed around concepts that are transferable and/or scalable; and produce data that can lead to change.

**Young, Minney & Corr, LLP (mycharterlaw.com)** has provided comprehensive legal expertise regarding the founding of Thrive. Young, Minney & Corr, LLP (“YM&C”) is proud to be California’s most experienced, knowledgeable and respected firm working in the unique area of charter school law. As a leader in charter school representation since the passage of California's Charter Schools Act of 1992, YM&C offers expertise in every facet of charter school creation, expansion and operation – including charter school petitions, renewals and revocations, employment and labor law, non-profit incorporations, board governance, facilities, student issues, policy development and much more.

In addition, several prominent experts in charter school management and education reform are serving as advisors to Dr. Assisi and Thrive Public Schools:

*Marcia Aaron, Executive Director, KIPP:LA*

*Kate Farrar, Managing Director of Alumni Affairs, Teach for America Los Angeles*

*Dr. Pedro Garcia, Professor of Clinical Education, Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California; Former Superintendent, Nashville Public Schools*

*Jerry Gumpel, Esq., Partner, Sheppard Mullin*

*Maria C.R. Heredia, Esq., Principal & Shareholder, California Counsel Group, Inc.; Former General Counsel, CA Charter Schools Association*

*Ilene Ivins, Regional Special Education Coordinator, Aspire Public Schools*

*Diane Levitt, Director of Corporate Social Responsibility, Belkin; Executive Director, The Safe Cities Foundation*

*Ana Ponce, Chief Executive Officer, Camino Nuevo Charter Academy*



Dr. Darlene Robles, *Professor of Clinical Education, Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California; Former Superintendent, Los Angeles County Office of Education*  
 Robert Schwartz, *Senior Advisor, New Teacher Center; Co-Chair, Education and Society Program and Academic Dean, Harvard Graduate School of Education*  
 Jed Wallace, *President and CEO, California Charter Schools Association*  
 Daniel Zaragoza, *Real Estate Professional, Prudential*

## II. STUDENTS THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL WILL EDUCATE

### A. TARGET STUDENT POPULATION

#### 1. PROJECTED ENROLLMENT

Thrive Public School (“Thrive”) opened in September 2014 with approximately 60 children in grades K and 6. It is the vision to expand each year to ultimately reach 756 students in grades K-8 in our 5<sup>th</sup> year of operations. Following Kindergarten, classes will be arranged in mixed-age grouping of students taught by a collaborative team of teachers, which we refer to as “Core” clusters rather than segregated grade levels:

Core 1: Kindergarten  
 Core 2: 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade  
 Core 3: 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade  
 Core 4: 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade  
 Core 5: 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade

The following are our enrollment projections for the term of this charter:

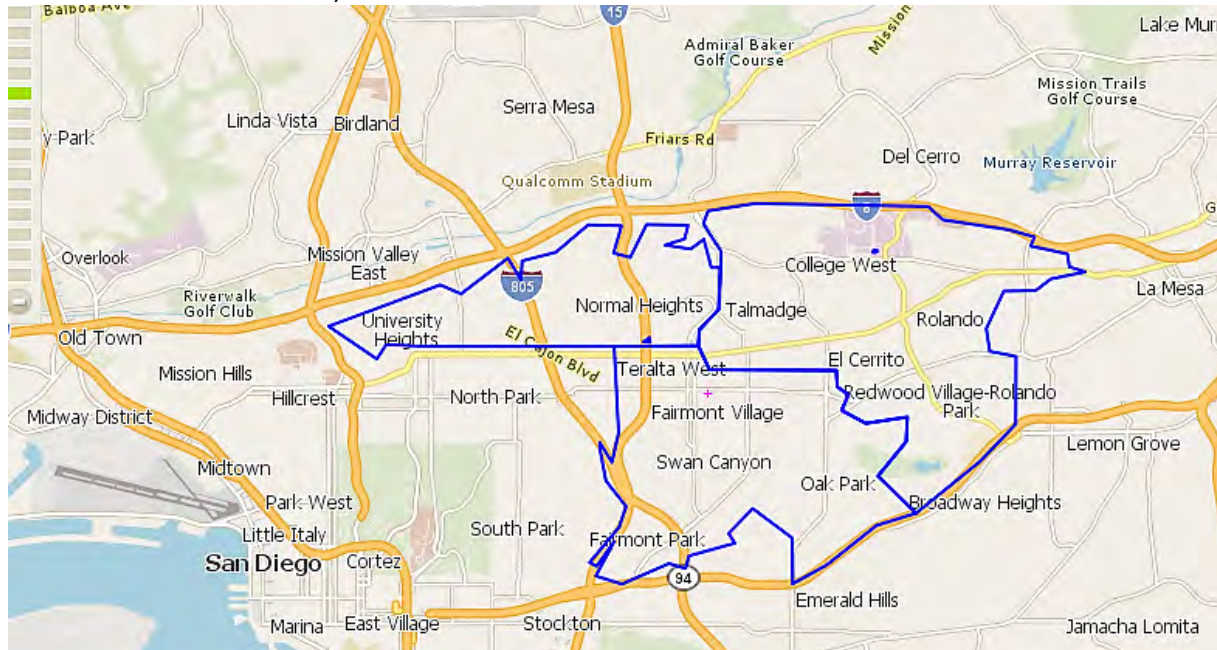
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
<b>Kindergarten</b>	40 (2 classes)	40 (2)	84 (4)	84 (4)	84 (4)
<b>1<sup>st</sup> grade</b>		40 (2)	84 (4)	168 (6)	168 (6)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> grade</b>					
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> grade</b>		20 (1)	42(2)	84 (4)	168 (6)
<b>4<sup>th</sup> grade</b>					
<b>5<sup>th</sup> grade</b>	20 (1 classes)	42 (1)	84 (4)	168 (6)	168 (6)
<b>6<sup>th</sup> grade</b>					
<b>7<sup>th</sup> grade</b>		26 (1)	42 (2)	84 (4)	168 (6)
<b>8<sup>th</sup> grade</b>					
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>756</b>

\*Class sizes are estimates and may be increased or decreased based upon demand. Classes will not exceed twenty-eight (28) students.

\*\* Classes are blocked (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> together; 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> together, etc.) to show our multiage grouping as shown by shaded area

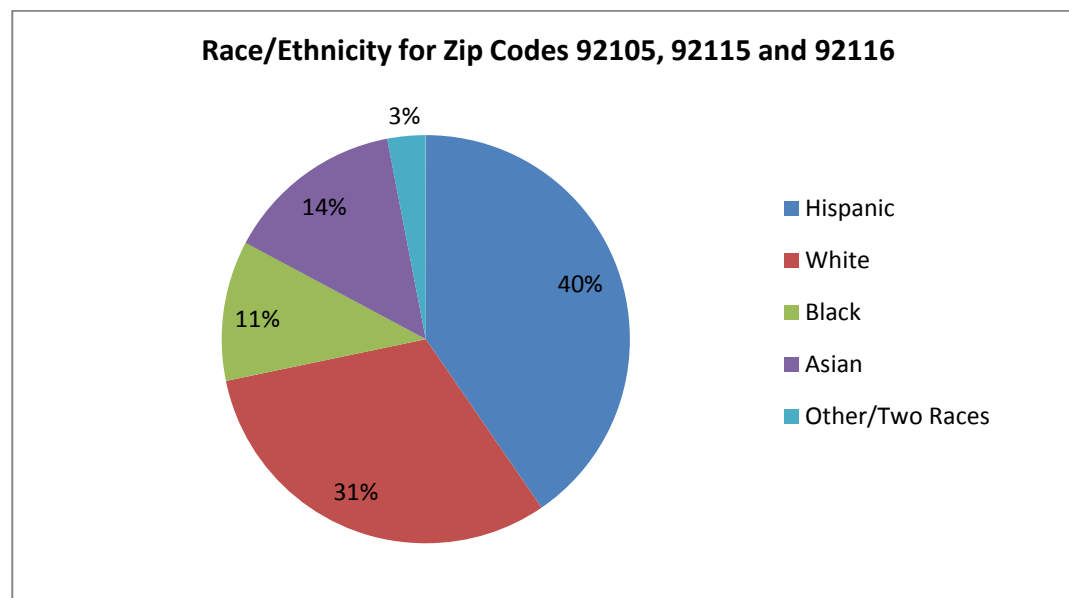
## 2. SURROUNDING COMMUNITY:

Thrive Public School will be open to all students who wish to attend, though we will focus our recruitment efforts (see *Element 7: Racial and Ethnic Balance*) on the Mid-City area and the Crawford and Hoover Clusters, which include portions of zip codes 92105, 92115 and 92116, as illustrated by the map below (see *Section II.B., Existing Public Schools*, below, for a detailed map of the Hoover and Crawford Cluster boundaries):



Source: [healthycity.org](http://healthycity.org)

We have selected this Mid-City area for our first school due in large part to the racial/ethnic and socio-economic diversity in the community, as illustrated in the following charts. In this area, 40% of residents are Hispanic, 31% White, 11% Black, and 14% are Asian. ([www.factfinder2.census.gov](http://www.factfinder2.census.gov) (2010 Census).)



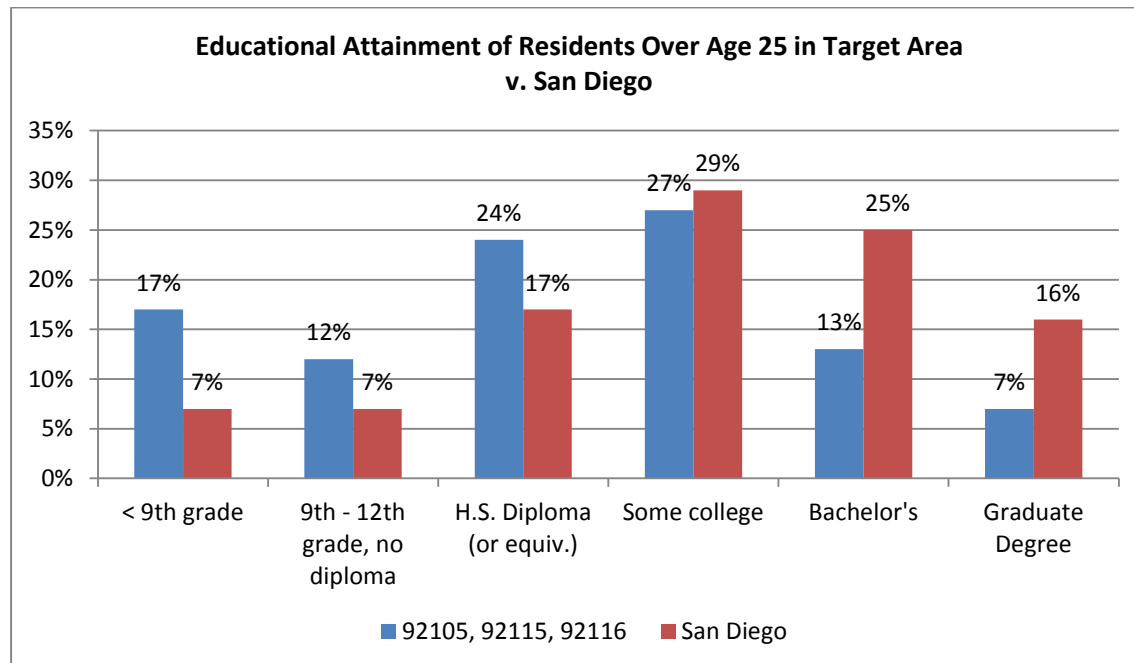
Source: [healthycity.org/census](http://healthycity.org/census) 2010.

This community also includes broad socio-economic diversity, ranging from upper-income households to significant percentages of families with children who live below the federal poverty line -- in 2010, the federal poverty threshold for a family of four was \$22,050. ([aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/10poverty.shtml](http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/10poverty.shtml).)

	92105	92115	92116
Total Population	69,813	58,560	31,680
# Households	20,181	20,625	16,322
<i>Income Level</i>			
< \$15,000	18.4%	17.3%	11.3%
\$15,001 - \$24,999	16.7%	12.3%	11.1%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	31.3%	25.2%	26.4%
\$50,000 – \$99,999	24.7%	28.4%	33.1%
\$100,000+	8.8%	16.8%	18.2%
%age of Families with Children Under 18 Below Fed. Poverty Level in Preceding 12 months	31.8%	21.6%	24.7%

Source: [factfinder2.census.gov](http://factfinder2.census.gov) (2010 census).

Not surprisingly, this income range is consistent with a broad range of educational attainment levels in the community. While in broader San Diego City, 41% of residents over age 25 hold a Bachelor's degree or higher, in the Mid-City area, only 20% have attained this level of education. Of greater concern, 29% of residents over 25 in Mid-City do not have a high school diploma (compared to 14% citywide).



Source: [factfinder2.census.gov](http://factfinder2.census.gov) (2010 census).

Thrive Public School will serve these families as a true neighborhood school. Following in the model of other highly successful mixed-race, mixed-socio-economic public charter schools throughout California and beyond, we aim to create a centralized hub in our community where families with young children of all races, ethnicities, home languages, income levels and parent education levels can come together to help build a neighborhood school that is reflective of the community in which we live. We believe that success in the modern world demands the ability to communicate and collaborate with people very different than oneself, both online and in person, and that our schools should reflect the broader diversity of our neighborhood and broader world.

#### **A. EXISTING PUBLIC K-8 SCHOOLS**

As noted, we will focus our outreach efforts on the Hoover and Crawford Clusters, illustrated by the map below (though all students will be welcome to attend):

*Source: sandi.net.*

Across the Hoover and Crawford Clusters, there are currently 20 traditional public elementary schools, three middle schools and one K-8 span school, plus six charter schools. Seventeen of the traditional public schools and two of the charter schools operate on SDUSD's year-round schedule.<sup>1</sup> While most of

<sup>1</sup> Schools on the year-round schedule are: Carver, Central, Cherokee Point, Clark, Edison, Euclid, Fay, Garfield Elementary, Hamilton, Hardy, Ibarra, Joyner, Language Academy, Marshall Elementary, Normal Heights, Rosa Parks, Wilson, plus America's Finest Charter and Darnall Charter.

Students arrive with academic and social needs that commonly exceed the capacity of schools to respond effectively. School readiness among students varies dramatically, and socioeconomic and language barriers clearly play a role in the stresses on these children, not to mention the naturally occurring diversity in learning styles and abilities that is found within any student group.

School (Grade Levels)	2012-13 Enrollment	2012 API Score	2011 State Rank/ Similar Schools Rank	%FRP L	% ELs	% Stud. w/ Disab.	% Hispanic/Latino	% Black	% Asian
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS									
Adams ES (K-5)	356	797	4/8	99%	52%	13%	67%	17%	6%
Carver ES (K-5)	231	747	2/2	100%	35%	20%	44%	22%	21%
Central ES (K-5)	815	787	4/6	100%	81%	10%	77%	5%	16%
Cherokee Pt. (K-5)	466	737	2/2	100%	58%	9%	81%	8%	5%
Clay ES (K-5)	296	808	5/9	100%	22%	16%	38%	26%	8%
Edison ES	592	860	7/10	100%	66%	9%	86%	7%	4%
Euclid ES (K-5)	620	765	3/4	100%	79%	6%	77%	9%	13%
Fay ES (K-5)	717	751	2/3	100%	63%	10%	60%	12%	20%
Franklin ES (K-5)	244	789	4/4	100%	61%	12%	53%	10%	28%
Garfield ES (K-5)	349	835	6/9	100%	50%	16%	68%	16%	2%
Hamilton ES (K-5)	573	(1)	1/1	100%	74%	11%	77%	8%	10%
Hardy ES (K-5)	420	903	9/8	62%	37%	9%	28%	6%	36%
Ibarra ES (K-5)	509	749	2/4	99%	73%	12%	65%	14%	19%
Joyner ES (K-5)	695	728	2/1	100%	62%	9%	78%	9%	10%
Marshall ES (K-5)	526	700	1/3	100%	70%	9%	46%	25%	26%
Normal Heights ES (	318	798	4/8	99%	48%	13%	72%	15%	--
Oak Park ES (K-5)	586	752	2/1	100%	38%	11%	36%	29%	27%
Rolando Park ES (K-5)	225	731	2/2	85%	40%	24%	70%	14%	4%
Rosa Parks ES (K-5)	929	774	3/5	100%	78%	12%	84%	3%	11%
Rowan ES (K-5)	255	755	2/3	100%	34%	16%	53%	26%	5%
MIDDLE SCHOOLS									
Clark (6-8)	1,090	730	2/6	100%	35%	14%	77%	8%	12%
Mann (6-8)	921	744	3/10	100%	37%	17%	51%	20%	23%
Wilson (6-8)	629	704	2/7	100%	43%	17%	72%	12%	11%
K-8 SPAN SCHOOLS									

Language Acad. (K-8)	1,003	853	7/4	51%	23%	6%	53%	16%	2%
----------------------	-------	-----	-----	-----	-----	----	-----	-----	----

School (Grade Levels)	2012-13 Enrollment	2012 API Score	2011 State Rank/ Similar Schools Rank	%FRP L	% ELs	% Stud. w/ Disab.	% Hispanic/Latino	% Black	% Asian
<b>CHARTER SCHOOLS</b>									
America's Finest Ch. (K-8)	206	665	1/--	39%	38%	13%	65%	13%	8%
City Heights Prep Acad. (6)	46	Opened 2012							
Darnall Charter K-6)	588	788	4/7	100%	60%	11%	69%	15%	10%
Harriet Tubman Village Charter (K-8)	315	816	5/10	83%	44%	8%	43%	36%	4%
Iftin Charter (K-8)	395	762	3/9	99%	88%	6%	2%	86%	3%
Pacific American Acad. (K-5)	132	664	1/--	77%	36%	15%	54%	21%	3%
SD Global Vision Acad. (K-6)	193	823	6/10	100%	13%	14%	27%	46%	--

Source: [Dataquest.cde.gov](http://Dataquest.cde.gov) (2012 API Reports).

(1) Hamilton ES had a testing irregularity in 2012; all data reported is from 2011.

-- = school in Program Improvement status.

Thrive Public School sees diversity – racial/ethnic, home language, socio-economic status, learning style – as a community asset that should be embraced and celebrated in our school. We are confident that our highly personalized model of instruction will ensure that all of these diverse students meet our high expectations.

### III. THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL 'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND FRAMEWORK FOR INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN IS ALIGNED WITH OUR TARGET POPULATION

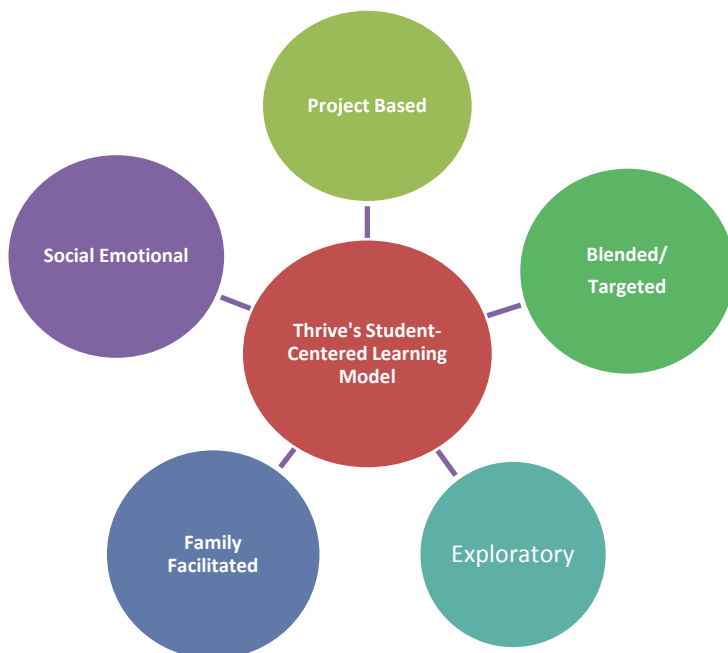
Like many in education reform, we believe that models of education developed during the industrial age and still in effect today are outdated and impractical for our ever-changing, rapidly developing global economy. We believe education is not simply about drilling students to learn concrete facts and skills found in standardized tests, but rather that a 21<sup>st</sup> century education, in order to be truly successful for both students and our nation's future, must emphasize aptitudes such as problem-solving, critical and creative thinking, inquiry, collaboration, communication and invention. While these aptitudes necessarily depend on a foundational knowledge base that is detailed in content standards, we believe the strongest value in education is learning *how* to learn. Thus, our overarching goal is to ensure that as each student masters the new Common Core standards across each discipline, we also develop each individual student's confidence and passion for learning.

*"If we teach today as we taught yesterday, we rob our children of tomorrow."* – John Dewey, [Democracy and Education](#) (1944).

At Thrive, our blended model of instruction will incorporate an integrated approach based on the best thinking in education today – learning will be both active and personalized. Students will acquire knowledge by *doing* and *experiencing* learning through hands-on, personalized inquiries and expressions of learning through a highly engaging project-based learning model that emphasizes critical thinking and problem-solving abilities crucial for success in secondary school, college and the global workforce. With students we talk about these different modes of learning as **Learning to Learn, Learning to Do and Learning to Be**. A visitor to our school will notice how incredibly active our students are – these are not students sitting quietly in rows as teachers lecture, but rather students are seen debating ideas energetically, collaboratively creating machines and models, and expressing their interpretations of literature through art. Student work will be continuously showcased and celebrated in culmination exhibitions of project work in which families and community members come see student presentations of their learning. Our students will be engaged, inspired and motivated to learn.

Similarly, instruction will be targeted to the needs of the student, with intensive individualized instruction through blended learning, one-on-one and small group instruction, and a constant review of student achievement data. We believe every child can meet high expectations for success – beyond “proficiency” in core subjects – if the school/instructors adapt to meet individual students’ needs, rather than expecting students to adapt to the school’s needs. The core tenets of our model (described in more detail in *Section IV.C. Teaching Methodologies*, below) are based on “best practices” and leading innovations in public education. These include:

**Project-Based Learning:** Our hands-on, minds-on approach to learning will develop students’ critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, motivation and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in communication and cooperation. Instead of treating each subject as an isolated silo, we recognize that in the real world, math, science, English Language Arts, history, technology and the arts all intersect. Cross-disciplinary teacher-created projects based on students’ passions will enable students to learn via active engagement and “doing,” incorporating best practices from our partners at the Buck Institute, High Tech High and leading researchers.



**Blended/Targeted Learning:** Through interactive tech-based learning programs such as ST Math, Lexia, Achieve 3000, Brain Pop and many more, students will proceed at their own pace to master skills and concepts. These online learning tools provide instant data about each student’s progress against state standards, enabling teachers to target instruction and ensure each student is

progressing. Based on real-time student achievement data and reflection, our multiage (mixed-grade) classroom teachers will use blended learning and flex time to offer “Just Right Instruction” – what students need, when they need it. For example, as some students work on classroom laptops, teachers



can work with small groups and provide one-on-one support. Curriculum such as Readers' and Writers' Workshop, CGI Math and more will ensure each student can proceed at an individualized level and pace.

**Exploratory Learning:** Through a "whole child" approach based on acclaimed theories of human development such as Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory, Thrive will ensure that students have ample opportunity to explore and develop all areas of their talents and interests, beyond the four core academic subjects. Tinkering, robotics, arts, chess, visual and performing arts and other opportunities will enhance creative and inquisitive thinking, bolstered by partnerships with organizations and businesses in the STEAM (Science Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) fields.

**Family-Facilitated Learning:** We believe that parents are kids' first teachers. Thrive will build on all the teaching parents already do, as well as the natural curiosity that children have about the adult world. Rather than asking families to do busy work at home, we will support families (and provide tutors for parents who are unavailable) to have rich dialogue and fun activities with their children. We will select tasks have been shown to increase student success and even improve family dynamics by creating "home-fun" rather than "home-work." This is another opportunity for students to learn things more deeply one-on-one with adults instead of a one-size-fits-all high-level approach to learning. We will provide intensive family support, workshops and guidance to help meet families' needs and enable all families to fully participate in their students' learning on a daily basis.

**Social Emotional Learning:** Interwoven in all we do at Thrive will be an emphasis on students' self-actualization through high standards for student behavior, applied learning, student choice and continuous feedback. We will emphasize solid decision-making and self-regulation in the pursuit of ambitious goals, and yet our students also will understand that some of the greatest learning can come from reflection on "failures." Students will be active participants in designing and directing their own learning, reflecting on their own learning modalities and styles, and presenting culminating exhibitions and student-led conferences to help them develop awareness and responsibility for their own growth.

#### IV. THRIVE WILL PREPARE STUDENTS TO BE EDUCATED CITIZENS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

*"The sky is not falling today, but it might be in fifteen or twenty years if we don't change our ways, and all signs are that we are not changing, especially in our public schools." -- Thomas L. Friedman, The World is Flat (2005).*

- As illustrated in the preceding section (and more fully in *Section IV.C. Teaching Methodologies*, below), the innovative Thrive model is designed to create a new paradigm for 21<sup>st</sup> century education – one that authentically meets the needs of students today, as well as today's global economy. Thomas Friedman describes a relevant education that best prepares Americans for the global economy as one that emphasizes the importance of instilling curiosity, love of learning, discernment, creativity, and interdisciplinary thinking. (Ibid.) Defining an "educated person in the 21st century" is perhaps more important now than at any time in the past several decades. New technologies and the globalization of the world economy are fueling societal change at a pace unprecedented in human history. In just the last decade, we have witnessed remarkable change in commonly used technology devices – the so-called "democratization of technology": Digital photos and videos are available instantly (versus film-based), easily manipulated via software such as Photoshop, and distributed in real time on a global scale via social media such as Facebook (more than 1 billion users), YouTube (1 billion unique visitors

each month), and Twitter (550 million users); and countless websites and blogs – all changing forever the way humans interact on a global scale.

- Search engines such as Google (more than 1 billion search requests a day in 184 countries) and Yahoo (700 million each month) have dramatically changed the way we access information, including educational content. Where school librarians – and school budgets -- once had to work diligently to replace outdated texts as advances in science, social science and more, today students can access the best thinking in medicine, archeology, astronomy, and an ever-changing economy and political world in real time.
- Personal technology devices including iPods/MP3 players, iPhones/smart phones, Kindles/e-readers, iPads/tablet computers and more – all introduced within the last 5-10 years -- have revolutionized the production, distribution and accessibility of news and entertainment content in a dramatic way, shifting the way billion dollar industries operate.

The impact of these changes on children cannot be overstated. Even young children today use new definitions for words like “cloud” and “server” that did not exist just a few years ago, and many young children are not only consuming, but creating, new digital content on a daily basis. Children today have access to unimaginable amounts of information at an instant, and have come to expect instantaneous access to highly personalized content. And yet, much has been made of the fact that our educational model is designed for an antiquated age.

Schools have struggled to prepare students to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century digital age without having a clear understanding of what future jobs will require, and without a sufficiently defined set of skills required for success in the workplace of the future. While the educated 21<sup>st</sup> Century worker certainly requires strong English and math skills, there is a growing recognition that problem-solving skills, an ability to think critically and analytically, and a true passion for learning are no longer ideals, but imperatives.

Many in education reform talk about the need for students in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to be adaptable, hard-working and reflective, and to think critically and creatively in order to prepare for the “real world.” Yet our educational system’s structures and practices do not reflect these same values in the way we deliver instruction. Its “do as we say, not as we do.” We aim to change that.

First, our learning structure will **adapt** to the needs of each student and his/her family. Our schedules will encompass flexibility, mixed-age grouping based on student mastery and not age, small group and one-on-one learning facilitated by teachers and technology, and meaningful family facilitation of learning to expand opportunities beyond our school walls.

Our student-centered expectations will not be limited to standardized state targets, but rather focused on each student’s abilities and levels of mastery to ensure that we push students to self-actualization. We recognize that this takes **hard work** – it is much easier to teach a group of students the same thing at the same time in the same way, but the evidence demonstrates that this is ineffective. Our faculty, administrators, and family educators will be held to high expectations to consistently push their own development as facilitators of student learning and model the concept of “lifelong learning” for our students. Learning *how* to learn will be critical at Thrive – the goal at all levels of our organization is not to be “good enough” but rather to continuously grow and develop further.

Just as our students will be encouraged to learn from their mistakes, so too will our instructional team be driven to continuously **reflect**, refine, try differently and grow. Data will be a constant presence in our efforts, both as a tool to track student growth but also to focus professional development and

coaching for teachers. Beyond that, we will emphasize a simple “gut check” for our team members: Would I send my own child here? Are we providing each student here with the school they deserve?

Ongoing professional development and coaching will enable our high quality teachers to exercise a high degree of autonomy in our project-based/blended instructional model. Teachers will **think critically** and **creatively** to meet student needs, adjusting their own practice and mixing students’ experiences, modalities and interfaces to truly embrace a new learning style and structure.

Finally, throughout all of our efforts we will emphasize a reimagined concept of Aristotle’s *Phronesis*, characterized as practical wisdom, common sense, and prudence. This concept will apply to our teaching at Thrive in the ways we discuss and reflect on *praxis* -- the applied “**real world**” use of knowledge and skills versus theoretical thinking. While student mastery of core skills and concepts is important, we believe that we also must foster students’ social/emotional intelligence so that they can self-regulate their choices, behaviors and actions, both academically and socially.

Through these signature strategies and our instructional methodologies (described below), Thrive will ensure that each of our students matriculates from Thrive exhibiting our core values for an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:

- **Commitment:** Persists with passion to meet high expectations; continuously strives to grow and develop; demonstrates work ethic and self-motivation that contributes to success in school and in life.
- **Collaboration:** Works with others in small and large groups both as a participant and at times as a leader; participates thoughtfully and effectively in our democracy; respects and embraces diversity.
- **Communication:** Actively listens and engages, conveys ideas and solutions effectively in writing and orally; uses technology fluently to give, receive and enhance communication; resolves conflicts in a constructive manner.
- **Critical Thinking:** Asks questions, tests hypotheses, refines, revises and persists; applies logical and creative-thinking skills in problem-solving and decision-making;
- **Creativity:** Explores and demonstrates curiosity; applies learned skills to new situations; innovates and invents.

