



Vista Lago Global Academy

**Charter Petition for a Five-Year Term
(July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2029)**

**Submitted to the Lake Elsinore Unified School District on
September 29, 2023**

**Dr. Donald S. Wilson,
Superintendent/Lead Petitioner
Vista Charter Public Schools**

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ASSURANCES, AFFIRMATIONS, AND DECLARATIONS

As the authorized lead petitioner, I, Dr. Donald Wilson, hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a California public charter school to be named Vista Lago Global Academy (“VLGA” or the “Charter School”), to be located within the boundaries of Lake Elsinore Unified School District, is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that this application does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public charter school; and further, I understand that, if awarded a charter, the Charter School will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School, including but not limited to:

- Shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in noncharter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c) (1)]
- Shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47612(b), 47610]
- Shall not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- Shall admit all students who wish to attend VLGA, and who submit a timely application, unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case each application will be given a chance of admission through a public random lottery process. Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(A)-(B)]
- Shall not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, home language, or disability. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d) (1)]
- Shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.
- Shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to, credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(c)]
- Shall ensure that teachers in VLGA 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. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to non-core, non-college preparatory teachers. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(1)]

- Shall on a regular basis consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(c)]
- Shall, at all times, maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- Shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment, practices, and all other operations. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- Shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1) (A)-(D).
- If a pupil is expelled or leaves VLGA without completing the school year for any reason, the charter school shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card and health information. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(3)]
- VLGA shall be deemed the exclusive public-school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act ("EERA"). The charter school recognizes the employees' rights under the EERA provisions to organize for collective bargaining. The Principal is responsible for compliance. [California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)]
- VLGA will follow any and all other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to our charter school including but not limited to:
 - VLGA shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.
 - VLGA shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities.
 - VLGA shall comply with the Public Records Act.
 - VLGA shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
 - VLGA shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
 - VLGA shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum of school days.
 - VLGA shall comply with all laws regarding services to students with disabilities as contained in IDEIA.

Lead Petitioner _____ Date _____

ELEMENT 1 – THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

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

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

“If the proposed charter school will serve high school pupils, a description of the manner in which the charter school will inform parents about the transferability of courses to other public high schools and the eligibility of courses to meet college entrance requirements. Courses offered by the charter school that are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may be considered transferable and courses approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the “A” to “G” admissions criteria may be considered to meet college entrance requirements.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(A)(iii).)

LOCAL CONTROL FUNDING FORMULA (LCFF) AND LOCAL CONTROL AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP)

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that it must comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (2013) (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from time to time, which include the requirement that Charter School shall annually submit a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)/annual update to the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools and the Lake Elsinore Unified School District on or before July 1. In accordance with Education Code sections 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall annually update its goals and annual actions to achieve those goals identified in the charter pursuant to Education Code section 47605(c)(5)(A)(ii), using the Local Control and Accountability Plan template adopted by the State Board of Education, as it may be changed from time to time. Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Education Code section 47606.5