Thrive’s Habits of Heart and Mind, adapted from the Institute for Habits of Mind ([instituteforhabitsofmind.com](http://instituteforhabitsofmind.com)), will be interwoven in all aspects of learning and life at Thrive. “Not only are we interested in how many answers students know, but also in knowing how to behave when they DON’T know. Habits of Mind are performed in response to those questions and problems the answers to which are NOT immediately known. We are interested in observing how students produce knowledge rather than how they merely reproduce knowledge. The critical attribute of intelligent human beings is not only having information, but also knowing how to act on it.” (Costa, A. and Kallick, B., *Describing 16 Habits of Mind*, [instituteforhabitsofmind.com](http://instituteforhabitsofmind.com).) Our school leaders and faculty will develop detailed descriptions and rubrics incorporating our core habits of heart and mind in the context of the Thrive school environment and curriculum, with a focus on:

- Persisting
- Questioning and Posing Problems
- Thinking and Communicating with Clarity, Precision, and Empathy
- Creating, Imagining, and Innovating
- Collaborating

We also will touch on the following additional Habits of Heart and Mind:

- Managing Impulsivity
- Thinking About our Thinking (Metacognition)
- Striving For Accuracy and Precision
- Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations
- Gathering Data through All Senses
- Responding with Wonderment and Awe
- Taking Responsible Risks
- Finding Humor
- Flexible thinking
- Thinking Interdependently
- Learning Continuously

#### A. HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS

*“Many schools identify themselves as ‘child centered’ . . . [y]et few adapt their curriculum and assessment model to reflect each child’s uniqueness and perspective of the world. Instead, children are given a general curriculum to follow and must adapt their skills accordingly.” – Vincent Rizzo, The Howard Gardener School for Discovery, Multiple Intelligences Around the World (2009).*

While our hybrid, authentically student-centered model of instruction may be innovative, Thrive will incorporate and integrate some of the most proven, successful curriculum methodologies, educational philosophies that have withstood the test of time, and current “best thinking” in the fields of neuroscience, developmental psychology, and education to ensure that each and every one of our students meets and exceeds state standards. The underlying, child-centered philosophies of education that support student engagement at Thrive are closely connected to the powerful learning methods described in the works of John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Maria Montessori, Howard Gardner, John Goodlad, Linda Darling-Hammond, and others. We start with the simple premise that “Education should be child centered; we should begin planning the lesson by looking at where the child is developmentally.” (John Dewey, 1902.)

We believe learning best occurs when:

1. Students feel safe, nurtured and supported in a caring school environment with clear, fair and consistent expectations for student and adult conduct.
2. Students and adults are all expected to joyfully push their own limits, with appropriate guidance and enthusiastic support. We believe that children want to be challenged, and given high expectations for their own futures. They must then be given appropriate, individualized support to achieve the stated goals, and meaningful opportunities to demonstrate their accomplishments and successes. We believe teachers must continuously analyze student achievement data, then scaffold learning and differentiate instruction in order to lead all students to academic growth and achievement.

3. Instruction is authentically child-centered and presented in a meaningful context that is relevant to students' lives. While educational pedagogy has long recognized that there are different ways of knowing and learning the same information, many schools continue to emphasize a "one-size-fits-all" approach to teaching. For far too long, schooling has been "premised on the notion that there exists a fixed world that the learner must come to know" and that the construction of new knowledge has not been "as highly valued as the ability to demonstrate mastery of conventionally accepted understandings." (Brooks and Brooks, 1999.)
4. Students are active, not passive learners. True mastery of content best occurs when students are given the means to explore, question, solve problems, reflect, make mistakes, try again, and demonstrate their knowledge. The more actively engaged children are in the learning process, the more effectively they will understand and retain concepts and skills that are delineated in the state standards, and even more importantly, the better equipped they will be to handle the challenges of the future.
5. Teachers have ample resources, including time, training and coaching, to develop their skills and talents. We believe it is imperative that teachers study and understand the best thinking in education, learn directly from experienced lead teachers, and collaborate with their peers in order to consistently be learners themselves in the context of our school community.
6. Data is used consistently, continuously and effectively to adapt curriculum to individual student's needs. Effective assessment tools (online/offline, formative and summative) and efficient data systems from Illuminate Education, Inc. will help educators continually assess and refine their curriculum's impact on each individual child throughout the school year.
7. Collaboration, cooperation and communication skills are valued. Understanding and respecting diverse perspectives and people, effectively communicating and building relationships all are imperative in today's tech-based global economy. Most importantly, we believe learning best occurs **when children have confidence and believe they can succeed**. When children are given the opportunity to express their skills, talents and intelligence across a variety of contexts, they are able to realize more success and thus develop more confidence. "If we can mobilize the spectrum of human abilities, not only will people feel better about themselves and more competent; it is even possible that they will also feel more engaged and better able to join the rest of the world community in working for the broader good." (Howard Gardner, Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons, 2006.)

**B. THRIVE WILL ENABLE STUDENTS TO BECOME SELF-MOTIVATED, COMPETENT AND LIFELONG LEARNERS**

*"If you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original." --  
Sir Ken Robinson, The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything, 2010.*

We believe that when children are given the opportunity to express their skills, talents and intelligences across a variety of contexts, they are able to realize more success and thus develop more confidence. The program at Thrive has been carefully designed to develop students to be self-motivated and competent, who view *themselves* as life-long learners:

- Self-motivated learners: Decades of research on true motivation found that three elements are needed for students to be self-motivated: autonomy, mastery, and a sense of purpose. (Pink, 2010.) Through our student-centered differentiated, hands-on instruction, (autonomy) students come to understand that they can achieve and they can experience the rewards and confidence that come with achievement (mastery). As students develop confidence in their own abilities they approach learning enthusiastically, for their own benefit and the benefit of others (purpose), fostering an authentic *self-motivation* to learn.
- Competent learners: Through “backwards design” and a relentless focus on student achievement data, teachers will ensure that learning objectives are met by students. Students will continuously be asked to reflect on their own learning, helping them gain understanding of the way they learn best. Students who can effectively express how they learn best can ‘own’ their education and be successful and enthusiastic life-long learners.
- Life-long Learners: Beyond mastering specific skills and facts, students at Thrive will learn *how* to learn. Student learning at Thrive will be structured in the context of real-world scenarios with meaningful context for the individual learners. In this way, students actively participate in their own learning, seeing the relevance and applications of their education and their daily lives. Thus, well beyond the mastery of specific skills and knowledge, students at Thrive will develop a *lifelong* ability to continue to learn.

Students at Thrive will develop a solid foundation that will serve them well in secondary school, college and beyond.

### C. TEACHING METHODOLOGIES

*“[T]o understand is to discover, or reconstruct by rediscovery, and such conditions must be complied with if in the future individuals are to be formed who are capable of production and creativity and not simply repetition.” -- Jean Piaget, To Understand is to Invent (1973).*

Thrive’s integrated and balanced instructional approach will provide a standards-based curriculum that is both skills-based and hands-on, in order to ensure each and every student meets our high expectations for success, well beyond achieving proficiency on state standards. We emphasize mastery of content over proficiency – authentic understanding and the ability to apply learning, in context, across realms.

The following provides a more detailed description of Thrive’s instructional methodologies. To be clear, instruction at Thrive starts first with the state standards, including the new Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, plus the State’s frameworks for instructional design, all of which drive the creation of lesson plans and the assessment of both student and teacher achievement. Thrive teachers will collaboratively plan units of study using the ‘backward design’ guidelines described in *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998). This strategy advises teachers to “begin with the question: What would we accept as evidence that students have attained the desired understandings and proficiencies – before proceeding to plan teaching and learning experiences.” There are three steps to this process:

1. *Identify desired results:* Beginning with the CA State/Common Core Standards, teachers will determine a three-tiered hierarchical set of learning expectations:

- Enduring understandings: How will students internalize the standards such that they are linked to an authentically meaningful big picture understanding of the material?
- Information and skills worthy of familiarity: What prior knowledge do my students need to make meaning of this new information?
- Important knowledge and skills: What foundational knowledge and skills do students need to master this material?

As teachers select and prioritize these learning expectations, they will be guided by thinking about the extent to which the idea, topic or process: (1) represents a ‘big idea’ having enduring value beyond the classroom; (2) resides at the heart of the discipline, and is tied directly to standards and standardized testing; (3) requires “uncoverage” to the extent that parts of these concepts are difficult for students to understand; and (4) offers potential for engaging students.

2. *Aligning Assessments to the Desired Results:* Recognizing that teachers will be shaping their standards-based instruction into larger projects and thematic units, it is essential that they assess mastery in an explicit way. Teachers will assess throughout the unit of study using a variety of assessment methods including both formative and summative assessments. Methods will include online assessments, quizzes or tests aligned with the style students will encounter on standardized-assessments as well as more comprehensive or authentic checks for understanding such as informal checks, student observation, 1:1 conferencing, performance tasks and projects. Teachers will match an appropriate assessment method to each standard and establish and articulate clear criteria for reaching proficient performance.

3. *Differentiating Instruction to Meet the Needs of All Learners:* Now that the learning expectations (knowledge and skills) have been identified, teachers will work together to determine the most effective teaching methods and select the appropriate materials and resources to achieve their goals with all of their students. Teachers will design innovative instructional strategies by differentiating the content, process, and products delivered to students in order to provide equal access for all learners (including English language learners and students with special needs). Teachers will write effective standards-aligned lesson plans and utilize a repertoire of research-based instructional strategies to increase student achievement.

As teachers implement their lesson plans, they will continuously be assessing their own efficacy and impact with individual students in the classroom utilizing specific data and analysis of sub-groups. Our instructional program will be driven by student data gathered by the teachers themselves in order to make informed decisions about assessment, curriculum, pedagogy, and student services. Teachers will continuously look at student work and questions in order to inform, structure and refine their instructional practice.

The following describes in more detail the methodologies we will employ to ensure our students will master the content standards:

- (1) Project-Based Learning
- (2) Blended/Targeted Learning
- (3) Exploratory Learning
- (4) Family-Supported Learning
- (5) Social-Emotional Learning

## 1. PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

*“At their best, projects can serve a number of purposes well. They engage students over a significant period of time, spurring them to produce drafts, revise their work, and reflect on it. They foster positive cooperativeness in which each student can make a distinctive contribution. They model the kind of useful work that is carried out after the completion of school in the wider community. They allow students to discover their areas of strength and to put the best foot forward; they engender a feeling of deep involvement or flow, substituting intrinsic for extrinsic motivation.” – Mihali Csíkszentmihályi, Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience (1990).*

Through project-based learning, our students will engage in complex and challenging tasks and problem-solving, both independently and in small groups, engaging in a depth of learning that creates true understanding for each individual student in a very personalized way, beyond rote memorization of facts. Our PBL curriculum will include Public Presentations of Learning, Exhibitions, and Digital Portfolios. Through projects, our faculty will be able to accomplish a number of objectives in an engaging, relevant way for students of all ages, and enable students to:

- *Acquire, communicate, and investigate worthwhile knowledge in depth.* Instead of dividing instruction into disconnected learning blocks, students will be able to view school subjects as connected and interrelated, much like real life. As students explore topics in a variety of ways and through various sources, they will learn to relate what they are learning to their own lives. When students view their learning as having personal relevance, they put more effort into their schoolwork and achievement. (Willis, 1995; Csíkszentmihályi, 2009.) Activities will be assigned for home exploration that will help students bridge school learning and their lives at home, with the intent of helping students develop problem-solving and decision-making skills.
- *Integrate reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking across the curriculum.* As noted by the California Science Standards Framework: “Effective science programs use standards-based connections with other core subjects to reinforce science teaching and learning. Reading, writing, mathematics, and speaking skills are all needed to learn and do science. In self-contained classrooms, teachers incorporate science content in reading, writing, and mathematics.” (CA Science Framework, p. 13.) Narrative and expository literature and high interest trade books will serve as key resources for thematic instruction. Extensive research documents the power of reading and writing across the curriculum to create “active readers and writers by engaging students in authentic literacy tasks that emerge naturally from interesting and worthwhile topics and ideas.” (Vogt, 2010; see also Heibert, 1994, Fielding and Pearson, 1994.)
- *Make choices, interact, collaborate, and cooperate.* Students will explore topics individually, in small groups, and together as a whole class. Reading and writing tasks will be authentic, motivating, relevant, and contextualized. Students will make appropriate choices based on their interests, abilities, and needs.
- *Participate and learn, regardless of ability, level of language development, or background.* One of the most important advantages of cross-curricular thematic instruction is that it is flexible and adaptable. Thematic learning allows teachers to implement a variety of instructional approaches that best meet the students’ needs. For example, while some students may need extra practice



with a strategy or skill, others may need additional time for writing or independent reading. This flexibility is central to thematic teaching.

*“Perhaps most important, [projects] offer a proper venue in which to demonstrate the kinds of understandings that the student has (or has not) achieved in the course of the regular school curriculum.” – Howard Gardner, Multiple Intelligences Around the World (2006).*

While many schools today incorporate some aspect of project-based learning, at Thrive, projects will offer two key elements: First, our projects will be comprehensive and all-encompassing – projects are not a side element of our curriculum or minor portion of the instructional schedule, but rather a core part of student learning that permeates and integrates activities at our school. This enables students to make real connections between subjects and deepen their understanding of skills and content. Faculty will carefully plan and detail all aspects of projects before starting, including alignment to standards across all subject areas. During common planning time, teachers will collaboratively create projects using a common project planning template and resources from experts such as the Buck Institute, and then use ongoing student achievement data to continuously refine their plans to ensure the needs of each individual student are being met.

Second, at Thrive it will be imperative that our projects are not simply hands-on; they must be authentic and meaningful, allowing children to see the real-world implication of the academic skills and knowledge they master. More importantly, they are able to develop and apply problem-solving, critical and creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and other crucial skills in a variety of practical contexts and settings and see how “real people” utilize these skills in the everyday workplace. Students gain confidence in their own abilities and the possibilities for their own futures, motivating them to persist in their education.

In this way, projects at Thrive will help students become self-directed. Engaging in hands-on, real-world project work helps learners “construct meaning by using recognition, memorization, conservation of constancy, classification, spatial orientation, temporal orientation, and metaphorical thinking. Helping students to be conscious of what their senses are telling them, encouraging them to visualize the information for processing, and then prompting them to ask questions and figure out solutions on their own that teachers can best help students develop the tools they need to:

- Gather, organize, and make sense of information,
- Become cognitively engaged and internally motivated to achieve, and
- Experience learning as a dynamic process of creating and changing.”

(Betty Garner, Getting to Got It!: Helping Struggling Students Learn How to Learn (2007).) Similarly, working with their peers in a collaborative fashion, including reviewing and critiquing each other’s work and refining drafts based on peer review, helps students develop a sense of investment in their own work by giving them a real voice in the process. (Ron Berger, An Ethic of Excellence: Building a Culture of Craftsmanship with Students (2003).)

Finally, project-based learning has significant benefits for English learners as well. Karen Carrier, in “Key Issues for Teaching English Language Learners in Academic Classrooms,” (Middle School Journal, November 2005) identifies three key challenges English Learners face in the academic classroom: (1) the

amount of time required for second language acquisition; (2) the dual job of ELs – learning content and learning the language; and (3) the need for multiple modes of input and output.

Through project-based learning, teachers will be able to frontload key vocabulary and concepts, and engage in multiple modes of instruction within one class period, therefore meeting the needs of diverse learners. Project-based learning also naturally allows for multiple modes of input and output, providing students with real-world applications and built-in visuals and realia to contextualize new learning.

There is a wealth of resources available to our faculty online to help them develop ideas and lesson plans for project-based work, including the acclaimed Buck Institute for Education (bie.org), Edutopia, pbl-online.org and dozens of others. In addition, we plan to partner with established schools such as High Tech High that already have been implementing successful projects to learn from their experience. Thrive will use these proven techniques in daily classroom practice, lesson planning for cognitive engagement, and guidelines for conducting reflective research and inquiry on our campus.

## **2. BLENDED/TARGETED LEARNING**

A critical tool in our effort to personalize learning for each student will be the use of blended learning. Students at Thrive will be able to use the ever-growing body of rich on-line curriculum to practice skills and engage in fun, game-like learning that adapts continuously to their individual needs. Instruction in phonetics, reading, math, science, history and much more can be found on high-quality free websites such as [www.khan.org](http://www.khan.org), [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov), [pbskids.org](http://pbskids.org), [coolmath-games.com](http://coolmath-games.com), and many more. In addition, our math curriculum will be based on the highly successful MIND Institute program, including their acclaimed Spatial Temporal Math software, which has been consistently shown to realize dramatic increases in proficiency levels at schools that previously were among the lowest performers in their states. [http://mindresearch.net/cont/research/re\\_ResultsAtScale.php](http://mindresearch.net/cont/research/re_ResultsAtScale.php) (See *B.2. Scope and Sequence, Math*, below for more information about the math program.) We also will utilize a standards-based programs like Lexia, Reading Plus, Brain Pop, Reading Eggs and more (see below) to enhance classroom learning.

Through this interactive software, learning is easily differentiated as students can choose from different activities based on their preferences, and then as they engage in the curriculum, the system gives them instant feedback (e.g., praise for correct answers, or encouragement to try again) as they master the content. In many programs, the technology adjusts to meet student needs so that students who are ready to proceed rapidly through content get increasingly levels of difficulty automatically, while those who need more time on a specific task do not advance as rapidly.

Blended learning provides a number of advantages to teaching and learning, which translate into accelerated student achievement and mastery of content:

- *Differentiated learning technology to quickly address students' academic needs.* We anticipate that students – especially those at upper grade levels – will enter Thrive with a wide range of different skill levels, with some potentially several grades behind. Quality education software programs can meet students at their levels and provide individualized curriculum and instruction to each student. This allows students who are behind to build the core skills they need to eventually master the grade level standards while also enabling students that are on grade level or above to push ahead. Teachers can create more differentiated lessons plans and pacing

guides for groups of students in the same class and leverage the technology to meet their students' unique needs.

- *Real-time data delivered to teachers to improve instruction on a daily basis.* Software programs provide real-time data to teachers so that teachers know the exact levels of their students on an on-going daily and weekly basis. This allows teachers to develop and refine their instructional strategies to ensure that each and every student is meeting the defined criteria for academic success. Teachers are more effectively able to make immediate adjustments during a lesson or in preparation for a lesson because they are provided with organized, accessible, and timely data on their students' progress.
- *Format and delivery mechanism engages students and facilitates small group instruction.* Today's tech-savvy students are engaged when they are using quality technology programs in the classroom. They want to participate in their learning and quality educational software programs offer a highly interactive, engaging experience for students. Because the programs meet students at their levels, students are much less likely to be lost or bored and more likely to feel a sense of accomplishment as they progress through programs. Leveraging technology effectively can also help a teacher group students by levels and having some students work on the technology while others are working directly with the teacher in a smaller group.
- *Unique offerings for students with special needs.* Thrive has chosen software programs that are flexible and can meet the needs of our student population. ST Math, for example, the acclaimed online math program from the MIND Institute, includes very little language and focuses on numbers, objects and concepts. This has proven to be particularly effective for English Learners. Additionally, Achieve 3000, a literacy program, has customized supports for English Learners built into the software. Blended learning also is particularly impactful as it allows for teachers to most effectively provide targeted one-on-one and small group instruction while other students work online.
- *Potential to extend instructional time for students.* All of the software programs we have selected are web-based and thus students can use them at any time, including during their family-facilitated learning time at home. This enables Thrive to essentially extend the school day for students (we plan to ensure that students also have computer access on campus before and after school) and allow students to continue working on their favorite programs. Because students enjoy the programs, they are more likely to use them outside of the school day. This is particularly essential for students who will be in need of remedial work to catch up to grade level standards.
- *Increased exposure to technology for a student population with limited access.* 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs require employees to be proficient with technology. Starting in Kindergarten, students will have regular access to technology and be able to master the practical technology usage and application skills that are imperative in today's world. In addition to interactive software, students will learn specific tech skills and engage in research and creation of presentations with technology. Programs such as freetypinggame.net, lessonplanet.com, and research sites such as yahooligans.com, bensguide.gpo.gov, lawforkids.org and dozens more will be used to enrich student learning.

**a. Blended Learning Curriculum**

While the field of online learning is rapidly developing, the following are some of the core programs we anticipate using at Thrive:

Curriculum	Subject	Level	Description
<b>Study Island</b>	ALL	ALL	Web-based tool to review and reinforce key concepts through standards-based instruction and practice, as well as an assessment tool for math, reading, writing, science, and social studies. Helps students in K-12 master state-specific, grade-level academic standards.
<b>ST Math</b>	Math	Core 1-3	Acclaimed program successfully implemented for more than 10 years, based on research from UC Irvine. ST Math, the Mind Research Institute's core program, is designed for elementary students and provides courseware that employs a learner's spatial-temporal reasoning abilities to explain, understand and solve multi-step math problems.
<b>Reading Plus</b>	Language Arts	Core 4-5	Provides individualized instruction in expository reading comprehension, vocabulary and fluidity. As a student's Lexile level increases, the text adjusts to increase the challenge for that student furthermore, student reading guides increase based on student needs. Reading Plus has been particularly successful with at risk students, English Learners and other high-need populations.
<b>BrainPop and BrainPop Jr.</b>	ALL	ALL	Helps introduce new topics and illustrate complex concepts in math, reading, writing, science, and social studies through animated videos.
<b>Complete Curriculum</b>	ALL	ALL	Downloadable and printable workbooks for math, reading, writing, science, and social studies.
<b>Dream Box</b>	Math	Cores 1-3	Integrates individualized instruction with embedded assessment to support students in building understanding in math through explanation of concepts, virtual manipulative-based learning and assessment of growth.
<b>Razz Kids</b>	Math	Core 1-3	The award-winning program where K-5 students go to read — anytime, anywhere. With over 27 levels of text, students with varying abilities can benefit from rich content and practice.
<b>College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM)</b>	Math	Cores 4-5	A program designed in collaboration with university professors and created to help students develop an understanding of the mathematical concepts rather than mimic a teacher's procedures without understanding the concepts. Used in collaboration with the math instruction your child receives in core classes. Provides practice problems, descriptions and team challenges, as well as a message board to ask questions and get help.
<b>Think Through Math</b>	Math	Cores 1-3	Designed for students in grades 3 through high school, Think Through Math (TTM) is a learning system that provides quality math instruction and supports students – and teachers – in unprecedented ways. Developed by teachers and technologists to help students prepare for rigorous Common Core

Lexia	Language Arts	Cores 1-2	Online system for differentiated reading practice, embedded assessment and targeted instruction designed for lower elementary students who are learning to read, primarily in grades K-2. The on-line activities are designed to be multisensory games with engaging settings and characters. With norm-referenced performance measures, Lexia provides teachers with recommendations for the appropriate intensity of instruction in order to improve reading achievement of on-level and at-risk students. It also provides skill-specific lesson plans for teachers or other support providers to complete with students based on their needs. Since students using this program are working on foundational reading skills, there is a significant focus on word study including phonological, phonemic awareness, structural analysis, fluency, vocabulary & comprehension.
-------	---------------	-----------	--

In addition to core subject learning via sophisticated online software, pending funding via grants and other financial support,<sup>2</sup> we plan to offer our students myriad opportunities to explore, create, investigate and invent through a tinkering lab, robotics, digital media such as photographs and videos, game creation, and more (see Exploratory Learning, below). In addition to learning skills relating to keyboarding, word processing, digital editing, presentations, databases and more, students also will learn about responsible and ethical use of digital information and electronic communication.

Thrive hopes, pending funding, to ultimately have a 2:1 computer ratio for all students in the school by the end of this charter term. Initially, we plan to establish a computer lab and/or mobile computer carts to ensure each student has frequent exposure to computer learning. We will provide students with safe and secure internet access for learning. Our faculty will have extensive training in implementing and using on-line curriculum and assessment tools (see *Section VII. Professional Development*, below). Parents also will be offered training to ensure equitable access to these tools – through various grant programs we hope to provide computers for families to use at home, but we also will ensure parent access to computers on our campus.

#### **b. Real Time Assessment Data**

Perhaps most critically, online learning provides an invaluable level of efficiency in the way programs assess student content mastery via frequent and ongoing assessments. Programs such as ST Math and Lexia will be utilized at all grade levels to provide teachers and school leaders – and parents -- with frequent measures of student performance. As students use these programs, data is automatically generated for teachers to see which skills students have mastered, which require more instruction, and so on. These reports are tied directly to state content standards so that summative data shows student mastery of specific standards as well as diagnostic data about areas in need of further development.

<sup>2</sup> For purposes of this charter petition, we have included in our budget projections the Public Charter Schools Grant Program (PCSGP) \$575,000 start-up grant administered by the California Department of Education. Thrive also has received the initial support of the Charter Schools Growth Fund for start-up assistance, with the potential for additional school launch funding post-charter approval, as well an initial planning grant from NextGen Learning Challenges, funded by The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. We have had additional preliminary discussions with other private funders in San Diego who are eager to support our innovative model once our charter is approved.

Teachers and school leaders can easily generate individual, sub-group, grade level and school wide achievement data in an efficient way, so that lessons, professional development of faculty and more can all be tailored directly to student needs.

This online data, in addition to a variety of formative and summative assessment tools (end-of-unit curriculum tests, informal checks, observation/dialogue, standards based quizzes/tests, open-ended prompts, performance tasks and presentations) will enable our faculty to develop and refine their instructional strategies and provide targeted support to ensure that each and every student is meeting the defined criteria for academic success.

#### **c. Review of Student Achievement Data**

At least monthly, the Director will facilitate data conferences to engage teachers in conversations, reflection, and planning based on student achievement data. In order to support this process, the school will systematically collect and analyze student data on key demographic, behavioral, and proficiency indicators. We will collect data through the implementation of a robust set of diagnostic and benchmark assessments that complement the state standardized test data (CAASPP, CELDT, etc.) and provide continuous information about student progress towards standards. The school will implement diagnostic assessments such as the NWEA MAPS or Pearson GRADE and GMADE. These formalized diagnostic assessments will provide data at least three times per year that informs student grouping, Lexile levels, math placement, intervention and enrichment needs, and pre- and re-teaching needs.

Furthermore, regular assessments aligned to the Common Core standards will provide ongoing data about students' real-time mastery of grade level standards. Formative diagnostics will be part of daily teaching practice. Teachers and students will collaborate to set measureable goals that personalize individual achievements for students of varying abilities. Data-driven conversations will also focus on teacher-generated grades to ensure that grading policies are fair, equitable, and focused on student proficiency (as opposed to behavior, homework completion, or compliance).

#### **d. Data Management System: Illuminate**

Utilizing a data management system such as Illuminate, a leading provider in student data and assessment management ([illuminateed.com](http://illuminateed.com)), the school leadership will be able to track student growth on state standards and run analyses such as pivot tables to compare growth on two dimensions, correlation analyses (to address assumptions about student demographic factors and links to student achievement), and identify patterns of behavior and achievement that can be addressed through instructional and behavioral policies and practices. School leaders will also be able to access teacher efficacy in real-time, ensuring that teachers who are struggling to achieve intended outcomes in specific subject areas, or with specific students, receive targeted training, support and professional development to improve their teaching practice.

In our opinion, a vital, next step in education is creating a system for tracking of student performance and assessment data. We want to measure what matters in K-16 student success. Specifically, we are envisioning a dashboard of metrics that aligns with a multi-faceted assessment tool culminating in a *K-16 Success Indicator Dashboard* (K16SID). Based on recent educational trends, research and 21st century needs, we believe that the factors that indicate students' success beyond K-12 are college and career readiness indicators, such as:

- Deeper Learning

- Common Core Mastery
- 21st Century Skills
- Habits of Heart and Mind

In order to effectively track these indicia over time in a meaningful way, we are working with Illuminate Education to develop a single comprehensive tool that will allow educators to compile and disaggregate data to support easy analysis and prediction of student success from Kindergarten through college. Measurements may include: Common Core assessments, End of Year Portfolios, developmental assets evaluations, satisfaction surveys, benchmarks, reading levels, course work completion, early college enrollment, academic achievement, attendance and demographic influences. We believe this system will provide a powerful tool to bring together granular and nontraditional data to help inform instruction, improve schools and predict the success of students earlier in order to offer more effective early interventions and critical support programs. Such a tool could also provide students/family, staff, and more with an understanding of what students know, are able to do, and need, to reach their goals.

Data-driven conversations will be Director-led initially, but eventually will be the responsibility of departmental and grade-level leaders, who will develop the capacity to design common formative assessments, run data reports, and analyze data to inform instruction. Departments and grade levels will be provided with common planning time that they will use to examine data at least monthly. Even as the responsibility transitions to departmental leads, the Director will continue to supervise the use of data by teachers (through meetings with department leads and collection of data conferencing agendas and notes, and to monitor actual student progress through weekly examination of the data. In particular, the Director will monitor the progress of all subgroups (particularly language learners and special education students), and patterns of academic achievement or behavior that may indicate declining progress or inequitable outcomes among different sub groups. Any problematic data trends will be directly addressed through meetings with individual teachers and departments, and through the examination of policies that may be contributing to declining achievement or inequities. At all times, teachers will be expected to articulate data patterns in their classrooms and describe what they are doing to raise the achievement of all students, and close any gaps that may exist.

Explicit instruction – particularly in reading, writing and mathematics – will play an important role within the overall delivery of instruction. Skill-specific academic needs will be identified through formative and summative assessments and subsequently addressed through direct instruction. Phonics, reading fluency, reading comprehension, sentence structure, grammar, and arithmetic are examples of skill areas that will be introduced and reinforced explicitly by teachers working with students individually, in small groups, and as a whole class. Teachers will work with students, based on data, to provide “Just in Time Support” to focus lessons on what students actually need, incorporating CGI strategies (see Math, below) and realia.

### **3. *EXPLORATORY LEARNING***

At Thrive, success will not be defined simply based on academic prowess in the four core subject areas, but rather far more broadly in ensuring each and every student demonstrates a wide array of skills and talents that go well beyond literacy, math, science and social science – a “whole child” approach. Drawing from acclaimed theories of human development such as Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence Theory, Thrive will ensure that students have ample opportunity to explore and develop all areas of their talents and interests, beyond the four core academic subjects. As Gardner has explained, rather than measuring intelligence as one finite figure or concept, “human cognitive competence is



better described in terms of a set of abilities, talents, or mental skills, . . . *intelligences*. All normal individuals possess each of these skills to some extent; individuals differ in the degree of skill and in the nature of their combination. . . . [I]ntelligences always work in concert, and any sophisticated adult role will involve a melding of several of them.” (Howard Gardner, Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons (2006).) Specifically, Gardner has identified eight broad areas of intelligence, some of which align clearly with the four core academic subject areas, while others cross subjects and realms:

- *Linguistic intelligence* involves sensitivity to spoken and written language, including the ability to use language to accomplish certain goals; to listen perceptively and read critically; to learn languages; to express oneself persuasively or poetically.
- *Logical-mathematical intelligence* is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking: the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically, conceptually, and abstractly; the interest in experimentation, puzzles, investigations and cosmic questions.
- *Musical intelligence* involves the capacity to distinguish the whole realm of sound, and in particular, to discern, appreciate and apply the various aspects of music (pitch, rhythm, and mood) both separately and holistically.
- *Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence* involves the ability to use one's body in highly differentiated and skilled ways, for both goal-oriented and expressive purposes; the capacity to exercise fine and gross motor control of one's body.
- *Spatial intelligence* involves the ability to accurately perceive the visual world and to re-create, manipulate and modify aspects of one's perceptions, even in the absence of the relevant visual stimuli.
- *Interpersonal intelligence* relates to the ability to work cooperatively and communicate, verbally and non-verbally, with other people; the insight to understand others' intentions, motivations and desires; and the judgment to recognize the biases underlying sources of information.
- *Intrapersonal intelligence* involves the ability to understand oneself; the motivation and focus to study independently; and the wisdom to reflect.
- *Naturalist intelligence* (added to Gardner's theory in 1997) involves the ability to recognize, collect, analyze and classify plants, minerals, animals, flora, fauna and even cultural objects such as cars and sneakers. Those who excel in naturalist intelligence exhibit a greater sensitivity to nature and their place within it, the ability to nurture and grow things, and care for animals.

*“[Multiple Intelligence] theory is an agent of cognitive equity: it enables a greater diversity of individuals to use their minds well. In turn, the theory is a democratizing tool: it facilitates the development and expression of ideas by those who might otherwise remain largely unheard in their communities or in the wider society.” – Mindy Kornhaber, What's Policy Got to Do With It?, Multiple Intelligences Around the World (2009).*



In keeping with this balanced approach to learning, Thrive plans to incorporate learning – both via direct instruction as well as integration throughout the core curriculum – in the arts, robotics, engineering, technology and movement. We call these classes “Exploratory,” and will offer students a “wheel approach” of rotating (8-week) mini-classes in Engineering (Robotics, Tech, Tinkering) and VAPA (Visual and Performing Arts) through programs like Gateway to Technology, Project Lead The Way, Mindstorm, Lego First Robotics, and more. All these courses will be standards-aligned and incorporate core content learning, and allow students will see themselves as makers and creators of their own curiosities.

#### **4. FAMILY-FACILITATED LEARNING**

Another way in which Thrive will innovate, adapt and expand our concept of school is through our emphasis on the home-school connection for the success of all children. Thrive will not give students “homework,” but rather will provide parents/guardians with training and support to engage their children in high-quality learning activities at home. Thrive will provide curriculum and training to support parents to be engaged in learning. The emphasis here is to provide families the opportunity and support to add to what their children are doing at school in meaningful ways beyond rote memorization work and worksheets. Staff will provide fun and engaging activities as extensions to the classroom work (For example, students in kindergarten learning about Carbon Footprints are encouraged to practice recycling at home, students who are learning about constellations are encouraged to look up at the night sky with their family members, etc.) . For families who have challenges providing this aspect of our program, trained tutors (our faculty plus community volunteers, parents and others) and flexible scheduling will ensure that each student receives the same learning as his/her peers receive at home (a student could take care of recycling in after school programs, watch a sky video with a mentor, or engage in other activities as appropriate). Our family-school collaboration includes the following key components:

##### **a. Parent Education**

In addition to a one day Family “Jump Start” Workshop in August, all families will be invited to attend a series of workshops throughout the year. These workshops will be led by Thrive’s school leaders and faculty, as well as outside consultants. Each workshop will be scheduled to maximize parent attendance and participation, and will include topics such as:

- Cognitively Guided Development of Math Skills
- Readers/Writers Workshop
- Handwriting without Tears
- Right-Brain Learning
- Executive Skill Functioning
- And many more

In addition to review of online resources for use at home, families will be coached to ask deeper questions when working with their child at home. In math, for example, they will be encouraged to ask questions like:

- *Why does this problem or algorithm work this way?*

- *How else can you solve this problem?*
- *How many different methods can you use to get the correct answer?*
- *Can you take the solution and work backwards to get the numbers you started with?*
- *How can this concept be applied to the real World?*
- *Can you create a real-world problem that would require the use of this type of problem or algorithm?*

Thrive also will offer recommended reading for our family educators, including: *How to Talk So Kids will Listen*, by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish; *The Whole Brain Child*, by Daniel J. Siegel, M.D. and Tine Payne Bryson; *Mindset*, by Carol Dweck; *Five Minds for the Future*, by Howard Gardner; and *Good to Great at the Social Sector*, by Jim Collins. We will provide excerpts and summaries (translated) of these books and facilitate family access to the recommended materials. The Thrive website also will provide detailed resources by subject-area and grade level for family educators above and beyond curriculum sources used at school such as ST Math. For example, we will list helpful resources such as:

- Handwriting Without Tears, a curriculum designed to facilitate the gain of printing skills which leads to writing fluency. [www.hwtears.com/hwt\\_a](http://www.hwtears.com/hwt_a)
- 6+1 Trait Writing (also referred to as “The Six Traits of Writing”), a writing instructional model in which teachers and students use a set of characteristics/traits to develop and analyze written work. The traits include ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. <http://educationnorthwest.org//resource/949>.
- Literacy & Learning Strategies, a series of free, downloadable learning guides designed to introduce a variety of literacy strategies appropriate for a variety of grade levels: <http://www.litandlearn.lpb.org/strategies.html>
- National Library of [Virtual manipulatives](http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html): This site has various virtual math manipulatives that parents can use with their learners. (<http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html>)
- [Illuminations](http://illuminations.nctm.org/): This resource, from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, has math lessons and activity pages that parents can download. <http://illuminations.nctm.org/>
- [Illustrative Mathematics Project](http://www.illustrativemathematics.org/): This site has examples of problems that illustrate the Common Core State Standards for Mathematical Content. <http://www.illustrativemathematics.org/>

#### **b. Curriculum and Assessments**

All necessary curriculum will be provided to family educators and supervised by our certified faculty. Curriculum materials and related instructional strategies will be selected based on their rigor and their relevance to supporting our goal of achieving proficient to advanced performance on state standards and preparing students for secondary school.

#### **c. Family Involvement in School Life**

A multitude of research demonstrates that active family involvement in a child’s education not only impacts a child’s academic success and attitudes towards education, but even community support for schools. To facilitate a close home-school connection, Thrive will employ several key strategies:

*Parent Communication* will be frequent, comprehensive and multi-pronged based on the “best practices” of similar schools in similar communities, to ensure the strongest possible connections between home and school. Given the prevalence of Spanish-speaking families within the community,

communication efforts will occur in both Spanish and English, and, and other languages as needed. The following are just some of the activities that will occur:

- **Thrive Public School newsletters** will convey important details about upcoming school events and news, celebrate student successes, and provide worthwhile tips and strategies for parents in a simple, accessible format.
- **Classroom communications** in form of a website, phone calls, or newsletters will update families on projects and activities in the classroom.
- **Parent/student/teacher conferences** (which we call student-led conferences) will be scheduled during the year to discuss academic progress, motivation, social behaviors, strengths and concerns, home support, and goals for learning. Informal conferences will be conducted as requested by parents/guardians, teachers, or students.
- **Orientation meetings** will be held before the start of the school year, or mid-year as needed, for newly enrolled families.
- **Monthly community meetings** will provide regular opportunities for parents to dialogue with the Director about important issues on an ongoing basis, and the Director and other staff will make presentations on the school's progress, current initiatives, issues, and school priorities.

In addition to curriculum-related workshops for family-facilitated learning at home, workshops will also be offered on topics of interests to parents, including:

- Understanding state mandated testing and interpreting standardized test results
- Presentations by local service providers regarding legal, employment, health and human services available in the community
- Health and nutrition
- Emergency preparedness and emergency aid
- Drug & alcohol awareness
- Parenting strategies through programs like the acclaimed Love and Logic ([www.loveandlogic.com](http://www.loveandlogic.com))

*Family Events, Activities and Support* at Thrive will similarly be comprehensive and multi-pronged, designed to benefit both our school and the families we serve.

**Before and after-school programs** (pending funding, such as ASES funds that will be available after Year 1 of operations) will be offered to support the needs of working parents. Parents will be able to drop off their children at school starting at 7:00 a.m. We offer a comprehensive before and after-school program from 7:00 a.m. in the morning, and until 6:00 p.m. each day, supervised by instructional aides and other part-time staff. This program takes place in classrooms as well as on the play yard and includes breakfast in the morning for students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch. As funding and capacity allows, we intend to offer a variety of enrichment activities and clubs after school, including structured homework support, tutoring and activities in the arts, technology, sports and more.

Our **parent volunteer program** will include a variety of opportunities for families to volunteer in support of our school, including helping with outreach, planning family events, volunteering in the classrooms reading with children or helping teachers prepare (making copies, etc.), helping in the school office, and more. Parents will be encouraged to volunteer each school year.

School-sponsored **Family Events**, such as an Annual Picnic to build community and get to know one another and the school's faculty and staff, and Exhibitions and Celebrations of Learning at the end of significant projects and units, where students will have the opportunity to show what they know to family and community members at school.

In addition to the timely ways parents and guardians will receive pertinent information and the many activities planned to involve them in their child's education at Thrive, parents will have opportunities to participate in school advisory and governance structures (see *Element 4: Governance Structure*). Parents also will be asked to support our extensive outreach efforts in the community to recruit new families to the school. (See *Element 7: Racial and Ethnic Balance*.) Finally, bi-annual surveys will be distributed to gauge the success of these programs and our efforts.

## 5. SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

As noted throughout this petition, at Thrive we do not believe it is enough to ensure students learn core academic content. Rather, today's rapid technological advances and the pace of modern life demand that critical thinking skills, collaboration, communication, conflict-resolution and self-awareness are all necessary to succeed. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is central to Thrive and will be integrated into the daily academic curriculum, involving all students, families, teachers, and community members. The following five key competencies have been identified by researchers a "the foundation for maintaining high-quality social relationships and for responding to the challenges of life":

<b>1. Self-Awareness</b>	What are my thoughts and feelings? What causes those thoughts and feelings? How can I express my thoughts and feelings respectfully?
<b>2. Self-Management</b>	What different responses can I have to an event? How can I respond to an event as constructively as possible?
<b>3. Social Awareness</b>	How can I better understand other people's thoughts and feelings? How can I better understand why people feel and think the way they do?
<b>4. Relationship Skills</b>	How can I adjust my actions so that my interactions with different people turn out well? How can I communicate my expectations to other people? How can I communicate with other people to understand and manage their expectations of me?
<b>5. Responsible Decision Making</b>	What consequences will my actions have on myself and others? How do my choices align with my values? How can I solve problems creatively?

<http://www.edutopia.org/sel-research-learning-outcomes#definition> (citing Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor & Schellinger, 2011).

Numerous studies have documented the impact students' social-emotional state has on learning and academic outcomes, ranging from a student's fundamental need to feel safe in an orderly school environment, to fostering motivation and self-awareness in the learning process. (Blum & Libby, 2004; Hamre & Pianta, 2006; Hawkins, Smith, & Catalano, 2004; Jennings & Greenberg 2009; cited in Durlak, et al., 2011, Marzano, 2003).

Students who are more self-aware and confident about their learning capacities try harder and persist in the face of challenges (Aronson, 2002; cited in Durlak et al., 2011). Students who set high academic goals, have self-discipline, motivate themselves, manage stress, and organize their approach to work learn more and get better grades (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005; Elliot & Dweck, 2005; cited in Durlak et al., 2011). Finally, students who use problem-solving skills to overcome obstacles and make responsible decisions about studying and completing homework do better academically (Zins & Elias, 2006; cited in Durlak et al., 2011). <http://www.edutopia.org/sel-research-learning-outcomes#definition>

At Thrive, we will use compassionate communication strategies and training to teach and reinforce core concepts such as tolerance, compassion, workability and self-responsibility, empathy, positive conflict resolution, and collaboration. The goals of this focus are to: (1) raise the level of social and emotional competence in all children as part of their regular education; (2) improve academic performance by creating caring, confident learners who are self-aware; and (3) create a compassionate, socially responsible, collaborative learning community.

Some of the strategies we will use to accomplish these goals are:

**a. Multiage Grouping and Looping**

Students at Thrive will be grouped in mixed age clusters (grades 1-2, 3-4, 5-6 and 7-8) after Kindergarten, and typically stay two years in each cohort, “looping” with the same teachers.<sup>3</sup> Younger students benefit from coaching from their older peers, and there are opportunities to form deeper relationships over time. Faculty will team-teach, thereby enabling each to focus on his/her strengths and passions while best meeting the needs of students.

Placement decisions will be made collaboratively with staff and families, taking into consideration far more than chronological age. In a multiage setting, how students are moved from one grouping to the next depends both on social and academic readiness. While a student may stay longer in one cluster, they can make up time in another. It is our goal to know students well enough to make good decisions about their academic needs; therefore, promotion is not based on seat time or work completed but rather social and academic readiness. Some of the ways in which students may show this readiness is through conferences with staff, Portfolio Presentations of Learning and Project Exhibitions.

**b. Community Agreements**

Our emphasis on social-emotion learning permeates all levels of our organization – every member of our school community from administrators to family members to our youngest students are held to high expectations for collaboration in creating a supportive learning environment.

As key partners in the Thrive community, Thrive’s staff, families, students and community partners are all expected to:

- Understand and support the mission of Thrive and support the guidelines that will be set forth in the Thrive Family Handbook, including Thrive’s Habits of Heart and Mind;

<sup>3</sup> As noted above, as the school grows over the initial years, clusters will develop over time. Teachers who do not have a second grade level cluster pair will nonetheless work very closely with their peers across grade levels.

- Treat all community members with kindness, care, respect and consideration;
- Agree to utilize compassionate communication and our conflict resolution process when conflicts occur;
- Create a safe and healthy environment at home and at school, supporting students in developing a flexible mindset by celebrating “struggles” and praising effort over intelligence;
- Take responsibility for learning, as well as the development and pursuit of passions, and motivate through understanding, not by rewards or punishments;
- Contribute to the well-being of others, so everyone can become a caring and confident learner.

All staff will have training by “Responsive Classrooms” and will read Faber & Matzlich’s *How To Talk So Kids Listen and Listen So Kids Talk*.

#### **D. SKILLS TO BE TAUGHT**

Teachers will implement an academically challenging and integrated curriculum, incorporating Common Core Standards while focusing on the innovative instructional approaches and direct instruction as detailed above. At all times, Thrive will ensure that lesson planning, instruction and assessments reflect the full scope of the California Content Standards and Common Core Standards by grade level. Purchased curricular materials will be used as a basis upon which teachers will build. (See *Section IV.E Textbooks and Other Instructional Resources*, below and *Appendix A* for further details.)

Most importantly, the key to our instructional methodologies is a focus on individualized instruction, tailored to meet the needs of students. We believe that all children can and will achieve state standards mastery, regardless of their background or circumstances. The challenge as educators is to discover the means with which to help each individual child achieve his or her full potential. By using these active learning strategies, a strong focus on data and ongoing multi-faceted assessments to inform instruction, we are confident that all sub-groups and individual students will succeed.

##### **1. ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

The English Language Arts (ELA) standards for public schools in California -- including the new Common Core Standards -- establish high expectations for all students, with the goal that all students “become effective language users so that they can succeed academically, pursue higher education, find challenging and rewarding work, participate in our democracy as informed citizens, appreciate and contribute to our culture, and pursue their own goals and interests throughout their lives.”<sup>4</sup> The integrated curriculum at Thrive will provide daily occasion for teachers to “take every opportunity to link reading and writing to other core curricula, including history, social science, mathematics, science, and the visual and performing arts, to help students achieve success in all areas.” To support teaching the standards, teachers will use the *Reading / Language Arts Framework; A Look At Kindergarten Through Grade Six in California Public Schools*; and *A Look at Grades Seven and Eight in California Public Schools: Transitioning to the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics* for planning and guidance. The framework will also be used as a reference guide during the selection of instructional materials and for professional development activities.

<sup>4</sup> Taken from the introductory message by Jack O’Connell, former State Superintendent of Public Instruction, regarding the ELA standards.

Based on the acclaimed Readers' and Writers' Workshop Programs from Lucy Calkins and Teachers College in New York, Thrive's English Language Arts program is designed to ensure that on a daily basis, all students engage in reading, writing, speaking and listening activities to become fluent readers who comprehend and value literature, and are competent writers, articulate speakers and thoughtful listeners who can communicate effectively. This core curriculum will be supplemented with online programs such as Study Island, BrainPop/BrainPop Jr., Complete Curriculum and Reading Eggs, which students can work on both during class time and at home. These programs will be supplemented with leveled readers and books from the CDE-recommended reading lists. (See Appendix A for sample excerpts from these curriculum resources.)

#### **a. Reading**

Reading instruction incorporates four main components: (1) Shared Reading, (2) Guided Reading, (3) Letter and Word Study and (4) Independent Reading. Within this framework, teachers are able to incorporate different strategies and approaches daily in order to meet the diverse needs of students. Students will receive direct instruction, work with partners and small groups and engage in independent work, all of which provide for multi-level learning. Teachers will explicitly teach reading comprehension skills and strategies, and then provide authentic opportunities for students to practice.

As students progress, reading instruction will focus on "reading to learn" rather than "learning to read," though Thrive recognizes that many students will struggle with the demands of grade level text. Differentiated instruction will be provided through rotating small group instruction in which students will apply learned skills to text at their independent reading level and will receive systematic decoding and fluency instruction if appropriate. Teachers, intervention specialists, Instructional Aides and trained parent and community volunteers all work to move struggling students towards grade-level reading proficiency.

*Shared Reading:* Focusing on comprehension, teachers will choose text for a particular purpose, then demonstrate using and applying a particular comprehension strategy. In the early grades, shared reading may focus heavily on applying decoding strategies, in addition to those used to construct meaning. Texts used may include big books, trade books, decodable texts, magazines and newspapers, anthologies, poems, and selections from social studies and science texts. During shared reading, teachers will model the appropriate use of strategies by employing "think alouds" to allow students the chance to explicitly learn what is generally a more implicit process. Students will be given the appropriate vocabulary to identify the strategies they are learning and using, and teachers will reinforce and encourage students to share their thinking processes and articulate what strategies they are using. Teachers might also teach particular comprehension skills during shared reading by demonstrating the use of a specific graphic organizer such as a Story MDS to teach sequencing or a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast.

*Guided Reading:* Teachers will target instruction based on the individual needs of students through guided reading. As a whole class, reading instruction might be focused on the reading strategy of asking questions. During guided reading time, the teacher will choose texts that provide opportunities to guide students in the use of this strategy based on the appropriate instructional levels of individual students. Students will all be working on the same objective, but using different texts. At other times, reading groups might be working on different strategies, again based on

need. Because students are more likely to reveal questions, tentative hypotheses, inferences and connections to past learning in small groups rather than in front of the whole class (Rhodes and Shanklin, 1993), teachers will regularly observe and assess the reading habits and progress of students. In the upper grades, in addition to guided reading, teachers will employ literature circles and discussion groups. Both of these activities encourage student exploration of complex themes in text, enhance oral language and higher-level cognition, provide a chance for students to freely explore ideas, deepen students' understanding of what they read, while creating more enthusiastic and engaged readers. The cooperative and heterogeneous grouping practices used in these activities are also beneficial to English Learners who may be less hesitant to practice and perform in smaller groups where peer interaction is more natural and comfortable.

*Letter and Word Study:* Major research studies have shown that systematic, explicit phonics instruction is the most effective type of instruction, especially for those students who are considered "at risk" for academic failure (Report of the National Reading Panel, 2000). Therefore, Letter and Word Study in the primary grades (K-2) – including on-line learning -- will focus primarily on phonics instruction in which sounds/spellings are introduced systematically and sequentially, taught in isolation, blended into whole words, and practiced in decodable texts. Further, spelling instruction and word-work activities allow students to practice sound/spelling patterns by building, manipulating, and sorting words to reinforce decoding and word attack skills. Dictation activities connect the process of encoding to decoding, as students learn that their sound /spelling knowledge allows them to read as well as communicate through writing. Primary grades also include high frequency word instruction to help students become fluent readers. By the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students will be expected to have mastered 400 high frequency words taken from the Dolch Basic Sight Vocabulary and Fry's Instant Words. Students will chant, spell-out, visualize, hunt for and highlight these words in texts in addition to practicing them at home. Classroom word walls will contribute to a print-rich environment, and word wall games and activities will reinforce learning.

In all grades, letter and word study will include spelling instruction and targeted vocabulary development. Spelling instruction will be based on a student's developmental stage, as determined by administration of Words Their Way Qualitative Spelling Inventory. Spelling requires a higher level of precision than reading, so when teachers consider the developmental reading and spelling stages of a child, instructional strategies can be implemented which foster overall literacy development. Spelling lists will be grouped by pattern (sound, visual, or meaning) and presented in a systematic sequence. Teachers will then engage students in activities such as making words, word sorting (closed, blind, and speed), and word hunts which allow them to actively analyze and categorize words, thereby discovering spelling rules and generalizations. Again, this approach allows for multi-level instruction as students learn and participate in similar activities, but at their own level. Targeted vocabulary development at all levels will be aimed at making sure students acquire new word knowledge and increase their depth of knowledge over time. Instruction in specific words and concepts will occur through explicit teaching and modeling when words are conceptually difficult. For example, teachers pre-teach vocabulary that is important to student understanding of the content or due to its usefulness or general utility.

Teachers use a variety of techniques to help students make connections between unfamiliar words with their own background knowledge. Explicit instruction in word-learning strategies allows students to determine meanings of unfamiliar words encountered while reading. These strategies include teaching students to use dictionaries, online sources and other resource aids to deepen understanding of words, instruction in word structure as it relates to meaning (morphemes, affixes,



and roots) and directly teaching students to identify and use external clues to determine word meaning from context. Starting in the primary grades, teachers will model these learning strategies as they read aloud, using picture and text clues to help students learn simple ways of applying context clues. As students get older, they will learn and apply more sophisticated strategies such as identifying examples, restatements, and comparisons in order to clarify word meanings. Upper grade students will apply knowledge of word origins and Greek and Latin roots, especially in content-area texts.

*Independent Reading:* Throughout the day, students will have time to choose and enjoy reading books that are of interest to them, an integral part of our curriculum at all levels. Classroom libraries will be stocked with high-interest books of various genres at a variety of levels. Teachers will explicitly teach students how to select books appropriate to their level and interests. Often teachers will create special book boxes or areas of the room stocked with books that relate to current themes in the classroom (e.g., first graders learning about seasons will have access to a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts relating to weather and seasons, including poetry and magazine articles). To motivate students to read, to give students more opportunities to apply new learning, and to help instill a love of literature, students will be given opportunities to talk about or respond to the books they read. Kindergarteners may draw a picture of their favorite part of a favorite story and tell why they liked it, while 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students complete reflection forms to evaluate books read.

In addition, students at all grade levels will be required to read nightly. This outside reading may be rewarded with various incentives such as reading parties and sharing stories they have enjoyed.

#### **b. Writing**

Hand in hand with the school's reading program is a structured daily writing program, which is directly aligned to the new Common Core emphasis on writing. The chief component of the writing program will be the acclaimed Writer's Workshop, based on the Lucy Calkins' Teachers College Writer's Workshop model. Writer's Workshop, which is based on the constructivist principle that learning to write is as much about the process as the product, is used to teach students in all grade levels how to enjoy writing and at the same time reach the goal of becoming competent writers.

The Writer's Workshop design consists of three components that occur daily: the Mini-lesson or direct instruction, independent writing time and share time. (See Appendix A for a sample.) Mini-lessons can relate to craft (applications, content, or strategies), skills (conventions and editing) or procedures relating to workshop. These short, focused lessons are based on standards or elements of a particular genre and on the observed needs of the students. Mini-lessons follow the same basic structure school-wide: teachers provide a connection to previous learning; explicitly teach a strategy using modeling techniques, published literature and teacher and student writing; provide active engagement (often in the form of partner talk); and provide a link which sets the intention for students to apply the new strategy in their own work. During independent writing time, students choose writing topics, a strategy that helps develop personal investment in the writing process. They apply learning from mini-lessons, move themselves through the writing process and may engage in partner talk to help focus and develop ideas. Students understand the rituals and procedures of the workshop including how to access materials and information from around the room (charts, posters, model authors) and to organize their writers' notebooks and folders. The teacher uses this time to take quick inventories of the class, confer formally and informally with students and track student progress on conference logs. The sharing

component of workshop occurs at the end of workshop and provides another opportunity for teaching and reinforcing the content of the mini-lesson. Sharing takes a variety of forms, including Author's Chair, pair-share, or popcorn around the room. During this time the teacher can also to address listening and speaking standards. Teachers model the process that teaches students to use the language of the genre and the standards, to refer to the author's text to support comments and to provide specific feedback to help peers move forward.

The writing conference is an integral part of workshop. These frequent, on-going conferences allow teachers the opportunity to further provide personal, targeted instruction that equips all students with the necessary tools to develop their authorship. The teacher's role is to understand where an individual writer is at a particular moment in time, to determine the goals/needs of that student along with an appropriate course of action and then to guide the student toward those goals. The teacher reinforces the child's strengths and motivates the child to push himself/herself by applying new learning. Teachers keep detailed conference notes in order to evaluate students' progress and determine next steps for instruction. Additional support for students demonstrating difficulties might include scaffolding in the form of graphic organizers or sentence frames, more frequent meetings with the teacher or instructional aide and peer support in the form of a specific writing partner. Teachers might also allow students struggling to articulate their thoughts on paper to dictate their ideas to them in order to facilitate the writing process until students become more confident in their abilities.

There are four basic writing modes that students will master as they progress through Thrive: descriptive, narrative, expository, and persuasive. We have added a fifth mode for creative writing as we feel this is an extremely important aspect of writing for students to develop both as it aligns to the project-based learning model, and as creative writing fosters a love for literacy. These basic modes can then be broken down into subcategories, described below.

#### *Basic Modes:*

- *Descriptive Writing* - The primary purpose of descriptive writing is to describe a person, place, or event so that the topic can be clearly seen in the reader's mind. The writer must use vivid details that paint a picture for the reader.
- *Expository Writing* - The primary purpose of expository writing is to provide information such as an explanation or directions.
- *Narrative Writing* - The primary purpose of narrative writing is to describe an experience, event, or sequence of events in the form of a story.
- *Persuasive Writing* - The primary purpose of persuasive writing is to give an opinion and try to influence the reader's way of thinking with supporting evidence.
- *Creative Writing* - The primary purpose of creative writing is to entertain the reader.

#### *Subcategories:*

Argumentative Writing - This form of persuasive writing has a primary purpose of making a statement that the reader will disagree with, then supporting the statement with specific details that will convince the reader of the truth of the statement

Business Writing - This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of communicating with others in the work place.

Comparison and Contrast Writing - This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of showing the similarities and differences between two subjects.

Expressive Writing - This form of creative writing has a primary purpose of sharing thoughts, ideas, and feelings on the topic.

Informative Writing - This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of providing information in a clear, concise manner.

Literary Response - This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of providing a personal reaction to a piece of literature.

Personal Narrative Writing - This form of narrative writing has a primary purpose of sharing an experience or event from the author's own life.

Poetry - This form of creative writing has a primary purpose of imaginatively reflecting on a subject, idea, or event. This is usually done in stanzas rather than paragraphs.

Process Writing - This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of explaining the steps or procedure of something.

Reaction Writing - This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of providing a personal response to something.

Research Writing - This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of reporting new information that has been learned by studying available resources.

Technical Writing - This form of expository writing has a primary purpose of conveying technical information in a simple, no-nonsense manner.

### **c. Speaking**

Speaking is very important to vocabulary and language development and contributes to social development. In all classrooms, teachers will provide students with multiple opportunities to explore oral communication in the classroom. For example, students will develop active and responsive listening skills through class and small group discussions. Classes will take turns presenting and performing at weekly Community Meetings. Each teacher will use scaffolding strategies to help English Learners build confidence in communicating information and ideas. One way this is done is by giving students “scripts” using sentence frames that provide students with appropriate language structures. Additional structured speaking activities in class include Author’s Chair and literature circles where students discuss and analyze elements of books as well as relate reading experiences to their own lives. Students practice speaking clearly and using complete sentences during formal oral reports and presentations. Teachers will develop specific rubrics based on ELA and ELD standards that they share with students in order to communicate expectations. These rubrics will provide students with an understanding of the components of effective speaking enabling them to reflect on their own performance and from the presentations of their peers.

### **d. Listening**

Based on the ELA and ELD standards for listening, students will be taught that active, effective listening is a habit to develop and the foundation of effective communication. Students will be taught how to focus their attention, avoid distractions, use body position to signal their interest, express appreciation and appropriately pose questions. Some of the ways in which active listening skills are practiced include: following oral directions, answering questions after read-aloud, critiquing shared pieces in Writer’s Workshop, writing dictated sentences and repeating rhythms through movement and clapping. In second grade, to address the standard that requires students to give and follow multi-step directions, teachers will create projects that require partners to listen to each other’s directions in order to correctly complete a task. Partner A learns how to complete part of the task and gives directions to Partner B, then they switch roles. Success depends on careful listening on the part of both students.

## 2. MATHEMATICS

Learning objectives and outcomes will be aligned to California's rigorous mathematics standards (including new Common Core). Teachers will use the Mathematics Framework for California Public Schools, *A Look At Kindergarten Through Grade Six in California Public Schools* and *A Look at Grades Seven and Eight in California Public Schools: Transitioning to the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics* for planning and guidance (and will transition to the Common Core updated standards as they become available). The goal of the math curriculum is to make students fluent with numbers, to build mathematical reasoning skills, to develop a strong math vocabulary and to apply algebraic concepts to problem solving. In light of state mandates regarding Algebra instruction, mathematics instruction will have the ultimate goal of enabling all students to successfully complete Algebra I by the end of eighth grade.

Following direct instruction in new skills, teachers will present hands-on activities while also allowing time in and out of class for substantial practice of grade level computational skills. Using blended learning via ST Math, Think Through Math and other online curriculum, teachers will be able to differentiate instruction several times weekly, focusing on the needs of struggling students and those ready to move beyond the grade level curriculum. The math period will also incorporate a daily warm-up activity focused on applying previously learned skills (spiral review) to solve a problem situation. The teacher will reinforce math vocabulary during the warm-up by requiring students to prepare a brief written or oral summary of the steps they took to solve the problem.

As part of our emphasis on writing and listening/speaking skills and on problem solving in the mathematics curriculum, the mathematics curriculum will frequently require students to explain, orally or in writing, their methods of solving a problem and their rationale for choosing those methods. Assessment of mathematics standards will be based on evaluation of these presentations as well as on more traditional mathematics assessments from the state adopted textbook. Students will also use math skills, particularly statistics and data analysis, to enhance oral and written presentations required in other subject areas.

Pearson's enVisionMATH California textbook series will form a jumping off point for mathematic curriculum. (See Appendix A.) Pearson is currently rolling out new transitions to the Common Core for California, which Thrive will adopt. The enVisionMATH program utilizes interactive and visual learning strategies so that all students are able to access the curriculum and are appropriately challenged. In addition, faculty will utilize a variety of additional instructional resources and hands-on activities, including manipulatives, math games, measuring, patterning, cooking and art projects that give students opportunities to learn by doing and relate math concepts and skills to their lives. Small group and one on one intervention for struggling students, consistent practice towards mastery and speed in basic computations (math "facts"), increased time spent on problem solving activities, and other strategies.

Cores 1-3 (grades K-4) will be using the Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) model for gaining intuitive mathematical thinking. Cores 4 and 5 (grades 5-8) will be using College Preparatory Math (CPM), a program designed in collaboration with university professors and created to help students develop an understanding of the mathematical concepts rather than mimic a teacher's procedures without understanding the concepts. These curricula have been chosen to provide in-depth, flexible instruction to meet the needs of the diverse learners at Thrive. Both of these selected curricula are non-traditional in that they take a discussion approach to working through math problems and concepts. Much time is

spent on “digging deep” and working through a few problems, rather than practicing rote memorization of an algorithm, which does not lend itself to a true understanding of mathematics.

The Cognitively Guided Instruction model offers an array of strategies to build mathematical understanding, competence and confidence. (More information can be found at the following sources: Partners in Learning: <http://performancepyramid.muohio.edu/pyramid/early-childhood-education/Math-Best-Practices/Cognitively-Guided-Instruction.html>; Wisconsin Center for Education Research: <http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/Publications/highlights/v18n3.pdf>.) Similarly, CPM provides a project-based, comprehensive analysis of mathematics and working with numbers, providing a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts. Unlike traditional curricula that simply teach an algorithm and then have students do endless amounts of problems, CPM outlines investigations and discussions about numbers and computations. CPM also provides a vast student and parent support system through its online portal. (More information can be found at <http://cpm.org/>.)

Because not all students will have mastered the prerequisite mathematical skills for success in the math curriculum, new students will be assessed at the beginning of each year and will receive interventions focused on addressing areas of deficit. Students not meeting standards will participate in extra math intervention during elective periods.

### 3. SCIENCE

Thrive will implement the new Next Generation Science Standards as they are developed and implemented, which align perfectly with our inquiry-based model of instruction. These new standards, along with the existing Science Framework for California Public Schools, will offer the basis for Project based learning which will be the mode for exploring, engaging in and learning science at Thrive. These resources will guide the evaluation and selection of instructional materials, and inform student assessments. Students will have the opportunity to learn science through a variety of modes so that they are fully engaged and all learning styles are addressed.

Our inquiry-based science curriculum will emphasize learning through exploration and experience, relying on resources such as the acclaimed Full Option Science System (FOSS) kits for grades K-5, which provide hands-on investigations, laboratory experiences, and projects. The program is fully aligned to California standards (and also is being updated to reflect Common Core and NextGen standards) and research has demonstrated its efficacy in engaging and educating diverse students. (See Appendix A for samples.) The following chart indicates the sequence of the standards-based FOSS units that may be used to facilitate student engagement and understanding of the standards for physical, life and earth sciences in grades K-5:

Grade	Physical Science	Life Science	Earth Science
<b>K</b>	<i>Wood and Paper</i>	<i>Animals Two by Two; Trees</i>	<i>Wood and Paper; Trees</i>
<b>1</b>	<i>Solids and Liquids; Air and Weather</i>	<i>Plants and Animals</i>	<i>Air and Weather</i>
<b>2</b>	<i>Balance and Motion</i>	<i>Insects and Plants</i>	<i>Pebbles, Sand, and Silt</i>
<b>3</b>	<i>Matter and Energy</i>	<i>Structures of Life</i>	<i>Sun, Moon, and Stars</i>
<b>4</b>	<i>Magnetism and Electricity</i>	<i>Environments</i>	<i>Solid Earth</i>
<b>5</b>	<i>Mixtures and Solutions</i>	<i>Living Systems</i>	<i>Water Planet</i>

Literature is also infused into the science curriculum to reinforce content literacy skills and boost comprehension on all grade levels. Students engage and read about science through both fiction and non-fiction texts. Content-rich and high interest trade books will be used to support the development of science concepts and associated academic language across all grade levels. Thrive recognizes that children tend to have greater interest in the content and photographs that are available in trade books, and they find them less confusing than traditional science textbooks. (Ross, 1994.) The story lines in children's trade books help them understand and remember concepts better than textbooks that tend to present science as lists of facts to be memorized. (Butzow and Butzow, 2000.) The colorful pictures and graphics are also superior to many texts for explaining abstract ideas (Kralina, 1993) and provide contexts for understanding difficult science concepts. (Dole and Johnson, 1981.) Trade books, such as those recognized by the National Science Teachers Association's annual list of Outstanding Science Trade Books (nsta.org) have been widely accepted as a vital component of effective science instruction and will be carefully selected by the school leaders and lead teacher(s) and incorporated into the science program at Thrive.

An integral part of the inquiry-based units are activities conducted around predicting and making hypotheses, recording observations, and using data to reach conclusions. Technology also is incorporated into science activities where appropriate. Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) can facilitate data analysis, construction of graphs and tables, and interpretation of results. This software, along with online resources, is used to scaffold content for English Learners and create challenging assignments for advanced students.

For middle grades (6-8), middle school science program will be informed by Lawrence Hall of Science, at the University of California, Berkeley. This curriculum, known as the Science Education for Public Understanding Program (SEPUP) is distributed nationally by LAB-AIDS, Inc. and supported by grants from the National Science Foundation. SEPUP is fully aligned with California state standards and National Science Foundation education standards (see [http://www.sepup.com/correlations/CA/CA%206-8%202011\\_v2.5.pdf](http://www.sepup.com/correlations/CA/CA%206-8%202011_v2.5.pdf)) as well as the inquiry-based focus of the new NextGen Science Standards, and provides hands-on investigations, student resources, laboratory experiences, and projects. The school will utilize standards based materials for the few state standards not covered by SEPUP. SEPUP also lends itself to traditional, quantitative assessments that are appropriate for middle grade students. Teachers will, therefore, be able to utilize a variety of pedagogical methods and a variety of assessments in order to best develop conceptual understanding via students' own inquiries, investigations, and analyses. The curriculum provides students with science experiences that are appropriate to their stages of cognitive development. The experiences serve as a foundation for more advanced ideas that prepare students for life in an increasingly complex scientific and technological world.

SEPUP learning modules are organized under the following strands:

- Issues and Life Science
- Issues and Physical Science
- Issues and Earth Science
- Issues, Evidence and You
- Science and Sustainability
- Science and Life Issues.

Most modules and courses are designed to be appropriate for two grade levels, and work in conjunction with one another to cover all of the state and national content standards in science. In addition to the science standards, SEPUP reinforces many mathematics, language arts and social studies standards. For example, when studying life and earth sciences, students will also study man's relationship with flora, fauna and the natural environment, throughout time and in different locations. In this way, life and earth sciences will be connected to economics and history. When studying the physical sciences, students will explore man's inventions and discoveries in the realm of physics and engineering and the greater ramifications of industrialization, warfare and technology. In this way, students will see connections between the physical sciences and their present reality, history and economics.

This program provides hands-on investigations, laboratory experiences and projects. It also lends itself to traditional, quantitative assessments in the form of tests and quizzes. Teachers will, therefore, be able to utilize a variety of pedagogical methods and a variety of assessments in order to best develop conceptual understanding in all students.

#### **4. SOCIAL STUDIES**

At Thrive we use Project Based Learning pedagogies to bring History to life. Our projects will be teacher curated and/or created and will may incorporate programs like Different Ways of Knowing (DWOK), a research-based instructional design developed by the Galef Institute as the core curriculum, as well as the Social Studies Alive! (K-5) and History Alive! (6-8) programs (See Appendix A for samples.) These programs will help inform student learning and provide teachers with resources to plan engaging projects that get students out of their seats and actively engaged with content. Additional primary and secondary resources will be chosen by faculty in order to support student investigations into multiple perspectives on historical events and concepts. Teachers will provide students with access to primary and secondary historical sources, maps, charts, and timelines from which to draw information about the historical time periods and cultures studied. In teaching social science, teachers will use a variety of graphic organizers, charts, and visual aids to support students' developing analytic skills and to assist English language learners. To further increase understanding and motivation, social science will be taught with an emphasis on the stories of the groups of people and individual historical figures who particularly impacted their times.

DWOK is a thematic social studies and language arts curriculum infused with the arts and rich with opportunities to build multicultural understanding. It features a discovery model of learning that includes building on what you already know, doing research, developing expertise, and making connections. Students pursue answers to their own questions and develop important skills by utilizing a variety of primary resources and by working individually and in small groups. This engaging curriculum offers many opportunities to integrate all academic content areas as well as the arts, technology, and community service.

Broad social studies themes and content cover topics of family life, cultures, community, the environment, the study of California, geography, economics, United States and world history with connections to mathematics, science, visual art, music, dance, and drama. At Thrive, learning activities will engage students in reading rich literature as well as original source documents across all content areas. Our teachers will invite experts from the community to speak to students. For example, during the first grade study of the Neighborhood, we can have firemen, policemen, bankers, librarians, doctors, etc. —interviewed by our first graders. When third grade is studying government, field representatives from our councilman, assemblyman, and senator's office can speak with students and share materials.



Online curriculum such as Study Island and Brain Pop will be used as a guided source of research and information. Students will experience daily opportunities to develop listening, speaking, research, and writing skills across the content areas and to develop proficiency in the use of the arts as tools for learning, creative thinking, and problem solving as well as assessment.

Because social sciences are taught in an integrated project-based instructional block, students will also read fictional texts related to social science content, further increasing their motivation and understanding. Additional integration of social science curriculum will occur in the math and science block, when students may study the scientific and mathematical contributions of cultures they are studying. At all grade levels, the curriculum will be enhanced whenever possible with multimedia resources, hands-on experience (e.g. artifacts from cultures studied) and field trips. While covering the social science standards, teachers will also focus on reinforcing and employing reading comprehension, writing, and listening speaking standards through social science content. For example, students will apply reading comprehension and vocabulary strategies to their social studies text and will complete assessments in which they demonstrate social studies content knowledge along with writing and speaking standards.

### **5. ENRICHMENTS/EXPLORATORY**

As noted above, our Exploratory program, pending funds availability, will include a selection of rotating eight week electives for students, incorporating programs like Project Lead The Way, Mindstorm, Lego First Robotics, and Visual and Performing Arts experiences. All these programs will be standards-aligned and incorporate core content learning. We will facilitate visual arts instruction through available materials and supplies (paper, paints, pencils, scissors, etc.), along with training to our classroom faculty during professional development time on strategies to integrate meaningful arts instruction into the curriculum, particularly through project-based work.

### **E. TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES**

Teachers will use real time student data and their training to make instructional decisions about students' best learning pathways. A subject-specific, commercially-produced curricular program that is standards-aligned will guide and inform their decision making. Teachers are trained professionals who, through the use of data, understand the strengths and needs of their students. We empower them to be the most effective educators possible by providing them with multiple resources to guide their instruction. Therefore, purchased curricular materials will be used as a part of our "Backward Design" methodology for lesson planning (see above). As also detailed throughout this petition, we believe that lesson plans need to be revised constantly to accommodate new assessment information, and lessons need to be customized to suit the learning needs of individual students.

Curricular materials will be reviewed and updated annually by the Director, in collaboration with faculty, and subject to approval by the CEO and Board of Governors. These decisions will be based on results of grade level benchmark assessments, the CAASPP tests, alignment with state standards, and disaggregated data from ongoing assessment tools.

As noted above, we currently plan to use the following instructional materials:

- Language Arts – Reader's Workshop, Writer's Workshop, Fontes & Pinnell leveled readers, Lexia, Reading Plus, Write Source, Reach and Inside (the last two will specifically be used for our English Language Learners)



- Math –ST Math, Think Through Math. EnVision Math (Pearson), as well as CGI and CPM strategies
- History/ Social Science –Social Studies Alive!, History Alive! and DWOK
- Science – FOSS and SEPUP

In future years, grade level teachers will meet and advise the Director as to areas of need and recommended books and materials for the following year. The curricular purchases will be implemented by the administration and purchased well enough in advance to ensure timely implementation. Most importantly, all curricular materials must have a proven record with our targeted student population and must have been developed through sound, research-based methods that utilize the latest information on teaching, learning and brain functions. Curricular materials will also be analyzed in perspective of the whole educational program and in relation to lessons and assessments that would follow from curricular programs.

#### F. TEACHER CAPACITY: RECRUITMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*“The evidence suggests that ‘teacher quality matters and should be a major focus of efforts to upgrade the quality of schooling. Skilled teachers are the most critical of all schooling inputs.’” – Ronald Ferguson, Towards Excellence with Equity (2008).*

Of course, curriculum is meaningless without effective teachers to implement our program. With the goal of a balanced approach to teaching and learning in mind, our program is grounded in the following key principles of learning that have emerged from extensive research on effective teaching. According to acclaimed researcher Linda Darling-Hammond, effective teachers:

- create ambitious and meaningful tasks that reflect how knowledge is used in the field.
- engage students in active learning, so that they apply and test what they know.
- draw connections to students’ prior knowledge and experiences.
- diagnose student understanding in order to scaffold the learning process step by step.
- assess student learning continuously and adapt teaching to student needs.
- provide clear standards and constant feedback.
- encourage strategic and meta-cognitive thinking so that students learn to evaluate and guide their own learning. (Darling-Hammond, 2008.)

Thrive recognizes that capable teachers and quality teaching play an extraordinarily significant role in the academic achievement of children. Consequently, substantial attention will be given to the recruitment and development of the teaching faculty. Just as students who have weak teachers lose valuable learning time, students who have strong teachers reap the rewards for years to come.

##### 1. RECRUITMENT

New faculty members will be recruited through various communication channels, including local newspapers, education networking websites (CCSA, CSDC, Teach for America, EdJoin, idealist.org, etc.), the school website, career fairs, local universities and word of mouth referrals. Thrive will engage in a thorough review of the qualifications of candidates that apply for employment at the school. The CEO,

Director and other lead staff will review resumes, letters of recommendation, statements of teaching philosophies and portfolios to determine which candidates will be interviewed for positions. The CEO and Director will bear primary responsibility for all teacher hiring, joined in their efforts by a hiring committee that includes teachers. Candidates for teaching positions will be interviewed, and in some cases will be asked to teach a lesson to a classroom of students where feasible and/or return for a second round of interviews. In some cases, the CEO or Director may observe candidates teaching a lesson in their current positions. Following interviews, Thrive will contact references, review letters of recommendation and notify each person of their status once a decision is made. Candidates that are offered employment will receive a written offer of employment. In addition, Thrive will verify the teaching credentials of candidates with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, ensuring that each teacher possesses credential subject authorization that meets state and NCLB requirements to teach the subject that he/she is being hired to teach.

Thrive will make every effort to recruit teachers who are committed to the vision and mission of the school. Job postings for teachers will clearly state the education philosophy and teaching pedagogy that of our innovative model so that teachers who are ultimately selected for employment possess the desire, capacity and dedication to work successfully at the school. To attract and retain outstanding teachers, Thrive will provide: competitive salaries; a challenging, rewarding and professional work environment; support and collaboration from colleagues and administration; and, the opportunity to participate in innovation, creativity and research within a model school program. See *Element 5: Employee Qualifications* for more teachers about desired teacher qualifications and hiring.

## **2. TEACHER EVALUATION**

Due to the profound impact that teachers have on students, only the most effective teachers will be retained at the school. Performance measures will be used to evaluate teacher effectiveness, to recognize superior performance, to provide targeted assistance in instances when performance is less than satisfactory, to determine the appropriateness of pay incentives, and to make informed decisions regarding continued employment at the school.

Teachers will be evaluated at least once annually using a comprehensive system that incorporates multiple measures of performance. A thorough evaluation system will ensure not only that teachers continue to grow professionally during their years at Thrive, but that only highly effective teachers are retained. The teacher performance evaluation process will include:

- The use of value-added data, consistent with current trends in teacher evaluation
  - The Director will formally conference with teachers one-on-one, no less than twice each year to review and discuss the academic progress of the students in their classroom.
  - The Director and teacher will participate in an analysis and discussion of impact on student learning over time, across all student groups
- Teacher performance will be evaluated using a criteria rubric that describes various levels of accomplishment as they pertain to job duties. The criteria rubric will be shared with teachers during professional development prior to the opening of school so that teachers are familiar with the process.
- Teachers will receive feedback from the Director regarding their effectiveness in all aspects of the job (i.e., instruction, parent communication, planning, collaboration, support of the school's mission).

- The Director will meet individually with teachers at the start of each school year for dialogue and goal setting and later in the year to assess progress toward goals.
- All teachers will be expected to maintain professional portfolios that document the features of their classroom program, including long and short term instructional planning, student assessment, student work, meeting the needs of all students, collaboration with colleagues, and parent communication.
- Teachers will develop a plan for professional growth that will be approved annually by the Director.

### **3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

***"The heartbreaking difficulty in pedagogy, as indeed in medicine and other branches of knowledge that partake at the same time of art and science, is, in fact, that the best methods are also the most difficult ones: it would be impossible to employ a Socratic method without having first acquired some of Socrates' qualities."** – Jean Piaget, Science of Education and the Psychology of the Child (1969).*

Thrive will offer engaging, interactive and ongoing professional development, incorporating principles outlined by Linda Darling-Hammond and other leading experts, including activities that are experiential, collaborative, sustained and intensive, supported by modeling, coaching, and problem solving around specific problems of practice. (Darling-Hammond, 1995.) The Director will serve as the instructional leader and lead supervisor of instructors, conducting formal and informal classroom observations, setting goals for performance, and providing regular feedback to teachers. General observations that have school wide implications will inform plans for professional development. The Director, and as the school grows, additional instructional leaders, will visit classrooms daily to observe teachers. In addition, the Intervention/Resource Specialist and the Literacy Specialist will both work closely with teachers in providing professional development and individualized expertise in strategies and targeted interventions for students in need. Teachers also will be given ample opportunity to observe one another, with those who excel in a particular area taking the lead in helping to train their peers. Data collected through classroom observations will help determine professional development topics. Teachers will be surveyed annually to determine whether or not the practices of high quality professional development are in place at the school.

#### **a. Time Allocated for Professional Development**

Perhaps most importantly, teachers will be provided significant time and opportunity – including at least 20 full pupil-free days plus at least three hours each week – a total of almost 300 hours annually -- to engage in collaborative planning time and professional development to continuously improve their teaching practice, including:

- Teachers will work with the Director in the summer prior to the school opening and throughout the year, to plan curriculum and assessments, professional development and more for the upcoming year.
- A two-week, mandatory Summer Institute for all Thrive teachers prior to the start of each school year to review the school's philosophy, goals, and teaching methodology; to discuss professional readings and research; to analyze and discuss instructional practices and student outcomes; and to engage in collaborative planning for the year ahead.

- Once-weekly grade level planning meetings; monthly planning time across grade levels.
- Wednesday “Early Out” sessions will provide a dedicated three hour block of time each week for faculty to engage in professional development with a rotating schedule of full-faculty meetings, professional development workshops, and every other week, collaborative planning time for curriculum and assessment development.
- Pupil-free days throughout the year to intensely analyze student achievement data and engage in collaborative planning
- Clearly articulated expectations with respect to professional development outcomes.
- Visits to other innovative and high performing schools.
- Access to a professional development library and other professional resources.
- Opportunities to attend professional development workshops or conferences on topics that have been agreed upon in advance by the Director.

#### **b. Professional Development Topics**

The Director (and in later years, Dean of Students) and teachers will all collaborate to determine specific topics and sequencing for professional development. We anticipate that the following, at a minimum, will be topics covered in the first years of operation:

- Mission and vision of Thrive and review of the charter petition
- Review of student achievement data for returning students
- School Operations
- Health & Safety Policies and Procedures
- Differentiating instruction for all learners
- Project-based learning
- Backwards Design, including using data to differentiate instruction
- Integrating technology in the classroom: full-day sessions will be devoted to each core online learning program (e.g., ST Math, Lexia, etc.) to ensure all staff not only understand the nuances of each program and use it most effectively, but also to ensure that each student’s initial benchmark assessment data is incorporated into each program to provide targeted instruction for each student
- Universal Design for Learning
- Literacy instruction: Reader’s and Writer’s Workshop, reading and writing across the curriculum, ABCs of phonics instruction
- Classroom Management Success
- Thrive’s Habits of Heart and Mind
- Meeting the needs of English learners including Sheltered English instruction/SDAIE and Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) strategies
- Special Education: legal timelines, district policies, Student Success Team process, assessments, and strategies for working with students with special needs
- Teacher evaluation: the evaluation rubric, teacher expectations
- Assessment: standardized tests (CAASPP, CELDT, etc.), benchmark assessments, online assessments
- Review of student achievement data and using data to differentiate instruction

## G. INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES: ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND BELL SCHEDULE

### 1. *SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULES*

The following are intended to be illustrative of the schedules students at Thrive will follow. These will be customized once we finalize our facility and staffing. A few notes about some terminology:

**Optional Tutoring:** While our intention is that each student will complete family-facilitated learning at home each day, we understand that for some families this may present challenges, particularly as subject matter becomes more sophisticated as a student progresses through upper grades.<sup>5</sup> Thrive will ensure that all students who need it – whether because of family needs, intervention support, or simple assistance with complex learning – have access to trained tutors each morning and afternoon (except Friday afternoons). These tutors – both our own faculty (who are expected to be on campus from 8:00 to 4:00 each day) and aides as well as trained volunteers (parents, retired seniors, local university and high school students, etc.) will provide invaluable assistance to our students and help expand their learning. Students who are struggling will be assigned to specific tutoring sessions, while all students who wish to attend the morning or afternoon sessions will be invited to do so (free of charge).<sup>6</sup>

**Morning Meeting**, at all grade levels, includes teachers working with students to review work done at home (family-facilitated learning) and check in based on individualized plans according to each student's assessments (online and offline) and needs. Given our mastery-based focus with students progressing at their individual pace, this time serves an important connection between students and the teacher. This time is also used to discuss our Habits of Heart and Mind and "character development," and provides an important forum for student communication and expression. Once a week, the entire school will gather for a **School-wide/Community Meeting**, which will include presentations (by students and staff) and community building activities.

**Flex Time**, at all grade levels, is a period that is devoted either to ELA or Math at the teacher's discretion, based on student needs in that particular week. We do not believe that the exact number of minutes for any given subject can be prescribed in advance for an entire year; rather, we believe teachers must constantly evaluate student needs and adjust the schedule accordingly. Flex time is designed to recognize this important emphasis in our program.

**Exploratory**, at all grade levels, will consist of a rotating schedule of 8-week long mini-courses in various electives/enrichments, including robotics, tinkering lab, game design, visual and performing arts and more. These courses will be taught by our faculty, as well as outside experts in their fields. All courses will be standards-aligned and include core content learning.

<sup>5</sup> As explained above, families will be asked to participate in a variety of hands-on trainings throughout the year designed to help them work with their children and provide appropriate learning support in our specific curriculum. Families who need additional support will also be invited to work directly with tutors on campus or meet with their child's teacher.

<sup>6</sup> In time, pending funding through ASES and other grants, Thrive plans to offer a comprehensive before and after-school program that includes both tutoring and enrichment activities (sports, arts, tech and more).

**Afternoon Meeting** is an important brief check-in to ensure each student has a plan for family-facilitated learning at home, can ask questions about activities completed during the day, and address issues that have arisen during the day.




**Picnic Story Time**, in Kindergarten, is a gathering of the class for snacks and literacy development via guided/group reading.

Our daily schedule for students aligns directly to the goals set out in our charter and the skills students need to be successful in and beyond school. Below is a sample of how our students spend their day.

## Sample Schedule:

SAMPLE STUDENT SCHEDULE								
MON, TUE, THUR, FRI								
Community Meeting 8:30-8:50	Rotational Blended Math 8:50-10:00	Picnic Story Time /Body Break 10:00-10:30	Rotational Blended ELA 10:30-11:40	Lunch 11:40-12:25	Community Meeting 12:25-12:40	Exploratory 12:40-1:40	PBL Science and History 1:40-3:00	Choice Time 3:00-3:30

<b>COMMUNITY MINDED</b> 	<b>COLLEGE PREPARED</b> 	<b>CAREER INSPIRED</b> 	<b>WEDNESDAY</b> <b>Community and Flex Day (8:30-1:00)</b> Completely flexible day based on community and students needs. All learners work on interdisciplinary, independent and group work across grades, based student needs, data and passions.
---	---	--	--

This schedule will help us to assure that we are working with students towards a common intellectual mission and that students' needs are met in all content areas throughout the week and instructional time is maximized. Please note that we offer before school tutoring starting at 7 AM Daily and provide support in the afternoon until 6 PM

## 2. DRAFT SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR, 2015-2016

[illegible]



### **3. THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL WILL EXCEED THE MINIMUM INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES**

The annual calendar at Thrive will include 180 days of regular instruction. Students will receive instructional minutes that exceed the minimum number required for traditional and charter public schools according to California Education Code § 47612.5. In particular, our full day Kindergarten program will offer students more than 27,000 additional instructional minutes than required, a major boost especially for students who will arrive at Thrive with little preparation for school.

Regular daily attendance is critical to the academic success of all students; the need to be present and ready to learn each and every day is particularly important for struggling students, and students at risk for school failure. We recognize that every day counts and that a day missed represents a lost learning opportunity, thus Thrive will set a school wide average daily attendance target of 95% or higher.

Teachers will remind students and their parents about the importance of consistent school attendance during classroom discussions, at Back to School night, and during parent conferences. When a concern regarding attendance or tardiness arises, teachers will initially address the concern directly with the home. If a student displays a pattern of absences or tardiness that is not resolved by means of a teacher conference, teachers will bring the student to the attention of the school administration. School administration will determine whether follow up contact with the parent(s) or a Student Success Team meeting is the most appropriate next step to resolve the issue (see *Section V. Special Needs*, below). Written communication from the school in the form of letters and progress reports will also inform parents of positive as well as negative attendance patterns. Every effort will be made on behalf of the school to ensure that children are at school every day for the duration of the school day when they are not ill or otherwise excused according to school policy.

## **V. SPECIAL NEEDS: THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL WILL ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF ALL SUB-GROUPS, INCLUDING AT-RISK STUDENTS**

---

### **A. THRIVE'S STUDENT-CENTERED APPROACH WILL BENEFIT ALL STUDENTS**

Our integrated instructional approach – Project-Based Learning, Blended/Targeted Instruction, Family-Facilitated Learning and Social/Emotional Learning – are all intended to ensure that each and every student's individual learning needs and learning styles are a central focus in the learning process at Thrive. Our mastery-based approach ensures that students will progress at their own pace, receiving targeted support and instruction as needed to ensure they master content before moving on. Through this differentiated and highly personalized learning program, our special needs populations (EL, Gifted, At-Risk of Low Achieving, Low Socioeconomic and Special Education) will automatically receive focused attention to their needs and strengths as teachers implement individualized instruction based on data-driven assessments. In addition, the following assist in meeting students' individual needs:

- Multiage grouping and looping (same teacher for two years) which allow the teachers to truly know their students;
- Ample instructional planning time so that teachers can collaborate and create lessons and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students;
- A culture among teachers of openness and collaboration, including team planning sessions and weekly professional development activities, allowing teachers to learn from each other's varying expertise in handling learning differences;



- An emphasis on communication between teachers and parents, including the Family-Facilitated Learning program, and a commitment to work together for the education of their children;
- Various forms of online, project-based and benchmark assessments that are used to guide instruction;
- Learning goals and objectives that are clearly articulated; and
- High expectations for all students.

Thrive will carefully establish procedures and sufficient staffing to ensure the needs of all students are met, including those who need additional support beyond the classroom to meet grade level standards.

### **1. INITIAL ASSESSMENT**

An entrance assessment, including a school-designed test derived from state standards and an English language assessment (where applicable) will be administered to all new students, and a baseline assessment will be administered to returning students. (See *Element 2: Measuring Pupil Outcomes* and *Element 3: Methods for Measuring Pupil Outcomes* for further details about assessments.) Throughout the year, teachers also will assess students through informal measures such as checklists, class work and observations, and through more formal means, such as CAASPP testing and benchmark assessments both in writing and via online assessment (see also *Elements 2 and 3*, below). Throughout the year, formative and summative assessments, as well as data from computer programs will be reviewed during Wednesday shortened days and will be implemented during Flex Time on Thursdays (where teachers will group students based on data and provide just in time instruction). Grade level teams will ensure that modifications such as differentiated instruction, scaffolding, and alternative assignments will be used to address the needs of individual students. Throughout each school day, our model of instruction allows time for small group and individual instruction by teachers. In addition, students who are struggling will be referred to our tutoring program for additional instructional assistance. These interventions will be recorded in a log (or online database), which will document the length of time and effectiveness of the modification.

### **2. HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

Teachers will communicate throughout the school year with parents and guardians during formal and informal conferences regarding the social and academic progress of students. The Dean of Students will assist both parents and teachers in fostering open communication. If a teacher has an urgent or persistent concern, the parent or guardian will be contacted and invited to the school to discuss the issue. Teachers will receive training and be expected to maintain an open line of communication between the school and the home and will make every effort to ensure that parents and guardians feel welcome at the school and comfortable enough to express their own questions and concerns. In addition, we offer a sophisticated online student information system such as Illuminate that allows parents/guardians to access their child's online profile, including data such as attendance and meal participation, as well as real-time reporting about online assessments the child has completed, homework assignments and other important information. Parents will be offered training on using computers and this system, and computers will be available at the school for parent use. Ultimately, we hope to secure grants to fund computers for family use at home. In these ways, we will further strengthen the partnership between school and home.

### **3. STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM (SST)**

Despite the many strengths of the school's programs, methods, and organizational design, additional support may be necessary in instances when students are not making satisfactory academic progress or when their behaviors are impeding their own progress or the progress of others. On those occasions, a referral to the Student Success Team (SST) will open a new pathway of support to students. The purpose of the SST is to ensure that the school and community are doing everything possible to make students successful at school. The SST mobilizes and coordinates the school's resources, and a request for assistance from the SST can be made by a teacher, administrator, parent or guardian. The SST process will be coordinated by the Dean of Students,<sup>7</sup> who will organize the SST process by managing the necessary paperwork, scheduling meetings, and inviting members (including parents/guardians) to SST meetings. All teachers will receive professional development regarding identification of student needs, modifications and interventions, and the SST process. (See also, Professional Development, above.)

The SST process begins by reviewing the student's progress and clarifying the student's strengths and other known background information, and continues with a discussion of the concerns and the modifications and/or interventions that have been tried. The meeting concludes after an action plan has been prepared and agreed upon which includes modifications and supports to be provided by the teacher as well as other intervention strategies for the family to implement at home and outside of school, along with a timeline for successfully implementing these interventions. Following the implementation of an SST plan and follow up, if concerns continue a second follow up meeting may be set where revisions to the original SST plan are discussed.

### **4. OUTREACH TO STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

No child will be excluded from the admissions process or excluded from attending Thrive Public School due to his/her English language fluency, academic achievement, IEP or suspected disability, or any other factor. Thrive Public School is committed to serving all students who wish to attend our school, and will not discourage parents of students with special needs from applying for admission or enrolling their child.

#### **B. English Language Learners**

We expect that Thrive will serve a significant number of English Learners. To address the significant academic needs of EL students, all of the major components of Thrive's instructional program have been carefully designed to promote the academic and social success of EL students. Several key features of effective programs for English learners were identified during a study of 75 exemplary schools that successfully provide academic programs to English learners in California. ([www.sharingsuccess.org](http://www.sharingsuccess.org).) Many of those features have been incorporated within the program at Thrive, such as:

- **Inclusion** - The program for English learners will be an integral part of the school, neither conceptually nor physically separated from the rest of the school.

<sup>7</sup> For purposes of this petition, as noted, we have not included PCSGP start-up funds in our budget. If we are able to secure these, or other start-up funds (e.g., private grants), we plan to hire the Dean of Students position in Year 1. In an effort to be conservative in our budgets, we have listed hiring this position in Year 2; in that event, the Director will assume all responsibilities listed herein for the Dean of Students until that position is hired.

- **Enrichment** – English learners will be provided with a rich intellectual diet, not a remedial curriculum. The instructional approach for all students will emphasize critical thinking, hands-on learning, relevance, and connection across the disciplines.
- **Coordination** - A premium will be placed on coordination and collaboration both horizontally and vertically across grade levels. Weekly schedules have been designed to provide common planning time for teachers.
- **Internal Impetus** – Thrive teachers and school leaders will be the driving force and key players in designing and implementing innovative curricular and instructional approaches.

### **1. IDENTIFICATION OF ENGLISH LEARNERS**

Thrive will adhere to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations with respect to serving students who are English learners. In order to identify students who are English learners in a timely fashion and to provide appropriate instructional support and services, all parents will be required to complete a *Home Language Survey* upon enrollment at the school. Cal. Education Code § 52164.1. Students whose primary language is not English will be assessed using the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) if he or she has not previously been identified as an English learner by a California public school or if there is no record of prior CELDT test results. CELDT testing will take place within 30 days of the start of the school year or within two weeks after the date of first enrollment at the school.

The English language proficiency of all currently enrolled English learners will be assessed in accordance with the test contractor's directions and California Education Code guidelines. Students with disabilities will be permitted to take the test with the accommodations listed in the Education Code if they are specified in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan. An alternate assessment for English language proficiency will be administered to students who are unable to participate in the CELDT test, according to the guidelines set forth in the student's IEP. Thrive staff will notify parents of the school's responsibility to conduct CELDT testing and will inform parents of CELDT testing results within 30 calendar days following receipt of test results from the test contractor. Students will be monitored in conjunction with the California English Language Development Standards levels.

Thrive will maintain a record of all students who participate in each administration of the CELDT test as specified in Education Code § 11512. CELDT testing will be used to fulfill the requirements for annual English proficiency testing and will comply with the accountability requirements under Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act. Thrive will adhere to all legal requirements regarding oversight and administration of the CELDT test.

### **2. SUPPORT FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS**

All English learners receive daily ELD instruction adjusted to the student's language proficiency level until they are reclassified. Thrive serves English Learners and delivers English Language Development ("ELD") instruction aligned to ELD standards. As a community that places high value on the inclusion of all of its students, we have communicated with families about the ways to support English acquisition and as a result are using a push-in service during the designated English class as well also as a pull out service for students who require additional time. Throughout the week, a specialized teacher pushes into the classroom to work with a small group of English Language Learners for 30-60 min on their ELD goals and other English goals listed in their Personalized Learning Plan. In addition to this core ELD instruction there are four (4) other components of Thrive's program for English Learners:

- 1) **Community meetings** focused on conversational language (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (“BICS”))
- 2) **Blended ELA** – Through the use of a blended rotation model, students move through independent, collaborative and small group instructional stations each day. At each station students’ learning is personalized and adapts to students’ needs based on continuously collected data. Each student has a personalized learning plan with their data and their goals, which are addressed with a laser like focus in the following ways
  - Small group teacher instruction: where teachers work with groups of 4-5 students based on ELD levels and other data collected through the year
  - Tech programs for individual practice of reading skills: RazKids, Lexia Core 5 and Reading Plus
  - Non-tech support such as Readers and Writer workshop, as well as supplemental support through programs like Reach (K-5) and Inside (6-8) (Hampton Brown)
  - Parent handbooks provide tips for parents in Spanish and English to help understand the common core and what students are doing in class
  - Literacy specialist built into budget to push in and support students in similar ways that a Special Education teacher would support special education students
- 3) **Blended Math**
  - Small group teacher instruction: where teachers work with groups of 4-5 students based on ELD levels, math ability and other data collected through the year
  - Tech programs for individual practice, such as Think Through Math, ST Math, Khan and MangaHigh offer students the ability to see, hear, manipulate and practice math with immediate feedback.
  - Non-tech support such as Cognitively Guided Instruction and a high use of manipulatives and realia supports learners to see math with and without words and is focused on conceptual math aligned to Common Core
  - Parent handbooks provide tips for parents and to describe what the common core questions look like and reinforce what happens in class (based on Sacramento County Office of Education’s work)
  - Aids and specialized teacher\ will be in class to support students as they work in small groups or individually
- 3) **Project Based Learning (“PBL”)**
  - We are partnering with the Buck Institute for Education, a nationally recognized trainer for project based learning and have staff who are experienced in Project Based Learning
  - Through PBL students learn to use content specific English (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency “CALPS”)) and apply their learning
  - Real world connections help students have greater buy-in and work towards outcomes with an authentic audience

In addition to the major program design features at Thrive that support students who are English learners, teachers at Thrive will employ the following specific strategies in their classrooms: (notably, these strategies are beneficial for all students, not just English Learners)

**a. Six Key Strategies for Teachers of English-Language Learners<sup>8</sup>**

- 1) Vocabulary and Language Development
  - i) Teachers will introduce new concepts by discussing vocabulary words key to that concept.
  - ii) Teachers will build on student's background knowledge.
  - iii) Classrooms will reflect a language rich environment (i.e. language charts, shared reading and writing experiences, other writing displayed throughout the room and used daily by students).
- 2) Guided Interaction (collaborative learning)
  - i) Teachers will structure lessons so students work together to understand what they read—by listening, speaking, reading, and writing collaboratively about the academic concepts in the text.
  - ii) Teachers will provide students with opportunities to negotiate meaning from language and text and to work in cooperative pairs or groups to develop problem-solving and social skills.
  - iii) Teachers will group students flexibly, at times working in heterogeneous groups and at times not.
- 3) Metacognition and Authentic Assessment
  - i) Rather than having students simply memorize information, teachers will model and explicitly teach thinking skills (metacognition) crucial to learning new concepts.
  - ii) Teachers will use a variety of activities to check for student understanding, acknowledging that students learning a second language need a variety of ways to demonstrate their understanding of concepts that are not wholly reliant on advanced language skills.
  - iii) Teachers will “make thinking public,” the metacognitive aspect of teachers and students modeling how an answer was arrived at, not merely what the correct answer was.
- 4) Explicit Instruction
  - i) Teachers will utilize direct teaching methods to teach concepts, academic language, reading comprehension strategies, text patterns, vocabulary, writing patterns, and decoding skills needed to complete classroom tasks.
- 5) Meaning-Based Context and Universal Themes
  - i) Teachers will incorporate meaningful references from the students' everyday lives and use them as springboards to interest them in academic concepts.
  - ii) Teachers will create classroom environments that provide authentic opportunities for use of academic language.
  - iii) Teachers will provide students with opportunities to activate and focus prior knowledge via inquiry charts, brainstorming, and clustering.
- 6) Modeling, Graphic Organizers, and Visuals
  - i) Teachers will regularly utilize a variety of visual aids, graphic organizers (such as *Thinking Maps*), pictures, diagrams, summaries, and charts to help English learners easily recognize essential information and its relationship to supporting ideas.

<sup>8</sup> Adapted from Alliance for Excellent Education. (December 2005). Case study on the New Teacher Center, University of California at Santa Cruz; and Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design).

### b. Sheltered Instruction / Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE)

Sheltered instruction is also grounded in a pedagogical commitment to meeting the needs of diverse learners, in this case particularly those students who are English learners. The teachers at Thrive will engage in the following practices to support universal access of subject matter content for all students:<sup>9</sup>

- During lesson planning and preparation, teachers will identify lesson objectives aligned with state and local standards.
- Teachers will link new content to students' background experiences and introduce unfamiliar vocabulary to facilitate comprehension.
- Teachers will use controlled vocabulary, sentence structure, visuals, and gestures as necessary and appropriate to make the presentation of content comprehensible.
- Teachers will provide students with a variety of strategies for organizing and retaining information associated with effective learning, such as graphic organizers and note taking.
- Teachers will provide students with regular opportunities to interact with their peers through collaborative learning activities, such as think/pair/share, partner and group projects.
- Teachers will provide students with regular opportunities to use new language skills in context.
- Teachers will pace lessons appropriately to allow for the participation and active engagement of all students.
- Teachers will utilize language-based as well as content-based assessments.

SDAIE instruction also focuses on strategies for taking students Into, Through, and Beyond the topics covered. For example, SDAIE-enhanced instruction for a sixth grade social science unit on Ancient Greece might proceed as follows:

**I. Into:** Determining what the students know about the topic of study. Possible SDAIE strategies for "Into":

**Anticipatory Guide:** Students are given a series of statements that relate to concepts they will be studying in their unit on Ancient Greece. Students indicate AGREE or DISAGREE. After the information has been presented, students check to see if they were correct.

**Brainstorming** - Students work in small groups. Each group begins with a stimulus such as a word, phrase, picture, or object related to the topic of Ancient Greece. A recorder records all responses to that stimulus and ideas from each group are shared with the class.

**II. Through:** The teacher enhances direct instruction on the topic by utilizing realia, manipulatives, visuals, graphic organizers, and various modes of interaction between students. In addition to reading the text and listening to information presented by the teacher, students takes responsibility for learning by participating in group-work and sharing understanding with others. Possible SDAIE strategies for "Through":

<sup>9</sup> Based on the eight broad elements of sheltered instruction described by Echevarria, Vogt, and Short. *Making content comprehensible for English language learners: The SIOP model*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon (2004).

**Graphic Organizers** – Students complete a variety of graphic organizers as they read or listen to information on Ancient Greece. Graphic organizers used might include:

Comparison-Contrast Matrix-Students determine similarities and differences between Ancient Greece and the Ancient Egyptian culture previously studied

Flowcharts – Students sequence important events in the development of the Greek culture.

Cause and Effect Chart – Students chart the ways in which geographical features of Ancient Greece shaped Greek culture and economy.

**Reciprocal Teaching** - Two students work together to read a passage in the social science text. Student A reads one paragraph aloud, then asks Student B one or two good questions based on the reading. Student B answers. Students A and B discuss questions and answers and repeat the process.

**Picture This** – Following the introduction of several key vocabulary terms related to the unit, a blank paper is divided into eight sections. Students draw pictures or symbols to represent words or major concepts. They then exchange papers with a partner and try to correctly label each other's drawings.

**Reading Guide** Students work in small groups to read a longer section of the social science textbook. Students first take turns reading the headings of the reading. Then, with their group, students predict what will be discussed in those sections. Students write their answers on a prediction chart. In their groups, students take turns reading the first page aloud, and finish reading the selection in silence. They write "yes" or "no" on the prediction chart to indicate whether or not their predictions were correct. Finally, students write one thinking question (Why..., How..., Compare..., What if...), and exchange papers to answer each other's questions.

**III. Beyond:** To create further understanding, students go beyond rote memorization and demonstrate real-world application of the learned information. This process requires higher-level critical-thinking skills. Possible SDAIE strategies for “Beyond”:

**Roam the Room** - In groups, students write down their individual answers to a higher-level question posed by the teacher (e.g. if only one idea or invention from the Greek culture could be passed on to subsequent cultures, what should it be and why?). Students share their answers within their group and the group comes up with and records on chart paper one “best” answer for their group. Groups then walk around to view other groups’ answers.

**Quotes** – Students identify quotes from a fictional text related to the unit (e.g. The Odyssey) that they feel exemplify important aspects of Greek culture. They create a chart listing the quote and the Greek culture they feel the quote illustrates.

### **3. RECLASSIFICATION OF ENGLISH LEARNERS**

Before the issuance of each progress report card, teachers will summarize students’ mastery of standards for their current ELD level by looking at assessment material collected throughout the



quarter. EL students will receive ELD grades in addition to ELA grades in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. At the end of the semester teachers will also go through the list of standards for a student's current ELD level and determine if the student has mastered every standard for his or her current level and is ready to move to the next ELD level. Teachers will present evidence (e.g. scored writing samples, rubrics from oral presentations) to the Dean of Students, who will work with teachers to make the final decision regarding progression to the next ELD level.

Reclassification criteria are outlined below.

- **CELDT:** Overall performance level of 4 or 5 and skill area scores of 3 or higher in listening-speaking, reading, and writing.
- **Report Card:** Meets or exceeds expectations in all ELA (Reading, Writing, and Listening/Speaking) strands.
- **Teacher/Dean of Student's judgment:** Classroom teacher and Dean of Students judge that the student will be successful in a mainstream English program. This judgment may be based on teacher observation, review of student work samples, analysis of past standards based report cards.
- **CAASPP or CMA:** Basic, Proficient, or Advanced performance on the ELA section of the test
- **Parent Opinion and Consultation:** Notice will be provided to parents/guardians of their rights, and they will be encouraged to participate in the reclassification process. Teachers will provide an opportunity for a face-to-face meeting with the parents/guardians to discuss their child's progress toward English language proficiency.
- **Comparison of Basic Skills:** Performance in basic skills means the score and/or performance level resulting from a recent administration of an objective assessment of basic skills in English, such as the California English– language arts Standards Test (CST for ELA) and the California Modified Assessment for ELA (CMA for ELA). Range of performance in basic skills means a range of scores on the assessment of basic skills in English that corresponds to a performance level or a range within a performance level. Students of the same age refers to students who are enrolled in the same grade as the student who is being considered for reclassification.

Thrive has set a demanding reclassification target for annual student progress (see *Element 2: Measurable Student Outcomes*). Students at Thrive will be expected to progress 1-2 English language levels each year through targeted instruction and assessment. It is anticipated that students who are enrolled at Thrive beginning in kindergarten will be re-designated as fluent-English proficient (RFEP) prior to middle school. Students who enroll at the school in subsequent years whose language development is still in the beginning or early intermediate stage will be receive added intervention from the teacher through small group instruction targeted to meet their individual needs with a goal that they will stay on target to advance 1-2 levels or more per year such that they can be reclassified during their K- 8 career.

Reclassified ELs are monitored for a minimum of two years after being reclassified. A literacy specialist will support students after reclassification. Students will be monitored through benchmark data and students will have a personalized learning plan to make sure they continue to make adequate growth.

### C. SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS



Our teachers and staff will all receive training on recognizing symptoms and behaviors indicative of a child's need for additional supports, including issues relating to hunger, extreme poverty, and individual families' challenges to meet their child's needs. Our SST will be responsible for identifying students and families who might need additional resources or supports, including referrals to community service organizations. Our emphasis on a school community and the responsibility we have to one another within that community will extend to the parents and families of our students as well.

Thrive will offer a whole day program from kindergarten on, and parents will be able to drop-off their children starting at 8:30 a.m. and through 3:30 p.m. (with an optional after school program),<sup>10</sup> both to best serve our students' needs and accommodate working families. As demonstrated by the success of countless schools in California and beyond serving students who are socio-economically disadvantaged, income is not a determinate factor in a students' ability to succeed academically. We have not found systematic research that correlates socioeconomic status with school achievement in a way that can lead to a pedagogical generalization. If students that are socioeconomically disadvantaged are low achieving or struggle with learning differences or are identified as English Learners, Thrive will utilize strategies described in other sections of this petition.

#### **D. GIFTED AND HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS**

Gifted students will be served within the regular classroom program. Teachers at Thrive will use multiple strategies to differentiate instruction for diverse learning styles and ability levels within the school's curriculum. Our integrated approach to planning and delivering instruction will be an effective approach for all learners, including gifted students. In the case of gifted students, teachers will provide a variety of options for students to demonstrate their understanding of what they have learned.

##### **1. IDENTIFICATION OF GIFTED STUDENTS**

Teachers will use a variety of assessment measures, including standardized assessment data and other classroom performance data, to identify students who are gifted. Students who achieve significantly above grade level and/or demonstrate behaviors consistent with gifted ability may be appropriately identified. In certain instances, services such as psychological testing might be used to test students for gifted ability, depending on the availability of such services. Parents and guardians will be informed when their child is suspected of being gifted or identified as gifted so that they can seek appropriate challenges and opportunities for their child.

##### **2. STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT GIFTED STUDENTS**

Students who are high achievers and/or identified as gifted benefit from differentiation and instruction that is flexible enough to meet their specific needs. According to Carol Ann Tomlinson, a recognized expert in the field of education for gifted students, "a class is not differentiated when all students are doing the same thing and no adjustments are being made to the difficulty levels of the assignments that are given." (Tomlinson, 1995.) Thrive has adopted many of the strategies recommended by Tomlinson and others for effective teaching in mixed-ability classrooms, such as:

<sup>10</sup> As noted above, we plan to secure appropriate ASES and other funding to offer a comprehensive after-school program including both academic support and enrichments until 6:00 p.m. each day by Year Two.

- Providing alternative and/or extension activities for students who have already mastered the content being taught;
- Allowing gifted and high achieving students to work at an accelerated pace;
- Providing opportunities for students to work in flexible groups with other intellectual peers
- Creating graduated task rubrics and product criteria negotiated jointly by the student and teacher;
- Asking open-ended questions, both in the classroom and on homework assignments, that stimulate critical thinking;
- Incorporating a variety of the levels of thinking described in Bloom’s taxonomy – including the higher levels of analysis, evaluation, and synthesis – into lesson content and student work products.

As a result of program differentiation using the strategies just described, the unique learning needs of advanced learners will be met within the regular classroom program.

#### **E. AT-RISK OF LOW ACHIEVEMENT**

Thrive is committed to ensuring that all students achieve at their maximum learning potential, including students achieving below grade level expectations. The program at Thrive has been expertly designed to meet the needs of all types of students by differentiating instruction, increasing student engagement and motivation, and providing a stimulating and challenging curriculum with multiple entry points for diverse learners and abilities.

Teachers will receive training on effective intervention strategies targeted towards the areas of greatest need. In order to reach the greatest number of our students falling within this category, teachers will be trained to utilize the following “best practices”:

*High Expectations:* By believing in and identifying each student’s potential, teachers then utilize the student’s strengths to help him/her reach this potential.

*Reality-Based Teaching:* Students need to be provided with “real life” purposes for their reading, writing and problem-solving. Reality-based learning approaches help to build a bridge between school and home, thereby helping students see relevance to their learning. Many at-risk students do not see the relevance in their schooling and, therefore, lose motivation to succeed and learn. The expected diversity of our student body will influence curricular choices and efforts will always be made to ensure we utilize culturally relevant literature, reality-based economic scenarios, and multiple perspectives.

*Cooperative Learning:* Students learn well from each other and opportunities should be provided for students to work together in order to plan, create and perform projects, as well as to discuss and debate issues. Cooperative grouping allows students to practice the social aspect of learning and contributes to active participation and team work. Each student can utilize his/her strengths in groups and learn from the strength of his/her peers.

*Varied Assessment:* As all students possess and utilize different strengths for their learning, a teacher who allows for a variety of assessments is more apt to find out what students have truly

learned, not just how they take a test. Portfolios, oral presentations, open-book tests, group projects and graphic maps are only some of the many avenues available for teachers to tap into their student's knowledge. The wider the variety of assessment the teacher uses and the more authentic and on-going it is, the truer the picture the teacher can get of their student's understandings. (See *Element 2: Assessment*, for explicit details about our assessment methodologies.)

*Direct Instruction:* As an instructional strategy, direct instruction responds to the student's needs by focusing directly on the skills required to be successful in school and ensuring that these skills are learned (Better Thinking and Learning, Maryland State Department of Education). Students can learn high level concepts if they know how to learn, how to question, how to access prior knowledge, and how to integrate new knowledge. The elements of Direct Instruction include:

- Clearly communicating goals for students
- Structuring academic tasks for students
- Demonstrating the steps necessary to accomplish a particular academic task
- Monitoring student progress
- Providing student practice (including through online exercise) and feedback to ensure success
- Holding students accountable for their work through frequent teacher review

By continuing to look to research, and giving teachers time to meet, discuss, and learn what works best with their students, teachers will continually assure that they are using the most effective strategies for helping all of their students become active and motivated learners who master the knowledge necessary for life-long learning and success.

### ***1. IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WHO ARE AT-RISK AND/OR ACHIEVING BELOW GRADE LEVEL***

It is anticipated that the academic needs of most students will be met through the core elements of the Thrive program. Nevertheless, in some instances students who are achieving below grade level may require additional assistance to catch up to their peers. Students will be identified as under achieving or at-risk of low achievement if:

- Their classroom performance is considered to be one or more years below grade level based on class assignments and/or assessments;
- They receive a Below Basic or Far Below Basic score in language arts or mathematics on the CAASPP (or comparable rating on the new CAASPP, as those are defined);
- They fail to demonstrate a minimum of one year of academic growth in reading, writing, and/or mathematics during each year; or
- They have an existing IEP.

### ***2. STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ACADEMICALLY LOW ACHIEVING STUDENTS***

Thrive's program features have been proven through research and practice in similar school populations to be especially effective with Title I students and students performing below grade level or at significant risk of low achievement. The following program elements, described throughout this petition, are designed to support all students. These elements have demonstrated particularly successful results with low achieving students and others who are at risk of school failure and for whom traditional strategies are less likely to be effective:

- An integrated curriculum with project-based learning
- Exploratory learning
- Blended learning
- A program built on rigorous content standards
- Highly qualified teachers
- Culture of excellence and high expectations
- A supportive school community
- A strong home-to-school connection

In the event that students are identified as under achieving, they will receive targeted support and assistance above and beyond the regular school program. Targeted support for under achieving and/or students at risk may include:

- Early intervention in reading during ELA in the daily schedule (see above);
- Tutoring;
- Focused attention – prepared in consultation with the student and the parent/guardian, if needed in the context of the Student Success Team process, regarding specific strategies and supports;
- Individual contract with the student detailing clear and achievable responsibilities and benchmarks for the student to achieve; and/or
- Other program modifications and supports as determined by the classroom teacher.

### ***3. CLASSROOM MODIFICATIONS FOR LOW ACHIEVING STUDENTS***

In addition to the instructional methods and strategies detailed above, when appropriate, classroom modifications will be made to support low achieving students. Modifications or accommodations may be used by the classroom teachers in coordination with the Student Success Team, for students who are low achievers, depending on the student's specific need. These may include using different materials (visual aids, manipulatives, audio materials), using different methods (reading written material aloud to student, guided note-taking, visual cues/modeling), differentiated pacing and assignments, environment changes, testing accommodations and more.

### ***4. TRACKING THE ACADEMIC PROGRESS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS***

Thrive will acquire and maintain Illuminate or a similar student achievement data management system that allows the school to effectively track academic progress over time. Using the data tracking system, the following groups of students will be monitored by teachers and school administration in order to ensure satisfactory academic progress and to provide timely and targeted intervention when necessary:

- Students identified as achieving below grade level
- Students identified as being at risk for school failure due to environmental factors
- Socioeconomically disadvantaged students (Title I).

In the event that struggling students fail to make satisfactory academic progress despite targeted interventions implemented by the classroom teacher, the teacher may decide to refer the student to the Student Success Team (see above).

## **F. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Teachers at Thrive will implement a wide range of accommodations for students with disabilities. All teachers will receive ongoing professional development regarding special education policies, strategies for working with learning-disabled students, and classroom practices that support students with diverse learning styles and abilities. Among the topics that will be discussed during professional development sessions will be:

- Early identification and symptoms of learning disabilities
- Classroom accommodations for specific, observed behaviors
- What to do when a teacher or parent suspects a child may be learning disabled.

Thrive will comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Furthermore, Thrive Public School will comply with SELPA and/or District guidelines, and all California laws pertaining to special education students.

To the maximum extent appropriate, all students with disabilities will be fully integrated into the programs of Thrive, with the necessary materials, services, and equipment to support their learning. The school will ensure that any student with a disability attending Thrive is properly identified, assessed and provided with necessary services and supports.

### **1. PLAN FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Thrive will operate as a Local Education Agency (LEA) for the purposes of providing Special Education services in the El Dorado County Charter School SELPA.

As its own LEA and member of a SELPA, Thrive pledges to work in cooperation with all local and state agencies to ensure that a free and appropriate education is provided to all students with exceptional needs. Thrive will comply with all regulatory special education requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Furthermore, Thrive will comply with all provisions of AB 602, applicable SELPA guidelines, and additional federal and state laws that apply to Thrive pertaining to special education students.

Per federal law, all students with disabilities will be fully integrated into the programs of Thrive, with the necessary materials, mandated services, and equipment to support their learning. Thrive will meet all the requirements mandated within a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). The school will include all special needs students with non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate according to their IEPs.

### **2. SEARCH AND SERVE**

Upon the commencement of each school year, all students will be evaluated as a means of general class placement. Students may be evaluated 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. No assessment or evaluation will be used for admission purposes. Through collaboration

between the faculty, parents and school leaders, Thrive will work to identify any students who do not currently have an IEP but may be in need of pre-referral interventions. The Student Success Team will convene weekly to review all referred students as well as student data across sub-groups, classrooms and more.

### **3. ASSESSMENT**

The referral process is a formal, ongoing review of information related to students who are suspected of having special needs and show potential signs of needing special education and related services. Thrive's primary internal method for referral for assessment will be the Student Success Team. The parent of any student suspected of needing or qualifying for special education services may also make a referral for an evaluation. Any such parent referrals will be responded to in writing by Thrive in a timely manner. Any Thrive professional may also directly refer a student for formal assessment to see if he or she has a disability. Thrive may additionally choose to refer a student for services assessment through the provisions of a Section 504 Plan, if appropriate.

After a student is referred for a special education assessment, Thrive will provide the student's parent or guardian with a proposed assessment plan within 15 days of the referral. Parents will be informed by the Dean of Students that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them. Thrive will obtain informed consent from the parent/guardian before conducting the assessment, and the assessment will be completed within 60 days of receipt of parental consent.

The Dean of Students (see footnote above) will be responsible for gathering all pertinent information and sharing such information all others involved in the assessment. Information gathered will be used as tools to determine the student's disability, eligibility for services, and determining the nature and extent of required services. If needed or requested, an interpreter will be provided for the parent or guardian during the assessment. A teacher or Thrive staff member may serve as the interpreter, if fluent in the parent/guardian's native language and with parent approval. The types of assessments that may be used for determining eligibility for specialized instruction and services will be selected by Thrive, in collaboration with any hired service providers, and will generally be performed by a qualified psychologist and a nurse if applicable. Those assessments could include, but not limited to:

- Individual testing;
- Teacher observations;
- Interviews;
- Review of school records, reports, and work samples; and
- Parent input.

Unless conflicting with SBE, CDE, or SELPA policies and procedures, Thrive will follow the below assessment guidelines. If a conflict with any of the prior mentioned agencies policies and procedures exists, then SBE, CDE, or SELPA policies and procedures will govern, and Thrive will revise these guidelines accordingly:

- Parents or guardians of any student referred for assessment must give their written consent for the school to administer the assessment;
- The student must be evaluated in all areas related to his/her suspected disability;
- The assessment will be conducted by a professional with knowledge of the suspected disability.

- Multiple assessments will be delivered by qualified professionals to measure the student's strengths and needs;
- Assessments will be delivered without cultural, racial or gender bias;
- Assessment results will be delivered to the parent/guardian in their primary language, and an interpreter will be provided if needed;
- Assessments will be adapted as necessary for students with impaired sensory, physical or speaking skills; and
- A multidisciplinary team will be assembled to assess the student, including a teacher knowledgeable in the disability.

Once the assessment is completed, Thrive will hold a meeting to review the results of the assessment and determine whether the student qualifies for special education by meeting the criteria for one of 13 disabling conditions. This meeting is the initial Individualized Education Program ("IEP") meeting described in detail below, and Thrive will give the student's parent/guardian the opportunity to participate. Thrive will be responsible for scheduling, coordinating and facilitating the IEP meeting.

If a student enrolls at Thrive with an existing IEP, an IEP meeting will be convened within 30 days to review the existing IEP, discuss the student's present levels of performance and needs, and offer appropriate placement and services. Prior to such meeting and pending agreement on a new IEP, if needed, Thrive shall work to implement the existing IEP or as otherwise agreed upon by the parent/guardian. Within 30 days of each school year beginning, Thrive will forward a complete list of all new IEPs to students' home districts for reference, if required by law.

#### ***4. DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW OF IEP***

Every student who is assessed by the school will have an IEP that documents assessment results and eligibility determination for special education services. If the student is deemed eligible for services, Thrive will be responsible for providing specialized services according to the student's IEP.

Thrive will ensure that all aspects of the IEP and school site implementation are maintained. Thrive will provide modifications and accommodations (as outlined within each individual's IEP) in the general education environment taught by the general education teacher. Students at the school who have IEP's will be served in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

Each student who has an IEP will have an IEP team that oversees the IEP Development, implementation and progress of the student. The proposed IEP team at Thrive will consist of the following individuals:

- Director (or in later years, Dean of Students)
- The parent or guardian of the student for whom the IEP was developed;
- The student
- At least one core classroom teacher who is familiar with the curriculum or progress appropriate to that student;
- If the student was recently assessed, the individual who conducted the assessment

Others familiar with the student may be invited as needed. Thrive views the parent as a key stakeholder in these meetings and will make every effort to accommodate parents' schedules and needs so that they will be able to participate effectively on the IEP team. Thrive will provide an interpreter if necessary to ensure that all parents and/or guardians understand and can participate in the IEP process. When

available, a Thrive teacher or staff member, fluent in the parent's native language, may serve as the interpreter with parent approval. If the parent(s) cannot attend the IEP meeting, the school will ensure his/her participation using other methods, such as rescheduling the meeting, conferencing by telephone, conferencing via webcam, or meeting at the parent's home. A copy of the IEP will be given to the parent in accordance with State law, Thrive and SELPA policies, as applicable.

Upon the parent or guardian's written consent, the IEP will be implemented by Thrive. The IEP will include all required components and be written on SBCSS approved forms.

The elements of the IEP will include:

- A statement of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance
- The rationale for placement decisions;
- The services the student will receive and the means for delivering those services;
- A description of when services will begin, how often the student will receive them, who will provide them, and where they will be delivered;
- Measurable annual goals and short-term objectives focusing on the student's current level of performance;
- A description of how the student's progress will be measured and monitored;
- An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate in general education;
- Any accommodations necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the student on state and district assessments; and
- Transition goals for work-related skills.

IEP meetings will be held according to the following schedule:

- Yearly to review the student's progress and make any necessary changes;
- Every three years to review the results of a mandatory comprehensive reevaluation of the student's progress;
- After the student has received a formal assessment or reassessment;
- When a parent or teacher feels that the student has demonstrated significant educational growth or a lack of anticipated progress;
- When an Individual Transition Plan is (ITP) required at the appropriate age;
- When a special education student has been suspended, especially if they demonstrate a pattern of misbehavior, to determine if changes to the IEP are required to address the misbehavior;
- Prior to the expulsion of a student with an IEP, to determine if the student's misconduct was a manifestation of his/her disability, and
- If the parent/guardian, a Thrive staff member, hired service providers, or the student has communicated a concern about the student's progress.

The IEP team will formally review each student's IEP at least once a year to determine how the IEP is meeting his/her needs. In accordance with IDEA regulations, the IEP team will also conduct a formal review of the IEP once every three years, in which the student is reassessed and the IEP is reviewed as part of an overall comprehensive reevaluation of the student's progress.

If a parent or faculty member feels the student's educational needs are not being met, they may request a reassessment or a review of the IEP by the IEP team at any time during the year via written notice to



the school. Once the request is received, the IEP Team will have thirty days, not including school vacations greater than five days, to hold the IEP meeting.

Parents will be informed four times a year of the student's progress toward meeting annual goals and whether the student is expected to meet his/her annual goals. The Goals and Objectives section of the IEP will be an attachment to the general progress report. This will serve to document the method by which the student's progress toward achieving the annual goal is measured, the student's progress during the relevant period, the extent to which it is anticipated the student will achieve the annual goal prior to the next annual review, and where needed, the reasons the student did not meet the goal.

#### ***5. SPECIAL EDUCATION STRATEGIES FOR INSTRUCTION AND SERVICES***

As detailed throughout this petition, Thrive will employ a highly individualized model of instruction for all students, which will benefit all students with learning challenges. Thrive will utilize a Response to Intervention (RTI) model, and will also comply with the federal mandate of the least restrictive environment ("LRE"). Thrive will mainstream all of its students as much as is appropriate according to each individual IEP. Each student's IEP will require 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.

Thrive's RTI program will include the three basic tiers:

*Tier 1:* The first step, or tier, of intervention is the regular classroom setting. As teachers introduce instruction, students' progress is monitored. Most students in this group will need additional help from time to time, and the teacher provides that guidance.

*Tier 2:* Tier two of RTI targets students who do not show progress with regular instructional intervention. In tier two, students receive more individualized instruction and intervention. They may work in smaller groups to allow one-on-one and small group instruction. During this process, teachers carefully evaluate the students' response to these interventions. Students who do well may be phased back into the regular classroom. Students who demonstrate the need for ongoing, intensive intervention will move into tier three.

*Tier 3:* Tier three is an ongoing, long-term program of diagnostic and prescriptive teaching and could be thought of as special education. In this level, students receive individualized instruction for as long as is necessary for them to acquire the skills they need to progress in school.

Our RTI process is instructional from beginning to end. At no point is a child left to experience the frustration of failure while waiting until their test scores show a severe achievement discrepancy before they get help. They will receive instruction that gradually increases in intensity and individualization as they show the need for it.

Thrive will employ a variety of strategies to ensure student success for our Special Education such as those detailed extensively in the previous sections, and all will be in accordance with their IEP.

Thrive may also contract with outside special education service providers depending on operational needs or specific requirements of the students' IEPs. Some of the potential contracted services may

include nurses, speech therapists, psychologists, autism behavioral or occupational therapists, and counselors. Thrive will reassess its special education staffing, service providers, methods, and strategies on a continuous basis to assure that all services provided are effective and of the highest quality.

Thrive retains the option, based on operational evaluation and program needs, to employ a high quality Special Education service provider that could coordinate and facilitate some or all of the special education related services and instruction for our students. Thrive will also consider joining the resource-sharing special education joint powers agreement established by San Diego charter schools participating in the El Dorado SELPA. These types of special education service providers could provide Thrive with the following staff:

- Credentialed special education teachers/Resource specialists
- School psychologists
- Occupational therapists
- Physical therapists
- Speech-language pathologists
- School nurses
- Vision therapist
- Interpreters for students who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Orientation and mobility aides for students who are blind or visually impaired

The chosen special education service provider could also be responsible for a number of areas including Assessments, Behavioral Support, Clinical Services, Compliance/Administration, Related Itinerant Services and Designated Instructional Services (DIS), and Special Education Instruction.

For every student who is eligible to receive special education instruction and related services, Thrive will provide transportation as a related service if it is required to assist a child with a disability benefit from special education. As required for any special education program, transportation will be provided to meet the criteria for a free, appropriate public education. As applicable, a student's IEP will describe how special education transportation is coordinated with regular home-to-school transportation, and will set forth an individualized plan for meeting the transportation needs of the student receiving special education.

## **6. REPORTING**

Thrive, in collaboration with its service providers, will collect and maintain the following information on disabled students as required by IDEA:

- A calculation of all school-age students with disabilities being provided special education services by age, grade, category of disability and the number of students with disabilities who are English Language Learners;
- The number of students provided with test modifications and the types and the number of students exempted from assessments;
- The settings in which students with disabilities receive their services, specifically including the portion of the school day they receive services with non-disabled peers and time away from the regular classroom;
- The number of students with disabilities suspended "in-school" and out of school, organized by

- disability and length of suspensions; and
- The basis of exit from Thrive of students with disabilities (i.e., attainment of diploma and type, declassified, moved, etc.).

All necessary procedures and practices to ensure confidentiality and accurate/timely reporting will be the responsibility of the Director (or his/her designee). The Director will ensure that a central file with all special education evaluation material and IEP's is maintained and that this file is locked and confidential, in accordance with IDEA guidelines. The Director will oversee access to these records, and will be responsible for ensuring that all providers responsible for the implementation of a student's IEP will have access to a copy of the IEP and will be informed of their specific responsibilities in implementing the IEP.

#### ***7. DUE PROCESS AND PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS***

Parents or guardians of students with IEPs at Thrive must give written consent for the evaluation and placement of their child; will be included in the decision-making process when change in placement is under consideration; and will be invited, along with teachers, to all conferences and meetings to develop their child's IEP.

Any concerns or disagreements raised by parents will be acknowledged by the school within five days, after which a meeting between the parent and school will be scheduled to seek resolution of the disagreement. If a disagreement or concern persists, parents or guardians have the right to initiate a due process hearing to challenge a decision regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of their child.

The school will provide the parent with all notices of procedural safeguards as well as with information on the procedure to initiate both formal and informal dispute resolutions.

In the event that a parent/guardian files a request for a due process hearing or request for mediation, Thrive will participate cooperatively to resolve the issues.

Parents or guardians also have the right to file a complaint with the CDE or SBE if they believe that the school or SELPA has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing special education.

#### ***8. SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT***

Thrive 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 Thrive Public 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 school.

A 504 team will be assembled by the Director and shall include the Director (or his/her designee), parent/guardian, the student if needed, a qualified faculty member, 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 IDEIA, those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team who 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 include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need, and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligent 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 IDEIA, a referral for assessment under the IDEIA 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 the 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 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 Special Education Coordinator will ensure that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that he/she review the 504 Plan with any long-term substitutes. 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.

#### **G. OTHER SPECIAL POPULATIONS**

As noted throughout this charter petition and in particular this section, Thrive will utilize a child-centered approach in all aspects of instruction, thus we are confident we will meet the needs of every student and help them to succeed. All members of our faculty and our instructional leaders will assist each family to ensure the educational success of their child, including making appropriate referrals to community organizations.

## **VI. ONGOING MONITORING OF STUDENT PROGRESS TO INFORM IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

---

As discussed throughout the preceding sections, the educational program describes in detail how the content standards will be taught (i.e. the methodology, organizational structures, and resources). Assessing whether or not the school has achieved its goals is critical to determining the overall effectiveness of the program's design. Frequent and varied assessments, including pre- and post-assessments of student achievement, will provide valuable information to teachers when planning instruction and will serve as relevant data for use by school leadership when making decisions leading to program evaluation and improvement. Regular assessment and reporting of student outcomes will also allow interested parties outside of the school to evaluate the academic success of Thrive.

## **VII. INDEPENDENT STUDY**

---

To the extent independent study is provided, Thrive will comply with state laws relating to independent study as set forth in Education Code § 47612.5 5 and applicable regulations. The governing Board of Thrive will adopt policies as necessary to implement any independent study options provided to students.

## **VIII. HIGH SCHOOL "A-G" REQUIREMENTS**

---

Not applicable.

## **IX. THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL WILL MEET THE STATE'S PRIORITIES**

---

Thrive will comply with all requirements under the new provisions of California Education Code Section 52060, and will ensure that all eight of the state priorities (and sub-priorities) are met. (See Element 2 for specific details and goals.)

## Element 2: Measurable Student Outcomes

*“The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. “Pupil outcomes,” for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school’s educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 47607. The pupil outcomes shall align with 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.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(B).*

As a California charter school, Thrive will assume an increased level of accountability for all aspects of its programs and for achieving the goals described within the vision and mission of the school.

Thrive will adopt a comprehensive set of benchmarks for student and school outcomes that support the achievement of the school’s vision and mission, based on the state and common core standards, state priorities, and our definition of an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Full implementation of the educational program and frequent monitoring of student and school outcomes will ensure that the school is an academic success and is achieving all of its overarching goals. To make certain that the school’s primary goal of increased academic achievement for all students is met, student achievement data obtained from standardized assessments will be disaggregated annually to clearly identify the academic performance of students by sub-groups (e.g., by ethnicity, gender, English Learners, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities).

Additional internal assessments, such as teacher-created, publisher and online assessment tools, will be analyzed individually by teachers and in collaborative groups during weekly planning in order to target student needs, identify program strengths and gaps, and to plan subsequent instruction. Throughout the year benchmark student achievement data will be analyzed among the school faculty during pupil-free professional development days.

Our faculty will use a variety of assessments to measure individual students’ attainment of state content standards and the objectives of our curriculum. Students will participate in several formal assessments each year, including the DRA2 and MAP diagnostic assessments. Official checklists and rubrics from the published curriculum programs and online resources such as ST Math and Achieve 300will play a major role in teachers’ determination of student achievement of standards mastery. Yet more informal assessment techniques will also play a major role. In kindergarten, for example, in order to find out how children are progressing, the teachers will observe the children engaged in a variety of events: children working on math manipulatives; using a pointer, children are reading from poetry charts; the teacher sitting at a table with a small group of children presenting a mini-lesson or conferencing; and so on. Teachers will observe children as they are engaged in classroom activities and record their behaviors in an anecdotal record. These observations, along with student work samples over a period of time gathered in a portfolio, guide the instruction.

As students become increasingly able to produce independent work samples such as journal entries, written reports, project work and presentations, these products will also be evaluated by teachers. By the end of the third grade we expect that most students will perform at the proficient level or above in reading, writing and speaking according to the school’s identified assessment measures. Ongoing

assessment of daily work and formal evaluation using online assessments, scoring guides, tests and checklists will provide the teacher, parent and student with feedback on student achievement and progress. As students progress into and through middle grades, student evaluation will become more formal, including student-produced book projects, final draft writing, science experiments and presentations of research. Portfolios, public Presentations of Learning, and project Exhibits will be used to assess student growth and to assist both the student and the teacher in identifying the next steps for growth. Students will be assessed in a summative manner on a weekly basis in the form of a quiz, test (both written and online), essay, research paper, presentation or project.

Thrive will pursue for all students the academic and social outcomes summarized in the following table, including focus content areas, methods and frequency for measuring academic progress, and specific benchmarks for student performance.

The CEO, Director and faculty will be accountable for the academic achievement and psychological well-being of students. The Director is ultimately responsible for meeting target goals, and will be held accountable by the CEO and Board of Governors. The Director also will be accountable for meeting Adequate Yearly Progress as required by NCLB.

## I. STUDENT OUTCOME GOALS

Thrive will pursue the following school wide and subgroup outcome goals, as measured by multiple and varied benchmark assessments that are aligned to state and federal standards (including the new Common Core) and reflect proficiency measures required by the CAASPP tests, as well as state priorities detailed in California Education Code § 52060(d).<sup>11</sup> Thrive will comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from time to time, including requirements relating to a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) pursuant to California Education Code §§ 47604.33 and 47606.5.

For purposes of measuring achievement of these goals, a numerically significant pupil subgroup will be defined as one that meets both of the following criteria:

- “(i) The subgroup consists of at least 50 pupils each of whom has a valid test score.
- (ii) The subgroup constitutes at least 15 percent of the total population of pupils at a school who have valid test scores.” Cal. Education Code § 47607(a)(3)(B).

Specifically:

- Annual API will meet or exceed the established growth target.
- All subgroups will make at least 80% of the school’s overall growth target.
- Thrive will meet or exceed Adequate Yearly Progress goals, as required by NCLB.
- The CAASPP participation rate will be at least 95%.

In addition:

<sup>11</sup> As the State and District develop regulations and policies regarding the new “local control and accountability plan,” Thrive will work with the District to ensure full compliance with these requirements.

- English Learners will progress at least one grade level on the CELDT each year.
- English Learner reclassification rates will meet or exceed the District's reclassification rate.
- Special education students will demonstrate appropriate progress toward stated goals in their IEPs each year.
- Thrive will maintain at least 95% Average Daily Attendance.
- Suspension and expulsion rates will be lower than comparable schools in the District.
- Students will demonstrate a mastery of grade-level standards and designated outcome goals in the areas of English Language Arts, mathematics, science, Social Science/History, and chosen electives in the arts.
- Students will demonstrate mastery of skills related to high school and college preparation and success in further educational and career endeavors.
- Students will demonstrate development of the skills and attributes detailed in our Habits of Heart and Mind, based on teacher-designed rubrics.

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. Cal. Ed. Code 47605(b)(5)(C).

These student outcomes are directly tied to the program goal of providing students with a rigorous standards-based program while preparing them to successfully learn, excel in school, and prepare to be self-motivated, competent, life-long learners.

## II. ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES

Our Board, CEO, Director and other school leaders will work diligently to assess overall school operations and progress towards achieving our mission and vision. In addition to the specific academic achievement goals detailed above, additional goals include:

1. Thrive will realize a higher teacher retention rate and higher teacher attendance rate than the district average, and demonstrate high levels of teacher job satisfaction as evidenced by end-of-year surveys.
2. Thrive will demonstrate a high level of parent satisfaction -- 85% or higher -- based on surveys.
3. The Board of Governors will carry out its responsibilities with the utmost degree of good faith, honesty, integrity, loyalty and undivided service to the school as demonstrated by the actions of the Board and adherence to legal requirements.
4. Financial planning and annual budgets will reflect the appropriate allocation of resources to ensure achievement of the school's vision and mission as demonstrated by balanced budgets that address the school's priorities and successful external audits.

These goals and our progress toward goals will be communicated regularly with our entire school community.



## Element 3: Methodologies for Measuring Student Outcomes

*“A description of the method by which pupil progress in meeting 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.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(C).*

Thrive will administer a variety of meaningful assessments to document and analyze student academic progress over time. Student achievement data gathered through internal and external assessments will provide teachers the opportunity to modify classroom instruction in response to student outcomes and allow the school to modify its program to best address student needs.

Measure of Success		
<i>How we will measure our success</i>		
<b>Outcomes for tomorrow today:</b> Prep for Next Level (on grade level) Measure of Academic Progress NWEA/CC Dra/f&p/ STEP	<b>Ambitious and multidimensional teaching and learning:</b> Presentations of Learning Exhibitions <i>(also see outcomes for tomorrow)</i>	<b>Engaging and Supporting Families:</b> Parent Satisfaction Partnership with local agencies Membership and involvement Self-Efficacy of families and staff
<b>Supportive environment:</b> Observations /Class Dojo Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support Habits of Mind Social Emotional Growth Minimal Behavior referrals	<b>Collaborative and engaged staff:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff Engagement in Learning Community</li> <li>- Leadership Team</li> <li>- Cognitive Coaching</li> <li>- Staff Satisfaction Survey</li> <li>- Credentials / Ed Level</li> <li>- Bi-yearly Evaluation</li> <li>- Retention of employees</li> </ul>	<b>Effective Leaders and Operations:</b> Community Engagement Budget and Reserves Ratios of staff, budget items Class size Student teacher ratio

At Thrive, we believe that learning is a life-long process that includes far more than the acquisition of knowledge. We are committed to supporting each student in continual growth of essential and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, as well as habits of heart and mind. We know that this comprehensive focus will support and empower our students as they develop and share their own individual gifts. Tracking each student's growth in a holistic way is accomplished through a combination of the following:

- *Progress reports* that capture teacher, student and family reflections on development in both skills and habits of heart and mind
- *Adaptive assessment tool* (see "MAP" section below) that is geared more towards measuring growth in skills, versus a one-time snapshot of proficiency provided by standardized tests
- *Student Presentations of Learning and Portfolios of Work* provide tangible evidence of each student's growth over time in a way that honors each student for the unique individual that they are
- *Ongoing observation and communication* between students, teachers and families

## I. PROGRESS REPORTS

---

We believe the purpose of “report cards” is to report progress and growth. Our progress reports will focus on “mastery” of skills, as opposed to traditional “grading”, measuring growth in both essential skills and habits of heart and mind. Provided 2-4 times a year, teachers prepare progress reports by using insights from the following:

1. *Presentations of Learning* by the student throughout the year, which provide students with valuable opportunities to share their insights and learning, while also further developing key 21<sup>st</sup> century skills
2. *Student-led conference with teacher/family/student*, which provides an opportunity for all 3 partners (student, teacher, family educator) to reflect on the student's growth, as well as to set goals for the coming months
3. *In-class work, as well as home school work samples*, which provide the opportunity to track growth in essential skills
4. *In-class interactions and observations*, which provide teachers with the opportunity to track growth in habits of heart and mind

## II. MEASURING ACADEMIC PROGRESS (MAPs)

---

In order to provide a personalized education experience and to understand better when students have achieved specific competencies and are ready to advance, and where they need help, we will use NWEA’s MAPs testing. It is a fully adaptive assessment tool that produces a measure of student growth and achievement. This information is used to personalize learning plans, create focused instructional groupings, as needed, and be a consideration in determining placement. Focused on growth rather than “proficiency”, this assessment is administered at the beginning of the year, midyear, and in the spring, providing an opportunity to track growth throughout the year.

## III. MANDATED STATE ASSESSMENTS

---

As is required by the state charter law, Thrive will meet all statewide standards, including the new Common Core, and conduct the state student assessments required pursuant to Section 60602.5, including the CAASPP tests and other mandated-state assessments. Additional support structures (i.e., tutoring) are in place to ensure that students are meeting or making progress toward the standards measured by the state assessments. Proficiency for our English Learners will be measured in accordance with the CELDT, CAASPP test data, teacher observations, and other school-based measures. Thrive will comply with all regulations, reporting and processes associated with the state’s new Charter School Accountability Plans Under the Local Control Funding Formula.

The Matrix below includes the currently required state assessments.

Measurable Outcomes	Assessment Tools
Students will achieve proficiency in English/Language Arts	CAASPP Pre- and post-diagnostics In-class assessments Portfolios, presentations of learning, project exhibits and other authentic assessments
Students will achieve proficiency in Mathematics	CAASPP Pre- and post-diagnostics In-class assessments Portfolios, presentations of learning, project exhibits and other authentic assessments
Students will achieve proficiency in Science	CST/CAASPP (when adopted) Pre- and post-diagnostics In-class assessments Portfolios, presentations of learning, project exhibits and other authentic assessments
Students will achieve proficiency in History/Social Science	CAASPP Pre- and post-diagnostics In-class assessments Portfolios, presentations of learning, project exhibits and other authentic assessments
ELL students will make substantial progress toward fluency in English	California English Language Development Test (CELDT) Aprendizaje 3 (or other state-required equivalent Spanish language assessment, as applicable) Benchmark assessments In-class assessments & letters Portfolios, presentations of learning, project exhibits and other authentic assessments
Special education students will achieve or make progress toward the learning goals in their Individualized Education Plans	IEP progress and review
Students will develop social and emotional skills	Portfolios, presentations of learning and project exhibits Teacher Narratives Presentations
Students will develop critical thinking and creativity skills	Portfolios, presentations of learning and project exhibits Presentations Writing Assignments Art Projects Use of a learning style inventory
Students will become competent, self-motivated, "lifelong learners"	Participation Logs Portfolios, presentations of learning and project exhibits Projects Demonstrations of learned skills Self-Assessments

#### IV. ASSESSMENT DESIGN

The student performance and assessments take into account several assessment methods anticipated to be based upon the assessment created and researched by Richard J. Stiggins, author of *Student Involved Classroom Assessment*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2001. Stiggins' work is based on the idea that effective assessment must directly correspond to specific achievement targets that have been made apparent to students as part of the instructional program. Various tools and resources allow teachers to determine the most appropriate type of assessment to measure student mastery of a given standard. This method has been included based on proven successful use in elementary and secondary educational settings, and includes such assessments as selected response, essays, performances, and products.

Our faculty will use all pieces of the assessment system in an ongoing effort to examine student performance and revise instructional practices to address student needs. Our goal is continuous improvement to achieve the highest quality educational program that is possible. Staff continuously will be challenged to rethink current pedagogical practices to meet the changing needs of individual students.

## V. USE AND REPORTING OF DATA

---

As discussed throughout this petition, Thrive will utilize the Illuminate student information system to store student information such as registration, class schedule, medical information, and emergency contacts. We will also utilize the Illuminate system to collect, analyze, and report a variety of reports on student achievement, including disaggregated data by content strand, student subgroup, grade-level, and classroom-level analyses. Thrive will use all pieces of the assessment system in an ongoing effort to examine student performance and revise instructional practices to address student needs. The goal is to foster continuous improvement to achieve the highest quality educational program that is possible. In this way, staff are continuously be challenged to rethink current pedagogical practices to meet the changing needs of new and existing student populations. While the Director will have primary responsibility for overseeing all student achievement data entry, analysis, reporting and reflection on data, all teachers will receive intensive training on student achievement data and effective usage of the Illuminate and other online systems.

Thrive's teachers and school leaders also will analyze trends, significant changes, apparent conflicts, and anomalies to track individual student growth over time, evaluate specific, aggregated and disaggregated groups of students, measure performance on the state tests, API, and school-based growth data and authentic assessments to assess the whole school from year to year. Our data analysis will also include attendance rates and comparative data, as appropriate. Thrive will also survey major stakeholder groups (e.g., parents/guardians, students and teachers) at least once annually about our effectiveness and opportunities for improvement. This data will be used by school leaders and staff to address challenges and areas of improvement; all results will be reported to the Board and school community to ensure transparency and accountability.

Thrive believes strongly in creating a two-way dialogue between the school staff and our parents/guardians. Parental involvement and commitment to this rigorous academic school is necessary if their children are to succeed. We expect them to be actively involved in supporting their children's education. Dialogue with the teacher and Director will be ongoing for parents/guardians as they support their child through each academic year. At student-led conferences, parents/guardians review the progress of their child, sharing and discussing test scores, projects, schoolwork, and areas for improvement. At these meetings, home and school strategies will be discussed so that the student has the best chance of continuously improving his/her performance.

Our educational philosophy, curriculum, and anticipated student outcomes grow out of our experience working with youth. We understand the commitment and standards that need to be maintained in order for students to achieve academic success. Once a student realizes that they are capable of "doing the work," they become confident, insightful, and inspired learners.

## Element 4: Governance Structure

*“The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(D)*

### I. NON-PROFIT PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION

---

Upon approval of this charter, Thrive Public School will be a direct-funded independent charter school, operated by Thrive Public Schools, a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation, pursuant to California law.<sup>12</sup> Members of Thrive Public Schools’ Board of Governors, any administrators, managers or employees, and any other committees of the School shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards and District policies and regulations regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

Thrive Public 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 governing board of Thrive will comply with the Brown Act.

Attached, as Appendix B, please find the Thrive Public Schools Articles of Incorporation, Corporate Bylaws, and Conflicts of Interest Code.

### II. BOARD OF GOVERNORS

---

Thrive Public School will be governed by the corporate Board of Governors for Thrive Public Schools, who will maintain active and effective governance in accordance with its adopted corporate bylaws that shall be consistent with the terms of this charter.<sup>13</sup>

The Board shall have a minimum of five (5) members, with a maximum number of eleven (11), as provided in the bylaws of the corporation. The existing Board of Governors shall elect all board members. Any member of the community may refer a potential candidate to the Board’s nominating committee. The Board will promote and utilize an open process prescribed in the Bylaws and Board policies to appoint new members to ensure broad representation of the communities served by Thrive. The Board of Governors shall, in its discretion, form Committees in accordance with its Bylaws and applicable law, to accomplish the objectives and responsibilities of the Board and to ensure that the school meets achieves its mission and goals, which may include a Finance Committee, Nominating Committee, Outreach and Diversity Committee and an Audit Committee.

Except for the initial Board of Governors, each individual Board Member shall hold office unless otherwise removed from office in accordance with these bylaws for terms of two (2) years and until a successor

<sup>12</sup> Thrive’s application for 501(c)(3) status from the IRS is currently pending.

<sup>13</sup> In the event Thrive Public Schools later operates more than one public charter school, the corporate/governance structure will be modeled after such highly successful multi-school operators as High Tech High, with centralized governance and school-site stakeholder input as detailed here.

member has been appointed or elected as required by the position as described below. Board terms are renewable upon mutual consent between the Board and the member.

Each member of the founding Board was carefully chosen for his or her passion and commitment to our mission, dedication to education, area of professional expertise, service to the community, and ability to support the vision and mission of Thrive. Founding/Initial Board members will transition to the permanent Board of Governors. Although not required, the Board will strive to create an odd number of members for voting purposes. The terms of the initial Board of Governors shall be staggered, with two members serving for one (1) year and three members serving for two (2) years. The staggering of the initial members' terms of service will be determined by a lot drawing. Please see Element 1: The Educational Program, Section I.C, "Founders, Board of Governors, and Partners," for more information on the initial Board of Governors.

Thrive's Founder/CEO, Director, and other employees shall not serve on the Board and shall not vote in Board elections. Dr. Nicole Tempel Assisi will serve as the Board Secretary.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47604(b), the District may appoint a representative to sit on the Board of Governors. If the District chooses to do so, Thrive may choose to appoint an additional member to ensure that the Board is maintained with an odd number of members. Subject to additional limitations that may be imposed, no more than 49 percent of the persons serving on the Board of Governors may be interested persons. An interested person is (a) any person compensated by the corporation for services rendered to it within the previous 12 months, whether as a full-time or part-time employee, independent contractor, or otherwise, excluding any reasonable compensation paid to a board member as a board member; and (b) any brother, sister, ancestor, descendant, spouse, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, or father-in-law of such person. The Board will adopt a conflicts of interest code upon charter approval pursuant to required public notice requirements.

### **III. BOARD MEETINGS AND DUTIES**

---

Thrive's Board of Governors will meet at least monthly during the first school year. Additional board meetings may be called as necessary and will comply with all of the provisions of the Brown Act. Agendas for regular meetings will be published in advance and distributed to each member of the Board of Governors and will be posted near the entrance of the school site, at the entrance of the schools' main office, and on the schools' website for public viewing at least 72 hours in advance of scheduled meetings. Agendas for special meetings will be posted at least 24 hours before the meeting. Approved minutes will be posted on the Thrive Public School and will be made easily accessible to parents and other community members upon request.

The Board of Governors is fully responsible for the operation and fiscal affairs of Thrive Public School in accordance with the Corporations Code. The Board shall be responsible for the following, subject to the authority of the board to delegate day to day operations:

- Promote, guard and guide the vision and mission of the school;
- Ensure the school meets its mission and goals;
- Hire, supervise, and evaluate the CEO;
- Hire, per CEO's recommendations, the Director and Business Manager;
- Approve contractual agreements;
- Approve and monitor the school's annual budget, budget revisions, and monthly cash flow statements;

- Act as a fiscal agent. This includes but is not limited to the receipt of funds for the operation of Thrive Public School in accordance with applicable laws and the receipt of grants and donations consistent with the mission of the school;
- Contract with an external independent auditor to produce an annual financial audit according to generally accepted accounting practices;
- Establish operational committees as needed;
- Recruit and appoint new Board members and provide orientation training;
- Participate in fundraising;
- Execute all applicable responsibilities provided for in the California Corporations Code;
- Monitor student achievement to ensure progress toward fulfillment of the school's mission;
- Engage in ongoing strategic planning;
- Approve the schedule of Board meetings;
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and complaint procedures when necessary;
- Approve charter amendments as necessary and submit requests for material revisions as necessary to the District for consideration;
- Approve annual independent fiscal audit and performance report;
- Appoint an administrative panel or act as a hearing body and take action on recommended student expulsions.

#### IV. SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

---

All stakeholder groups within the school community will play a vital role in advancing the vision and mission of Thrive Public School and its programs. Thrive is committed to ensuring that all stakeholder groups -- staff, families, students and community members -- have a voice in matters critical to the school's success.

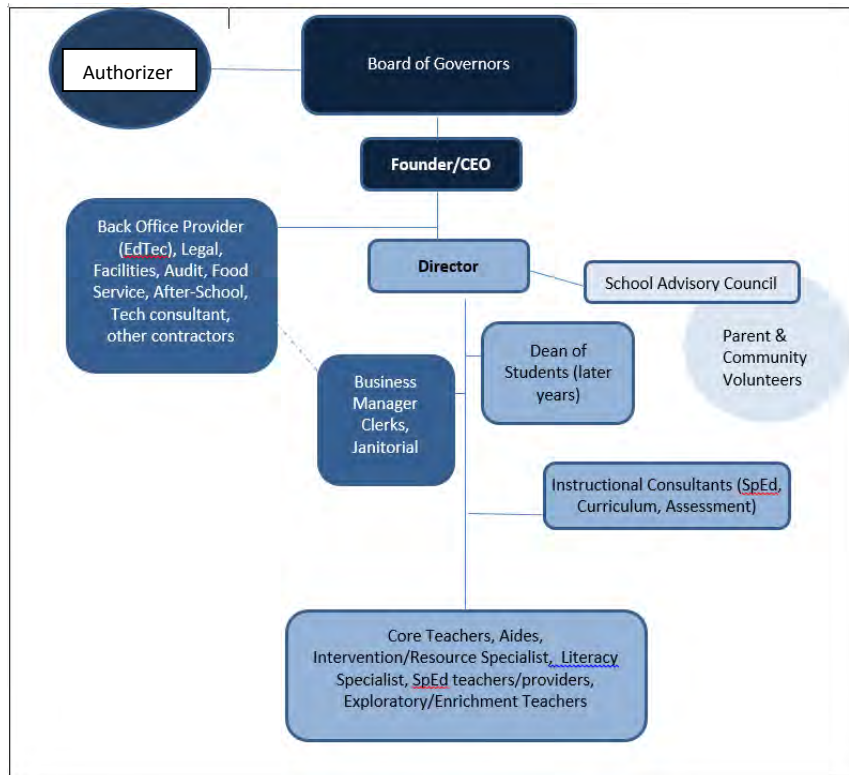
The School Advisory Council will help ensure that parents and teachers are involved in shared leadership at the school. The School Advisory Council will be comprised of elected parent and teacher representatives, via procedures and policies determined by the Director after consultation with teachers and parents (e.g., do the teachers want one representative per grade level or cluster, or just a few representatives from across the school, etc.). As the school grows and needs change over time, the Director will work with the School Advisory Council to make any necessary modifications to the representation on the Council based on the school's needs.

The School Advisory Council will meet regularly and as needed for a minimum of four (4) times each year (when school is in session). The Council will make recommendations and participate in a shared decision making process regarding matters of interest to families and teachers, including budget priorities, resource allocation, school events/activities and fundraising at the local school level. The Director will be responsible for communicating the Council's recommendations to Thrive's CEO and/or Board of Governors (though all parents/teachers will be invited to attend any Board meeting per the Brown Act), and members of the Advisory Council will be invited to make presentations to the Board on specific issues. Other members of the school community will be invited to attend School Advisory Council meetings in a non-voting capacity. Although the School Advisory Council will strive to create a collaborative and transparent decision making process that includes representatives and participation from all stakeholder groups, if agreement cannot be reached on any issue, the school's Director, CEO, and ultimately the Board of Governors, will have final authority on all school related matters.



## V. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Our organization has been designed to ensure the entire school community works effectively and efficiently to achieve our mission. The organizational structure was developed based on the recommendations and best practices of other highly successful charter schools and similar organizations and meets all legal and District mandates, as illustrated below:





## Element 5: Employee Qualifications

*"The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school." CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(E).*

Thrive is committed to recruiting and hiring a community of professionals who are dedicated to the best practices education of all students and the mission of the school.

### I. QUALIFICATIONS OF EMPLOYEES

---

All employees of the Charter School shall be employees of Thrive, an equal employment opportunity employer. Unlawful discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, sexual orientation, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by state or federal law is strictly prohibited.

Employees' job duties and work basis will be negotiated in individual contracts. General job descriptions have been developed for the administrative staff, teachers, other certificated staff, office personnel, and classified staff.

The Board of Governors will be responsible for hiring and supervising the CEO. The CEO shall embody, advocate, and put into operation the mission, vision and strategic direction of Thrive, and oversee all aspects of the organization, including financial, operational, educational operations, and strategic planning. The CEO shall not be a member of the Board of Governors but shall fulfill the role of the corporation's general manager and shall have general supervision, direction and control over the corporation's business and officers, subject to the control of the Board of Governors.

The CEO will hire, supervise, discipline and, as needed, dismiss the school's Director. The Director may, in collaboration with the CEO, hire, promote, discipline and, as needed, dismiss staff and teachers at the school. A formal evaluation process will be developed and the Board will ensure that the CEO is evaluated formally at least once annually, and the CEO, in turn, shall evaluate central office and lead school staff.

#### A. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The CEO reports to the Board of Governors and is responsible for the overall operations of the school, collaborating with the Director, who is the instructional leader of the school. The CEO bears primary responsibility for ensuring the organization meets annual revenue goals and generates an appropriate surplus without compromising the quality of the program, securing the school's long-term sustainability.

Responsibilities include:

#### *Planning and Operations:*

- Collaborate with the Board of Governors to plan and publicize all Board meetings, prepare agendas, arrange logistics, and attend all regularly scheduled Board meetings
- Facilitate strategic planning with the Board of Governors
- Diagnose the gaps between where the school is, versus where it aspires to be, and ensure that strategies and practices are implemented to close these gaps

- Oversee school compliance with all applicable laws, regulatory reporting, contractual obligations, and donor restrictions
- Recruit, develop, evaluate, retain (and as needed, discipline and terminate) high-performing individuals who are passionate about Thrive and its mission
- Recruit, hire (in collaboration with the Board), supervise and evaluate the school's Director;
- Collaborate with Director in recruiting, hiring and supervising the Dean of Students (Year 3);
- Collaborate with the Director to assist him/her in fulfilling the educational mission of the school, including working collectively to resolve any personnel issues or other disputes that may arise
- Assist Director with data analysis and oversee all reporting related to student performance
- Prepare and update as appropriate the Employee Handbook, Health and Safety Handbook and Family Handbook and ensure that all parties receive and acknowledge receipt
- Establish and oversee compliance with the school's emergency and safety plans
- Ensure that an effective performance management system is in place for all staff under his/her direct supervision and ensure that formal evaluations are conducted at least once annually
- Oversee self-evaluation efforts of the school relating to operations, including parent surveys
- Collaborate with Director to establish school computer systems, including classroom computers, data systems, records management and reporting, telecommunications, etc.

*Fundraising and Financial Oversight:*

- Develop appropriate budget projections, in collaboration with back-office services provider.
- Ensure that the annual fundraising target is met as well as additional funds to ensure long-term financial sustainability.
- Develop and maintain relationships with philanthropic, business, and public sectors to increase awareness of the school and increase its donor base within a competitive non-profit (specifically charter school) funding environment.
- Work with the Board on fundraising, including a capital campaign to secure and develop a permanent school site.
- Oversee and manage the operating budget, payroll, contracts and all other financial and accounting operations, supervising the efforts of back-office staff.

*Facilities:*

- Pursue appropriate temporary facilities for the school as needed.
- Secure permanent site for school.
- Oversee relevant planning, construction and other activities to obtain CUP for school site (if needed) and occupancy.
- Secure appropriate furnishing, materials, supplies and equipment for school operations.

*Outreach and Collaboration:*

- Develop and maintain effective relationships with the authorizer, and oversee all aspects of charter renewal, review and compliance.
- Oversee the WASC accreditation process and any related activities.
- Represent the school as a leader in the California charter school community in all advocacy efforts (e.g., legislative efforts to sustain charter school funding levels) as well as with community leaders to maintain support from the local community.
- Conduct outreach and serve as a liaison with local leadership, school faculty and staff, students, parents, community members, partner businesses and organizations, and current and prospective supporters.
- Establish and maintain partnerships with community service organizations, businesses and local councils and resident.
- Assist Director as requested in coordinating parent involvement and volunteering.

*Communications:*

- Oversee the school's website, email/list-serves, newsletter and other means of communication with the parents, teachers, volunteers and other community members.
- Maintain open lines of communication between stakeholders and work to resolve conflicts and disputes that may arise.
- Assist Director in coordinating parent education workshops, Town Hall meetings and other forums to discuss the school's mission, vision and operations with parents and other stakeholders.

*Qualifications include:*

The ideal candidate will have extensive experience in non-profit management, fundraising, budgeting, government relations, communications and marketing. S/he will have the ability to inspire excellence from a diverse staff and to leverage the talents of the Board of Governors. S/he will be a confident decision-maker and possess the ability to facilitate collaboration and teamwork. The ability to multitask and handle a diverse array of responsibilities is key, including attention to numerous details with the ability to shift to big picture, long-term thinking.

The candidate must demonstrate an ability to communicate a genuine passion for Thrive's mission and vision. Knowledge of the California and local education, government, and nonprofit funding environment would be valuable in this position. The CEO must see building and maintaining relationships with parents, foundations, members of the private sector, community leaders, and government staff as an essential part of his/her role. Excellent oral and written communication skills are imperative. A Master's Degree in a relevant field is preferred.

**B. BUSINESS MANAGER**

The Business Manager will function as the lead supervisor and coordinator of all business functions of Thrive, ensuring that appropriate reporting, accounting, fiscal management, record keeping and facilities-related functions are implemented successfully to ensure the organizational health and stability of the school. The Business Manager will work closely with both the CEO and Director, and will supervise non-instructional staff, including office and clerical staff, food services, maintenance, and janitorial staff. The Business Manager will also serve as the primary point of contact for Thrive's anticipated initial back-office services provider, EdTec, as well as other contractors such as after-school providers, transportation, auditors and more.

*Qualifications include:*

The ideal candidate will have experience in non-profit management, budgeting, government relations, operations and communications. S/he will be a confident decision-maker and possess the ability to facilitate collaboration and teamwork. The ability to multi-task and handle a diverse array of responsibilities is key, including attention to numerous details.

While experience in non-profit management and, specifically, in the charter school movement are pluses, they are not required. Excellent oral and written communication is required. A Master's Degree in a relevant field is preferred.

Responsibilities of the Business Manager include:

*Planning and Operations:*

- Assist CEO in coordinating with the Board of Governors to plan and publicize all Board meetings, prepare agendas, arrange logistics
- Attend all regularly scheduled Board meetings and give appropriate updates and reports on school activities;
- Assist CEO and Director in ensuring compliance with applicable laws, regulatory reporting, contractual obligations, and donor restrictions;
- Prepare (with outside experts as needed, including legal) and update as appropriate the Employee Handbook, Health and Safety Handbook and Family Handbook, and ensure all parties receive and acknowledge receipt;
- Provide and implement an emergency plan that details procedures for staff, students and volunteers;
- Oversee facilities operations including maintenance, custodial, grounds keeping and other upkeep in collaboration with the District;
- Secure appropriate furnishing, materials, supplies and equipment for school operations;
- Oversee, in collaboration with back-office provider and legal, HR functions including background checks, medical clearance, credentials and other requirements and record-keeping for staff and volunteers;
- Facilitate creation of school computer systems, including classroom computers, data systems, records management and reporting, telecommunications, etc.;

*Fundraising and Financial Oversight:*

- Assist in developing appropriate budget projections, in collaboration with EdTec, CEO and Director;
- Assist in fundraising efforts via grants and corporate sponsorships;
- Assist in managing the operating budget, payroll, contracts and all other financial and accounting operations, supervising the efforts of back office staff.

*Outreach and Communications*

- Assist in overseeing the school's website, email/list-serves and distribution of newsletters and other means of communication with the parents, teachers, volunteers and other community members;
- Assist school site personnel in overseeing applications for admission and implementation of proper lottery procedures (as needed) in compliance with applicable law and regulations as well as collection of post-lottery (as needed) enrollment paperwork.

**C. DIRECTOR**

The Director is the educational and instructional leader of the school, and also collaborates with the CEO on school operations and management. Responsibilities include:

*Educational Leadership:*

- Recruit, hire, train and supervise talented instructional staff, including Dean of Students, in implementing best practices consistent with Thrive's educational philosophies;

- Provide hands-on guidance to teachers as they create and implement a project-based/blended learning curriculum;
- Provide hands-on guidance to teachers in the development of multiple assessments;
- Use multiple sources of data to develop a plan for the improvement of student achievement and oversee the collection, analysis and utilization of this data in relation to specific students, teachers and curricula;
- Oversee teacher professional development via both in-house training sessions (including a two week summer teacher training and planning session), visiting lecturers, external professional development opportunities and other resources (articles, web-based resources, and development of a school professional resources library);
- Develop and implement an evaluation process for all instructional staff and ensure that formal evaluations are conducted at least twice annually;
- Develop partnerships with university researchers, other area schools and educational consultants to support teacher's professional development and personal research endeavors;
- Create and oversee Thrive's policies and programs relating to Special Education, English Learners and Gifted and high-achieving students and other sub-groups;
- Oversee and assist teachers with behavior management, including handling student suspension, expulsion and other disciplinary issues as needed;
- Promote the school mission and philosophy throughout the school community;

*Communications and Outreach:*

- Lead the School Advisory Council and oversee parent volunteer efforts;
- Schedule and participate in regular family education and Town Hall meetings designed to communicate the school's mission, vision and curricula to families, provide updates on school progress and operations, and cover other areas of interest to community stakeholders;
- Ensure open and clear lines of communication with all stakeholders, including working to resolve conflicts and disputes as they may arise between community members;
- Collaborate with CEO in providing regular communications to families via email, the school's website, letters home, and other avenues;
- Maintain positive relationships with authorizer and its related entities;
- Actively participate in Charter organization activities (CCSA, CSDC, etc.) and become an active leader in the Charter community;
- Work effectively with the media.

*School Management:*

- Oversee the day-to-day management of the school site with a commitment to ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty and staff, including supervision of janitorial/custodial staff;
- Work with the CEO and Board in the strategic planning for the growth of the school
- Attend all regularly scheduled Board meetings and give appropriate updates and reports on school activities;
- Assist CEO with budgets, charter renewal, outreach, partnerships and other duties as required.

*Qualifications include:*

Our ideal Director is a visionary educational leader whose experience, knowledge, and drive will set the tone for a supportive school climate that challenges and motivates our students, teachers, and families to achieve our ambitious mission and vision. Resourcefulness, flexibility, and an entrepreneurial spirit are key qualities for a new charter school leader. A commitment to the educational philosophy of our school and demonstrated passion about our ideals is imperative.

The ideal candidate will have:

- At least five years of teaching experience, ideally in a K-8 school;
- A Master's Degree in Education and/or Administrative Credential or equivalent;
- Experience recruiting, hiring, training and supervising teachers, ideally in a charter, independent or public school that has a record of high achievement;
- Significant experience with a project-based approach to teaching and learning, blended learning, social emotional learning and student-centered/data driven instruction;
- Knowledge of, or experience with, diverse populations, English learners, special education and GATE;
- Excellent communication skills and experience motivating and working with a variety of diverse stakeholders and local community members;
- Fluency in a second language preferred;
- Experience with school operations, budgets and organizational management.

#### **D. DEAN OF STUDENTS**

The Director, in collaboration with the CEO, will recruit and hire the Dean of Students to start in Year 3, with a second Dean added in Year 5, with one Dean focusing on elementary grades and the other focusing on middle grades. Selection of the Dean(s) will be based on proven experience in educational leadership, educational vision and relevant experience with diverse children, demonstrated ability in program design and/or development, entrepreneurial ability, and interest and commitment to educational reform.

The Deans will support the instructional vision and operations of the school by working collaboratively with the Director and other members of the school team.

*Responsibilities include:*

- Assist Director with recruiting, hiring, supervising, coaching, and evaluating all faculty and instructional staff, including providing hands-on guidance and coaching to teachers in curriculum and assessment development, data analysis, instructional practice and more;
- Assist Director in planning and implementing professional development;
- Manage intervention programs for academically at-risk students, including coordinating all aspects of Special Education and the Student Success Team to ensure:
  - Compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and policies
  - Supervision, support and evaluation of Special Education services providers
  - Helping identify students in need of intervention
  - Communicating with staff and parents regarding interventions
  - Initiating new intervention programs as necessary
  - Training staff (instructional aides, tutors) and volunteers
  - Using assessment data to track the success of interventions
  - Attending SST and IEP meetings
  - Providing staff development on intervention programs
  - Providing small group and one on one literacy intervention
- Oversee and support student attendance including communicating with parents regarding attendance and truancy;
- Assist Director in overseeing and planning parent-teacher conferences, parent meetings and parent education;
- Oversee parent volunteer training and assignments;

- Ongoing schedule management
- Coordinate all state testing (CAASPP, CELDT, etc.), including:
  - Attending trainings related to the administration of state tests
  - Training staff in preparation for test administration
  - Ensuring the security of test documents
  - Scheduling and supervising test administration
  - Coordinating the submission of test materials
  - Supporting teachers with test administration (make-up tests, etc.)

*Qualifications include:*

- Leadership, supervision and staff development experience;
- Experience teaching English language learners in an urban educational setting;
- Strong interpersonal skills, including the ability to interact effectively with staff members, parents, district personnel, vendors and community stakeholders;
- Proficiency in the collection and analysis of student achievement data;
- Knowledge of Special Education law and services;
- Advanced degree, preferably in education and/or administrative credential; and
- In-depth understanding of and commitment to the School's vision and mission.
- Spanish-speaking preferred.

#### **E. TEACHING STAFF**

Thrive's teachers and all paraprofessionals will meet the requirements for employment of California Education Code section 47605(l) and the applicable provisions of *No Child Left Behind*. These documents will be maintained on file at Thrive and made available to authorizing district upon request.

*Responsibilities include:*

- Backward design curriculum construction and implementation of student-centered lessons that incorporate the school's definition of an educated person and emphasize active learning strategies, project-based learning and blended learning
- Assessing student progress and differentiating instruction
- Maintaining frequent communication with students, student's families, colleagues, and other school stakeholders
- Maintaining regular, punctual attendance. Teachers will have an on-site commitment of 8:00 to 4:00 each day, to allow for collaborative planning time, tutoring students and other duties that may be assigned.

*Qualifications Include:*

Selection of teachers will be based on their teaching experience and their ability to demonstrate curriculum creation, implementation and assessment and classroom instructional capabilities in the context of the Thrive instructional model. All teachers will be required to possess and maintain a current California Commission on Teacher Credentialing Certificate, permit, or other document that would satisfy school district requirements and meet all legal requirements to teach in California public schools. All core subject teachers will be "highly qualified" as that term is defined under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), and further defined by California state regulations implementing the NCLB requirements, unless such requirements are not deemed by the federal or state government to apply to charter schools such as Thrive. In addition, Thrive will place priority on hiring teachers who possess a

Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development (CLAD) certificate (or equivalent California Commission on Teacher Credentialing EL certification) to ensure that they have appropriate academic preparation to address the needs of students who are English learners. Thrive also will actively seek to recruit and hire teachers who possess a Bilingual Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development (BCLAD) certificate (or equivalent). The ideal teaching candidate will have:

- 2+ years' experience teaching K-8 students
- Experience at a high performing school
- Enthusiasm for the school's values, mission and educational philosophy
- Proven commitment to project-based learning, blended learning, multiple assessments, data driven instruction and a collaborative approach to teaching and learning

#### **F. INTERVENTION/RESOURCE SPECIALIST AND LITERACY SPECIALIST**

Two specialized teacher coaching and intervention/support positions (and more in later years as enrollment increases) will work with faculty and school leaders to provide targeted support and interventions to students (English Learners, special needs, literacy development, etc.). Responsibilities will include:

- Provide direct instruction/support to students as identified by the Student Success Team
- Provide technical expertise to teachers and staff as it relates to serving English Learners and other students with special needs (gifted, students with disabilities, etc.)
- Establish effective working relationships with teachers, staff and parents
- Work closely with special education services providers as needed to meet needs of individual students
- Demonstrate teaching strategies and utilizes materials considered appropriate and effective in meeting both academic and non-academic needs of identified students with special needs
- Provide consultation to school staff and parents which may relate to student assessment, specialized instruction or behavior management
- Help train volunteer tutors in working with students

In addition to meeting the qualifications of a teacher as noted above, these teachers will be expected to have additional experience and qualifications including:

- Mild to Moderate Special Education Credential with a RSP certification desired for Intervention/Resource Specialist; Literacy expertise and advanced training desired for Literacy Specialist
- Evidence of successful specialized experience (e.g. special education) is desired
- Ability to administer and interpret results of assessment instruments
- Commitment and experience working with a diverse population in an urban school
- Experience working with parents and families
- Experience with community resources referrals
- Excellent communicator and facilitator
- Strong commitment to the Thrive mission and values
- Comfortable with a start-up environment, including fast growth and flexible roles



## G. ACADEMIC COACHES

Academic coaches will assist teachers, including specialists in literacy and math, who will work directly with students one-on-one and in small groups. Similar in function to a teachers' aide, but more focused on providing direct support to students, these Coaches will work closely with classroom teachers in ensuring each student receives the support he/she needs to succeed. While Academic Coaches are not required to hold credentials, Thrive will ensure that all Coaches possess a Bachelor's degree. They will be expected to demonstrate subject knowledge and the ability to work well with students, as well as the ability to carry out the roles and responsibilities as stated in their specific job description.

### Additional Staff

Other Certificated Staff: A pool of day-to-day substitutes will be established and a list of qualified substitutes will be maintained.

Office Personnel: Clerical staff will be selected by the Director on an applicant and interview basis. Selection will be based on experience and the ability to perform the job duties for that position.

Responsibilities will include:

- Answering phones
- Filing reports
- Enrolling students
- Managing and monitoring office operations in collaboration with Business Manager, CEO and Director
- Ordering and purchasing supplies and vendor management
- Developing and implementing clerical and administrative procedures for daily school operations
- Preparing correspondence, reports, bulletins, files, forms, memorandums, and performing other duties as assigned
- Bilingual translation and communication with parents

## II. ASSURANCES REGARDING APPLICABLE LAW

Thrive believes that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. Thrive shall 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. Thrive also is committed to providing a school that is free from sexual harassment and any other type of harassment based upon protected characteristics (race, age, gender, etc.). Thrive will implement a harassment policy to prevent sexual and other types of harassment and to immediately resolve any concerns or complaints of a harassment nature, including employee to employee, employee to student, student to student, and student to employee. School staff will be trained on the harassment policy annually.

Thrive Public School will comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding background checks and clearance of all personnel, and prohibitions regarding the employment of any person who has been

convicted of a violent or serious felony. Thrive Public School teachers and all para-professionals will meet the requirements for employment of California Education Code § 47605(l) and the applicable provisions of *No Child Left Behind*. The school shall ensure that all teachers hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit or other document that a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. The school will actively recruit credentialed teachers to minimize the use of teachers holding emergency credentials.

Thrive Public School will comply with all State and federal laws concerning the maintenance and disclosure of employee records.

Thrive Public School will comply with all State and federal mandates and legal guidelines relative to NCLB.

## Element 6: Health and Safety Procedures

*“The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in § 44237.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(F).*

The school will adopt and implement a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies, developed in consultation with the school's insurance carriers. (A sample draft Plan is included in Appendix G.) The Health and Safety Plan will be reviewed and revised (as needed) annually, and a copy will be provided to the School Police Department in the format requested. The Health and Safety Plan also will be kept on file in the main office and will be available for review upon request. All school staff will be trained annually on safety procedures. The policies will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in the school's staff development efforts and governing board policies. At a minimum, the Policy will address the following topics:

- A requirement that all enrolling students and staff provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment in non-charter public schools. Records of student immunizations shall be maintained, and staff shall honor County requirements for periodic Mantoux Tuberculosis (TB) tests.
- Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires and earthquakes.
- A policy requiring that instructional and administrative staff receive training in emergency response, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent.
- Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines.
- A policy that the school will be housed in facilities that has a valid certificate of occupancy. Periodic inspections shall be undertaken, as necessary, to ensure such applicable safety standards are met.
- A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace.
- A requirement that each employee of the School to submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Section 44237.
- A policy for reporting child abuse, acts of violence, and other improprieties as mandated by federal, state, and local agencies.
- Compliance with all health and safety laws and regulations that apply to non-charter public schools, including those required by CAL/OSHA, the California Health and Safety Code, and EPA.
- A policy that details pest management at the school that is consistent with the Healthy Schools Act (Ed Code §17608).

### A. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

Employees and contractors of the Thrive Public School will be required to submit to a criminal background check and to furnish a criminal record summary to the extent required by Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1. New employees not possessing a valid California Teaching Credential must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary.

## **B. FACILITY**

For our first year of operations, we anticipate that we will need:

- 7 core classrooms
- Office space for the CEO, Director, Intervention/Resource Specialist, Business Manager and front office (Admin/Clerical)
- Lunch/Auditorium/Multi-Purpose Room
- Outdoor play space
- (Ideally): a library, computer lab, tinkering lab, family/community resource center, and teacher meeting/work space.

By the time we reach K-8 capacity with 756 students enrolled, we anticipate we will need 28 core classrooms, plus an expansion of the office, lab, multi-purpose and resource facilities.

Assuming approximately 20-25 square feet per student for core classroom space, and a total of approximately 50-60 square feet in combined campus facilities per student (though this could vary significantly and we could potentially make do with less space, and ideally would have even more), in Year 1 we estimate needing approximately 8,500-10,000 square foot facility, and by Year 5, a 38,000-45,000 square foot facility.

Thrive is working with InSite Charter School Services, a highly experienced real estate brokerage and consulting firm that helps charter schools identify and secure both temporary and permanent school facilities. InSite already has identified three viable facilities options, all properly zoned for school use; one of these facilities is move-in ready and would not require any tenant improvements as it was previously occupied by another charter school. One facility would only permit our occupancy for one year but the other two could accommodate at least some growth until we secure a permanent home. Thrive is aggressively pursuing these options.

Our leadership structure is designed to ensure that our school Director is able to focus on instruction, while our Founder/CEO focuses on operational needs, including facilities. Given the disparate needs between our first year of operations and when we reach full enrollment capacity, we will focus our initial efforts on securing a temporary facility for our shorter-term needs via a lease. Ultimately, we hope to purchase or secure a long-term lease for a “permanent” home for our school. We will work with private donors and lenders, and pursue appropriate financing options, including financing and reimbursement programs offered by the state and local governments. Thrive will ensure that any private facility used by the school will meet all applicable building codes, is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and all other applicable fire, health, building and structural safety requirements.

## **C. AUXILIARY SERVICES**

School staff will conduct annual reviews to ensure all auxiliary services are safe (food services, transportation, custodial services, hazardous materials) by developing appropriate policies and awareness training.

**D. IMMUNIZATIONS, TUBERCULOSIS TESTING, AND SCREENING**

All enrolling students and staff will provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment in non-charter public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Sections 6000-6075. Records of student immunizations shall be maintained, and staff shall honor County requirements for periodic Tuberculosis (TB) tests. Faculty and staff will be tested for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment and working with students as required by Education Code Section 49406. All enrolling students will have screening of vision, hearing, and scoliosis to the same extent as would be required if the pupils attended a non-charter public school. Thrive Public School will adopt policies consistent with Ed Code § 49450, et seq., as applicable to the grade levels served by the school.

**E. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Thrive Public School shall secure and maintain, at a minimum, insurance coverage as required by the District pursuant to the District's requirements (minimum coverage amounts, etc.), to protect Thrive Public School from any claims that may arise from its operations. Thrive will annually submit all required documentation regarding insurance coverage to the District. Thrive Public School will secure and maintain the following required insurance coverage:

1. Commercial General Liability, including Fire Legal Liability, coverage of \$5,000,000 per Occurrence and in the Aggregate.
2. Workers' Compensation Insurance in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code adequate to protect the Thrive Public School from claims that may arise from its operations pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Act (Statutory Coverage). The Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage must also include Employers Liability coverage with limits of \$1,000,000/\$1,000,000/\$1,000,000.
3. Commercial Auto Liability, including Owned, Leased, Hired, and Non-owned, coverage with limits of \$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.
4. Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by Thrive Public School to cover all charter school employees who handle, process or otherwise have responsibility for charter school funds, supplies, equipment or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be \$50,000 per occurrence, with no self-insured retention.
5. Professional Educators Errors and Omissions liability coverage with minimum limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate.
6. Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage with minimum limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate. Coverage may be held as a separate policy or included by endorsement in the Commercial General Liability or the Errors and Omissions Policy.
7. Employment Practices Legal Liability coverage with limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate.

Coverages and limits of insurance may be accomplished through individual primary policies or through a combination of primary and excess policies. As appropriate, others shall be named as an additional insured or covered party as respects Thrive's operations.

Should Thrive Public School deem it prudent and/or desirable to have insurance coverage for damage or theft to school, employee or student property, for student accident, or any other type of insurance coverage not listed above, such insurance shall not be provided by the District and its purchase shall be the responsibility of the Charter School. In addition, Thrive agrees to indemnify the District from any against any claims brought by any third party arising out of its operation of the charter school.

## Element 7: Racial and Ethnic Balance

*“The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing with the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(G).*

### I. OUTREACH TO ACHIEVE RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

We expect that the students will reflect the current community demographics as described in *Element 1, Section A: Targeted Student Population*; Thrive will strive to meet the broader demographics of the diverse state of California. Thrive Public School will continually review and expand its outreach efforts in order to achieve its goal of enrolling a student population that reflects the economic and academic balance of the community.

Thrive Public School will pursue a wide variety of venues for the distribution of information about the school, such as local events, community centers, parks and recreation activities, social service agencies, shopping centers, apartment complexes and other dwellings, etc. The following is a sampling of the organizations and locations we will target in our outreach efforts:

#### Preschools/Head Start/Day Care Centers

A Child's Place Preschool  
Associated Students Child Care Center  
Children of the Rainbow Day Care  
City Heights Child Development Center  
College Ave. Preschool  
College Park Preschool  
Creative & Performing Arts Child Care Center  
Garfield Children's Center  
Kensington Community Church Preschool  
Miss Debbie's Day Care  
Montezuma Child Care Center  
Neighborhood House Association Head Start Preschools throughout the community (Altadena, Darnall, Early Link Webster, Hamilton Twilight, Home Avenue, John Marshall, Rolando, Urban Village)  
Naval Station MWR Child Development Center  
Our Savior's Lutheran Preschool

#### Community Associations/Councils

Adams Avenue Business Association  
City Heights Community Development Corporation  
City Heights Foundation  
Normal Heights Community Association  
University Heights Community Association

#### Service Organizations

Alliance for African Assistance  
Boys & Girls Club, Encanto  
Copley YMCA

Episcopal Community Services  
Kensington's Garden Angels  
Mid-City Community Action Network (midcitycan.org)  
Neighborhood House Association  
Speak City Heights  
Public Libraries (especially parent education/literacy programs)

#### Community Events

Adams Avenue Street Fair (September 2013)  
City Heights Farmers Markets (weekly)  
City Heights Youth Fair (April)  
Kensington's Holiday at Home (May)  
Rolondo Street Fair (March)  
San Diego Lantern Festival (July 2013)  
Trolley Barn Park Summer Concert Series (Friday evenings throughout the summer)

Thrive Public School also will meet with local Council representatives, as well as the numerous colleges and universities in the area (San Diego State University, San Diego Continuing Education – Mid-City, etc.). As needed, Thrive also will seek to use local newspapers, television, and radio advertising to the extent possible to inform the parents and others about the presence of the charter school within their community. Marketing and other informational materials about the school will be developed in English, Spanish and other languages as needed.

#### **A. FEDERAL COMPLIANCE**

To the extent that Thrive Public School is a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, Thrive Public School has agreed to meet all of the programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act and other applicable federal grant programs. Thrive Public School agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act and other applicable federal programs, including, but not limited to, documentation related to required parental notifications, appropriate credentialing of teaching and paraprofessional staff, the implementation of Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services, where applicable, or any other mandated federal program requirement. The mandated requirements of NCLB include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Notify parents at the beginning of each school year of their “right to know” the professional qualifications of their child’s classroom teacher including a timely notice to each individual parent that the parent’s child has been assigned, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified.
- Develop jointly with, and distribute to, parents of participating children, a school-parent compact.
- Hold an annual Title I meeting for parents of participating Title I students, if applicable.
- Develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy.



## Element 8: Admissions Requirements

*“Admission requirements, if applicable.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(H).*

Thrive Public School will be open to all students residing in California who wish to attend the school, as outlined in Education Code § 47605(d)(2)(A). Thrive Public School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220, including actual or perceived disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, nationality, 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 association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics.

### A. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS & PREFERENCES

Thrive Public School will be an open enrollment, tuition-free public school with no specific requirements for admission (e.g., minimum grade point average, test scores, discipline records, etc.). Enrollment to the school shall be open to any resident of the State of California. Enrollment will be on a first come, first served basis. Thrive will enroll all pupils who wish to attend to the extent that space allows. CA Ed. Code § 47605(d)(2)(A).

Thrive Public School is fully committed to serving all students who wish to attend, regardless of socio-economic status, race/ethnicity, academic achievement, special education needs or other “risk factors.”

As a charter school, Thrive Public School is a school of choice, and Thrive Public School may have more students interested in attending the school than there are spaces available. If the number of students who wish to attend the school exceeds the openings available, entrance shall be determined by single random public drawing in accordance with Education Code §47605(d)(2) and all federal requirements. In accordance with applicable law and federal guidance, the following groups of students will be exempted from the lottery:

- Students who are currently enrolled
- Siblings of admitted students
- Children of teachers and staff not to exceed 10% of total enrollment.

Admissions preference will be given first to residents of the District. During any period of funding for the Public Charter Schools Grant Program (“PCSGP”), requirements of the PCSGP program will be followed.

No other admissions exemptions or preferences will be assigned. The Thrive Board of Governors may review and revise this preference policy as necessary for the well-being of the school.

### B. ADMISSION PROCESS AND OPEN ENROLLMENT

In order to be included in the admissions lottery (if a lottery is necessary), families must submit an application that includes the student’s name, grade, birthday, and contact information for the family. Application materials will be made available in English and Spanish. The enrollment period will be advertised in English and Spanish through flyers, posters in prominent locations throughout the community, during informational meetings for parents, and announced on the school’s website. Thrive Public School also will attempt to advertise through local media as the school’s budget permits. In the

event that the enrollment deadline is extended due to available space, the revised deadline to apply will also be announced to the community using similar venues.

Open enrollment window will be set annually by the board of governors. During our first year enrollment began the first business day after January 1 and continue through the last Friday of April of the same year.<sup>14</sup> All interested families will be required to submit a completed Admissions Application Form directly to the school before 4:30 p.m. on the date of the annual deadline, which will be clearly indicated on the form and in all communications and notices (websites, flyers, etc.) regarding admission to the school. Submitted Admission Application Forms will be date- and time-stamped and student names will be added to an application roster to track receipt. Families who apply after the enrollment deadline will be added to the wait list in the order the applications are received.

Following the open enrollment period, applications will be counted to determine if any grade level has received a number of applications that exceed available seats. If the number of students who have applied for any grade exceed capacity as of the date of the application deadline the school will hold a public random lottery to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level. In the event that the school has not received sufficient enrollment forms to fill to capacity, the enrollment period may be extended beyond the April deadline. In the case of an extended deadline for open enrollment, the date for the public random drawing, if required, may also be extended accordingly. All families who have applied for admission will be advised by mail of any changes to the date and time for the public random drawing.

All admissions timelines will be subject to annual review and adjustment by the Board of Governors to meet the needs of the school while providing ample time for applicants. Changes will be reflected in adopted Board policies.

### **C. PUBLIC RANDOM DRAWING PROCEDURES**

As stated, should the number of pupils who wish to attend the charter school exceed the school's capacity, then admission will be determined by a public random drawing in accordance with Education Code § 47605(d)(2)(B). Lottery rules and deadlines will be communicated via the Admissions Application Form, flyers/posters, and the Thrive Public School website. Public notice will be posted regarding the date and time of the public drawing once the deadline date has passed. Notice will include an explanation that parents/guardians do not need to be present at the lottery, but may attend if they choose to do so.

The Thrive Public School Director and at least one other school employee will conduct the admissions lottery as a public event to ensure that lottery procedures are fairly executed.

The Thrive Public School lottery will be set annually by the Board of Governors and will be posted on our website and in the school office. During the first year of operations it will take place during the last week of April. The lottery will be conducted at a time that is convenient for a majority of interested parties and will be open to the public. The school will inform parents of all applicants and all interested parties of the rules to be followed during the lottery process, location, date and time of the lottery via mail at

<sup>14</sup> For the first year, depending on the timing of charter approval, the open enrollment period may be extended to allot sufficient time for thorough outreach and recruitment.

least two weeks prior to the lottery date. The school will choose a date and time for the lottery (either on the weekend or after 6 pm on a weekday) so that most interested parties will be able to attend. The lottery will be held at the school site if the school facility can accommodate all interested parties. Thrive authorizer representatives and respected members of the community is welcome to come to officially observe the lottery to verify lottery procedures are fairly executed.

Admissions Application Forms, the manual record of all lottery participants and their assigned lottery numbers, and other lottery-related documents will be physically filed on campus, and lottery results and waiting lists will be readily available in the school's main office for inspection upon request. Each applicant's admissions application will be kept on file for the academic year with his or her assigned lottery number in the school database and on his or her enrollment application.

Students who are offered spots will be notified by mail and asked to complete an Enrollment Packet by a predetermined deadline (approximately two weeks for initial post-lottery enrollment; an expedited timeline will be required for families offered spots off the wait list) to secure their spot. Thrive Public School staff will be available to assist families in completing this paperwork if needed.

#### **D. WAIT LIST**

The random public lottery determines applicants' wait list status. Those who apply after the lottery deadline are added to the end of the lottery wait list in the order they are received. Vacancies that occur during the school year will be filled according to the wait list. When an offer occurs during the school year, families will be contacted in the order of the wait list and typically will be given 48 hours to decide whether or not to accept a space at the school. In the event that no such wait list exists where the space is available, the space will be made available on a first come, first served basis to the next interested family at the appropriate grade level.

The wait list for the current school year remains active until Thrive Public School's admissions period commences for the following year. Applications are only valid for the current year. Applicants must reapply for the lottery annually if the school is unable to offer them admission for the current year.

#### **E. MCKINNEY VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT**

Thrive Public School will 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 youth.

#### **F. NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND**

Thrive Public School will adhere to all admission and enrollment provisions of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) pertaining to Public School Choice and other legal requirements.

## Element 9: Financial Audits

*"The manner in which annual, independent, financial audits 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 authority." CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(I).*

### I. BUDGETS

---

Each spring Thrive Public School will establish an annual budget, monthly cash flow projections, and a three-year financial projection. The CEO will prepare the budget in collaboration with the Business Manager and EdTec (or other back-office services provider), and work with the Finance Committee of the Board to ensure the budget meets the programmatic needs of the school within the anticipated revenue. The annual budget will include all estimated revenues and expenditures for the year and will also include ample reserves to accommodate cash flow challenges. At this time, a number of contingency budgets will be prepared to provide a framework in the case of an unexpected increase in expenses or cut in revenue. The budget development process will begin in March of the preceding fiscal year and continue through the Governor's May revisions of the State budget. The budget and three-year projections will then be presented to the Thrive Public School Board of Governors for discussion and approval. Thrive will maintain a reserve of at least 3% at all times to cover any contingencies.

The CEO and Finance Committee will review monthly cash flow statements and will present comprehensive budget updates to the Board at least four times each fiscal year. The CEO and Board of Governors will also recommend formal budget revisions as needed to ensure financial stability and adequate cash flow. The Thrive Public School Board will adopt formal policies regarding the deposit of funds, investment procedures, and internal financial controls. Thrive Public School's first year operational budget, as well as cash flow and financial projections for the first five years can be found in Appendix E. An updated budget has been submitted to reflect the revisions contained herein in this request for material revision of the charter.

#### A. BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

As noted in Element 5, above, the CEO will have ultimate responsibility for financial matters at the school under the policies adopted by and oversight provided by the school's Board of Governors. The CEO will supervise the Business Manager, who will manage the day-to-day financial operations of the school in collaboration with the school's back-office services provider.

Thrive Public School and any contracted back-office business services provider will employ all Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

#### B. ANNUAL AUDIT

Each fiscal year an independent auditor will conduct an audit of the financial affairs of Thrive Public School to verify the accuracy of the school's financial statements, attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and review the school's internal controls.

To the extent required under applicable federal laws for audits of the major federal programs, the audit scope will expand to be in compliance with the requirements described in the U.S. Office of

Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133, audits of states, local governments, and nonprofit organizations. Should OMB Circular A-133 be rescinded, audits of the major federal programs will be conducted in compliance with standards and provisions approved by OMB.

Thrive Public School will engage an independent public accountant with education finance experience certified by the State of California and approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider, to audit the school's financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing standards and the audit guide issued by the Controller of the State of California. The Thrive Board of Governors will be responsible for contracting and overseeing the independent audit. The school's plan for providing information is to gather, prepare, and organize documents, materials, and other information as requested by the independent auditor. Fiscal statements audited by the auditor, who will be a Certified Public Accountant, will be submitted to the District, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The CEO will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Charter School Board of Governors 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 public record to be provided to the public upon request.

Pursuant to AB1137, Thrive Public School will provide any necessary financial statements to the San Diego Unified School District, the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE), and California Department of Education. Additionally, the following reports will be submitted to the District, in the required format and within timelines to be specified by the District each year:

- Provisional Budget – Spring prior to the operating fiscal year
- Final Budget – August of the budget fiscal year
- First Interim Projections – November of operating fiscal year
- Second Interim Projections – February of operating fiscal year
- Unaudited Actuals – July following the end of the fiscal year
- Audited Actuals – November following the end of the fiscal year
- Classification Report – monthly the Monday after close of the last day of the school month
- Statistical Report – monthly the Friday after the last day of the school month
- P1 Report - first week of January
- P2 Report - first week of April
- Calendar and Bell Schedule – annually by November
- Other reports as requested by the District

### **C. DISTRICT OVERSIGHT COSTS**

In accordance with applicable law, the District may charge for the actual costs of supervisory oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 1% of the Charter School's revenue, or the District may charge for the actual costs of supervisory oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 3% if the Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District may charge the maximum supervisory oversight fee allowed under the law as it may change from time to time.

## Element 10: Student Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

*"Procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled." CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(J).*

### I. DISCIPLINE POLICY

---

Thrive Public School will strive to develop and maintain a school culture that reinforces positive behavior and eliminates the distractions caused by student misbehavior. One of most fundamental priorities will be ensuring that the school has a safe, enriching environment where students are cared for, supported and effectively educated. We believe, based on principles of Restorative Justice that students respond better to caring structures, positive reinforcements, mediation and alternative forms of discipline than they do to traditional detentions, and suspensions. Restorative justice, featured recently on *60 Minutes*, is based on centuries-old cultural and religious philosophies, includes a set of principles that guide the response to conflict and harm. "Restorative justice's three main goals are:

- Accountability. Restorative justice strategies provide opportunities for wrongdoers to be accountable to those they have harmed, and enable them to repair the harm they caused to the extent possible.
- Community safety. Restorative justice recognizes the need to keep the community safe through strategies that build relationships and empower the community to take responsibility for the well-being of its members.
- Competency development. Restorative justice seeks to increase the pro-social skills of those who have harmed others, address underlying factors that lead youth to engage in delinquent behavior, and build on strengths in each young person." (*Implementing Restorative Justice: A Guide for Schools*, [icjia.state.il.us/public/pdf/BARJ/SCHOOL%20BARJ%20GUIDEBOOK.pdf](http://icjia.state.il.us/public/pdf/BARJ/SCHOOL%20BARJ%20GUIDEBOOK.pdf).)

Expectations for appropriate behavior will be clearly articulated to students and families during orientation meetings and will be provided as written policy in a Family Handbook.

Teachers will be trained during professional development meetings to use effective classroom management strategies to maximize instruction and minimize student misbehavior, and there will be school-wide systems for assigning both positive and negative consequences. Students who do not adhere to stated expectations for behavior and who violate the school's rules may expect consequences for their behavior. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Warning, verbal and/or written
- Individual conference with the teacher
- Loss of privileges
- Individual behavior contract
- Referral to the Director or other school staff member
- Notices to parents by telephone or letter
- Parent conference, at school or during a home visit
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Prior to opening, the Board of Governors will approve a formal discipline policy that seeks to reinforce the strength of the school's culture and to protect the safety and best interests of the school's students and staff. This policy—which will be fully compliant with all applicable State and federal law -- will clearly describe various disciplinary measures, grounds for suspension and expulsion, minimum and maximum

number of consecutive days of suspension, notification process to parents of suspension, reason for suspension, appeal process, length of suspension, provision for student's education while suspended, and other pertinent details regarding the discipline policy. This policy, and the list of offenses for which students may be suspended or expelled, will be reviewed and modified annually by a Student Discipline Committee comprised of the Director, teachers, parents, students, CEO and community members, with additional opportunities for input from all staff, families, and students as appropriate.<sup>15</sup> We intend to be transparent and inclusive as we design our student discipline program and expectations for student conduct. We believe empowering all of the stakeholders in this process – including students – will help to create a policy and culture at the school of respect.

Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This policy and its procedures will clearly describe discipline expectations, and it will be printed and distributed as part of the Family Handbook which is sent to each student at the beginning of the school year. The school leaders shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures.

Discipline includes but is not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Thrive has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEIA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. Thrive will follow all applicable federal and state laws when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Thrive has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

Any student who engages in repeated violations of the school's behavioral expectations, or a single severe infraction, will be required to attend a meeting with the school's staff and the student's parents. The school will prepare a specific, written agreement outlining future student conduct expectations, timelines, and consequences for failure to meet the expectations which may include, but are not limited to, suspension or expulsion.

<sup>15</sup> Of course, stakeholder preference will not trump applicable law, and school leaders will ensure that all stakeholders who participate in this process understand the school's obligations under the law.

A student may be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated in Education Code § 48900 related to school activity or school attendance that occurs at any time including, but not limited to:

- While on school grounds
- While going to or leaving from school
- During, or traveling to or from, a school-sponsored activity

#### **A. CAUSE FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

In preparing the lists of offenses specified in subparagraph (A) and the procedures specified in subparagraphs (B) and (C) of Title 5 CCR Section 11967.5.1(f)(10), Thrive reviewed the lists of offenses and procedures that apply to students attending non-charter public schools, and the charter petitioners believe their proposed lists of offenses and procedures provide adequate safety for students, staff, and visitors to the school and serve the best interests of the school's pupils and their parent (guardians). A student may be recommended for suspension or expulsion for any of the following reasons:

- Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person
- Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the Director or the designee of the CEO
- Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind
- Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant
- Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion
- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property (includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases)
- Stolen or attempted to steal school property or private property (includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases)
- Possessed or used tobacco, or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel (exception made for use or possession by a student of his or her own prescription products)
- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity
- Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code
- Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties



- Except as provided in Education Code Section 48910, a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 3, inclusive, shall not be suspended for any of the acts enumerated in this subdivision, and this subdivision shall not constitute grounds for a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to be recommended for expulsion.
- Knowingly received stolen school property or private property (includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases)
- Possessed an imitation firearm
- Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Section 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a, or 289 of the Penal Code or committed a sexual battery as defined in Section 243.4 of the Penal Code
- Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or a witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of either preventing that student from being a witness or retaliating against that student for being a witness, or both
- Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing as defined in Section 32050
- Aided or abetted, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person (suspension only)
- Committed sexual harassment
- Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in the act of hate violence
- Engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation directed against school personnel or students, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of either school personnel or students by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment
- Made terrorist threats against school officials, school property, or both
- Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261, directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel

Students will receive a mandatory recommendation for expulsion for any of the following reasons, unless the Director, CEO and Board of Governors finds that expulsion is inappropriate due to the particular circumstance:

- Causing serious physical injury to another person
- Possession of any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object
- Unlawful possession of any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind
- Robbery or extortion
- Assault or battery upon any school employee
- Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery as defined Section 48900 of the Education Code

Students are subject to mandatory expulsion from Thrive Public School for any of the reasons as specified in the Education Code § 48915(c) and the Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994. It is a federal mandate that a school expel, for a period of not less than one year (except on a case-by-case basis), any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school.

## II. PROCESS FOR SUSPENSION AND/OR EXPULSION

---

### *Step 1: Informal Conference*

Suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the Director and/or Dean of Students, with the student and the student's parents. The conference may be omitted if the Director and/or Dean of Students determine that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If the student is suspended without a conference, the parents will be notified of the suspension and a conference will be conducted as soon as practicable.

### *Step 2: Notice to Parents*

Parents and students will have due process rights with regards to suspensions and expulsions. At the time of a student's suspension, a school employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parents by telephone or in person. Initial contact will be followed by a written notice. This notice will state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time the student may return to school. If the school officials wish to confer with the parents regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may note that the parents are required to respond without delay, and that violation of school rules can result in expulsion from the school.

### *Step 3: Determination of Length of Suspension*

The length of the suspension will be determined by the Director and/or Dean of Students based on the severity of the offense(s), as evidenced by witness statements, physical evidence, and other relevant factors. The length of suspension for students may not exceed a period of 5 continuous days unless an administrative recommendation has been made and agreed to by the student's parent/guardian. If a student is recommended for a period of suspension exceeding 5 continuous days, a second conference will be scheduled between the parent/guardian and the school to discuss the progress of the suspension upon the completion of the 10th day of suspension. A student may be suspended from school for not more than 20 school days in any school year; this restriction on the number of days of suspension does not apply, however, when the suspension is extended pending an expulsion.

Arrangements shall be made to provide the student with classroom material and current assignments to be completed at home during the length of the suspension.

### *Step 4: Recommendations for Expulsion*

If the Director and/or Dean of Students recommend expulsion, the student and the student's parents will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the student should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Director/Dean of Students upon either of the following findings:

- The student's presence will likely be disruptive to the educational process
- The student poses a threat or danger to others

Upon this determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

Students will be recommended for expulsion if the Director and/or Dean of Students find that at least one of the following findings may be substantiated:

- Other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct
- Due to the nature of the violation, the presence of the student causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the student or others

#### *Step 5: Expulsion Hearing*

Students recommended for expulsion will be entitled to a hearing to determine whether or not the student should be expelled. The hearing will be held within 30 days after the Director and/or Dean of Students determines that an act subject to expulsion has occurred. The hearing may be presided over by the governing Board, an ad hoc committee of the Board, or an administrative panel appointed by the Board. A Facts and Findings document will be prepared to summarize the evidence adduced at the hearing to substantiate the expulsion decision.

Written notice of the hearing will be forwarded to the student and the student's parents at least 10 calendar days before the date of the hearing. This notice will include:

- The date and place of the hearing
- A statement of the specific facts, charges and offense upon which the proposed expulsion is based
- A copy of the disciplinary rules that relate to the alleged violation
- The opportunity for the student or the student's parents to appear in person at the hearing
- The opportunity for the student to be represented by counsel
- The right to examine and acquire copies of all documents to be used at the hearing
- The opportunity to cross-examine all witnesses that testify at the hearing
- The opportunity to present evidence and witnesses on behalf of the student

Upon expulsion, written notice will be sent by the Director or Dean of Students to the parents of any student who is expelled. This notice will include the following:

- The specific offense committed by the student for any of the acts listed in "Reasons for Suspension and/or Expulsion."
- Notice of the student or parent obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with Thrive Public School .

In the event of a decision to expel a student, the school will work cooperatively with the district of residence, county and/or private schools to assist with the appropriate educational placement of the student who has been expelled. Any incident of violent and/or serious student behavior shall be communicated to the district/school to which the student matriculates.

If the decision is not to expel, the student will return to classes at Thrive Public School.

### **III. APPEAL OF SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION**

Parents will be notified in advance to enactment of the suspension or expulsion and can appeal a student's suspension or expulsion.

The suspension of a student will be at the discretion of the Director and/or Dean of Students or their designee. A suspension appeal may be made to the Director or Dean of Students within the term of the suspension. Following due consideration, a decision by the Director and/or Dean of Students regarding student suspension will be considered final.

An expulsion may be appealed within ten working days and must be submitted in writing to the Director and/or Dean of Students. The student will be considered suspended until a meeting is convened to consider the appeal (within 10 working days). The appeal will be considered by a fair and impartial panel, selected by the Thrive Board. For a student who is not reinstated upon appeal, the family will be sent written notification of such, including specific reasons why reinstatement was denied, and will be given a new eligibility review date.

The decision of the panel of representatives of the Board will be final.

#### **IV. SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

---

In the case of a student who has an IEP, or a student who has a 504 Plan, Thrive Public School will ensure that it follows the correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. As set forth in the MOU regarding special education between the District and the charter school, an IEP team including a district representative will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement utilizing the District's Policies and Procedures Manual. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a 504 Plan, the charter school Dean of Students will convene a Link Determination meeting to ask the following two questions: A) Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student's disability? B) Was the misconduct a direct result of the school's failure to implement the 504 Plan?

##### **Notification of District**

Thrive shall immediately notify the District and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the District of the discipline of any student with a disability or student who Thrive or District would be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability who is suspended for more than ten (10) school days during a school year.

##### **Services During Suspension**

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

##### **Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination**

Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file,

including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:

- a) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- b) If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team shall:

- a) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the Charter School had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;
- b) If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
- c) Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the Charter School agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and that the conduct in question was not a result of the failure to implement the IEP, then the Charter School may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

### **Due Process Appeals**

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or the Charter School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings.

When an appeal relating to the placement of the student or the manifestation determination has been requested by either the parent or the Charter School, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the forty-five (45) day time period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the Charter School agree otherwise.

### **Special Circumstances**

Charter School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

The Dean of Students or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student:

- a. Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- b. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- c. Has inflicted serious bodily injury, as defined by 20 USC 1415(k)(7)(D), upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

#### **Interim Alternative Educational Setting**

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP team.

#### **Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services**

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEIA and who has violated the Charter School's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if the Charter School had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

The Charter School shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if one of the following conditions exists:

- a. The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to Charter School supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of special education or related services.
- b. The parent has requested an evaluation of the child.
- c. The child's teacher, or other Charter School personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the special education case manager or to other Charter School supervisory personnel.

If the Charter School knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the protections available to IDEIA-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put.

If the Charter School had no basis for knowledge of the student's disability, it shall proceed with the proposed discipline. The Charter School shall conduct an expedited evaluation if requested by the parents; however the student shall remain in the education placement determined by the Charter School pending the results of the evaluation.

The Charter School shall not be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if the parent has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

## Element 11: Retirement Programs

*“The manner by which staff members of the charter school will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employees’ Retirement System, or federal social security.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(K).*

### RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Thrive’s Board of Governors shall determine which school-sponsored retirement plans will be available to various types of staff (e.g., certificated staff, part-time staff, etc.). Thrive plans to participate in the State Teachers’ Retirement System for all eligible staff (i.e., full time credentialed teachers and/or administrators previously participating in STRS) and will coordinate such participation, as appropriate, with the social security system or other reciprocal systems. All other employees will participate in social security. Thrive plans to work directly with San Diego County Office of Education (or another approved benefits administrator) to forward in a timely fashion any required payroll deductions and related data. All withholdings from employees and any matching funds from Thrive will be forwarded to the STRS Fund (or other applicable plan/fund) as required.

Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of STRS. For full-time certificated employees who participate in STRS, employees will contribute the required percentage (currently 8.0% of salary), and Thrive Public School will contribute the employer’s portion (currently 8.25%) required by STRS.

If Thrive is found to be ineligible for STRS, or chooses not to participate, then Thrive plans to participate in a 403(b)/401(k) for all eligible employees, administered by an experienced provider selected by the Board.

### OVERSIGHT OF BENEFITS

Thrive initially has contracted with EdTec to handle our payroll and accounting services. The Business Manager will be responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements for coverage have been made. The Board of Governors may, in its discretion, contract with another qualified provider of payroll and accounting services.

### EMPLOYEE POLICIES

Employee Policies relating to the terms and conditions of employment will be detailed in an Employee Handbook, approved by the Board. (See also Element 13.)



## Element 12: Public School Attendance Alternatives

*“The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(L).*

No student may be required to attend the Charter School. Thrive Public School is a school of choice that is open to anyone in the State of California. Those students who choose not to attend Thrive Public School but who live within San Diego Unified School District attendance area will have the right to attend any other school in the attendance area served by SDUSD in keeping with existing enrollment policies of the District. Alternatives to Thrive Public School for these students living within the SDUSD attendance area will be the same as those offered to all other students currently residing in the District. The parent or guardian of each student enrolled in the charter school shall be informed on enrollment forms that the students have no right to admission in a particular school of any local education agency (or program of any local education agency) as a consequence of enrollment in the charter school, except to the extent that such right is extended by the local education agency.

Pupils who choose not to attend Thrive Public School may choose to attend other public schools in their district of residence or pursue an intra- or inter-district transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the district.

## Element 13: Rights of District Employees

*“A description of the rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(M).*

No District employee shall be required to work at Thrive Public School. Job applicants for positions at Thrive Public School will be considered through an open process and, if hired, will enter into an at-will contractual agreement with the school. Any District union employee who is offered employment and chooses to work at Thrive Public School will not be covered by the District collective bargaining agreement.

Former District employees must consult with the District to determine their eligibility for leave. All provisions pertaining to leave and return rights for District union employees will be granted to certificated and classified employees in accordance with current collective bargaining agreements.

## Element 14: Dispute Resolution

*"The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter." CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(N).*

The intent of this dispute resolution process is to (1) resolve disputes within the school pursuant to the school's policies, (2) minimize the oversight burden on the District, (3) ensure a fair and timely resolution to disputes, and (4) frame a charter oversight and renewal process and timeline so as to avoid disputes regarding oversight and renewal matters.

In absence of district policies or protocols for charter school dispute resolution, this plan is being presented based on common charter school best practices. Should any section of this element pertaining to resolving disputes, be in conflict with authorizing district's policies or desired protocols, then Thrive Public School is amenable to altering said areas through an addendum, to be mutually agreed upon, and considered in addition to the original petition. Any such areas of conflict can also be resolved in the Memorandum of Understanding that will be drafted and agreed upon by authorizing entity and Thrive.

The staff and governing board members of Thrive and the District, agree to attempt to resolve all disputes regarding this charter pursuant to the terms of this section.

### **Disputes Arising from Within the School**

Disputes arising from within Thrive, including all disputes among and between parents, students, staff, volunteers, advisors, partner organizations, and governing board members of the school, shall be resolved pursuant to policies and processes developed by Thrive and in accordance with the law.

### **Disputes Between the School and the District**

In the event of a dispute between Thrive and the District regarding the terms of this charter or any other issue regarding the school and District relationship, both parties agree to apprise the other, in writing, of the specific disputed issue(s). All communications from the District to the School regarding any dispute shall be addressed to both the Founder/CEO and the Director of the School. In the event the initiating party believes the dispute relates to an issue that could potentially lead to revocation of the charter, this must be explicitly stated in written notice of the dispute. Not later than five (5) business days from receipt of the dispute statement, a Thrive representative and a District representative shall informally meet and confer to attempt to resolve the dispute. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Thrive representative and the District representative shall meet again within fifteen (15) business days to identify a neutral third-party mediator to assist in dispute resolution. The format of the third-party mediation process shall be developed jointly by the representatives. The mediation shall be held within thirty (30) business days of receipt of the dispute statement. All timelines in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement.

The cost of the mediation shall be shared equally by Thrive and the District; each party shall bear its own attorney's fees and costs and all other costs associated with the dispute resolution.

In the event that the third-party mediation process does not result in the resolution of the dispute, both parties agree to continue good faith negotiations. If the matter cannot be mutually resolved, Thrive shall be given a reasonable amount of time to correct the violation, unless the District indicates in writing the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health and safety of the

Thrive's students. The District reserves the right to take any action it deems appropriate, and Thrive reserves the right to seek legal redress for any such actions under the law. In addition, the dispute is not required to be referred to mediation in those cases where the District determines the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health and safety of the Thrive students.

As an SBE-authorized charter:

Each party will bear their own costs, including but not limited to attorneys' fees in dispute resolution.

The Charter School recognizes that, because the SBE is not a local educational agency, the State Board of Education may choose to resolve a dispute directly instead of pursuing the dispute resolution process specified in the charter, it must first hold a public hearing to consider arguments for and against the direct resolution of the dispute instead of pursuing the dispute resolution process specified in the charter.

The Charter School further recognizes that if the substance of a dispute is a matter that could result in the taking of appropriate action, including, but not limited to, revocation of the charter, the matter will be addressed at the SBE's discretion.

## Element 15: Employer Status and Collective Bargaining

*"A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (Chapter 10.7 (commencing with § 3540) of division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code)." CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(O).*

Thrive Public School will be the exclusive public school employer of all employees of the charter school for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act ("EERA"). Thrive Public School shall comply with the EERA, as applicable to charter schools.

## Element 16: Charter School Closure

*"A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records."*  
CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(P).

Closure of Thrive Public School will be documented by official action of the Board of Governors. The action will identify the reason for closure. The official action will also identify an entity and person or persons responsible for closure-related activities.

The Board of Governors will promptly notify parents and students of Thrive, the District, the San Diego County Office of Education, Thrive's Special Education Local Plan Area ("SELPA"), the retirement systems in which Thrive's employees participate (e.g., Public Employees' Retirement System, State Teachers' Retirement System, and federal social security), and the California Department of Education of the closure as well as the effective date of the closure. This notice will also include the name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure; the students' school Districts of residence; and the manner in which parents/guardians may obtain copies of student records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements.

The Board of Governors will ensure that the notification to the parents and students of Thrive of the closure provides information to assist parents and students in locating suitable alternative programs. This notice will be provided promptly following the Board's decision to close Thrive.

The Board of Governors will also develop a list of students in each grade level and the classes they have completed, together with information on the students' Districts of residence, which they will provide to the entity responsible for closure-related activities.

As applicable, Thrive will provide parents, students, and the District with copies of all appropriate student records and will otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. All transfers of student records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g. Thrive will ask the District to store original records of Thrive students. All student records of Thrive shall be transferred to the District upon school closure. If the District will not or cannot store the records, Thrive shall work with the County Office of Education to determine a suitable alternative location for storage.

All state assessment results, special education records, and personnel records will be transferred to and maintained by the entity responsible for closure-related activities in accordance with applicable law.

As soon as reasonably practical, Thrive will prepare final financial records. Thrive will also have an independent audit completed within six months after closure. Thrive will pay for the final audit. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by Thrive and will be provided to the District promptly upon its completion. The final audit will include an accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value, an accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable and any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid

staff compensation, and an assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to Thrive.

Thrive will complete and file any annual reports required pursuant to Education Code Section 47604.33.

On closure of the school, Thrive will distribute any restricted assets of the school to the to their source in accordance with the terms of the grant or state and federal law, as appropriate, which may include submission of final expenditure reports for entitlement grants and the filing of any required Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as well as the return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any conditions established when the donation of such materials or property was accepted.

On closure, Thrive shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of Thrive.

As Thrive is operated by a non-profit public benefit corporation, should the corporation dissolve with the closure of Thrive, the Board of Governors will follow the procedures set forth in the California Corporations Code for the dissolution of a non-profit public benefit corporation and file all necessary filings with the appropriate state and federal agencies. The Board may, at its discretion, retain staff to complete appropriate closure activities as needed. As specified by the proposed budget (Appendix D), Thrive will utilize the reserve fund to undertake any expenses associated with the closure.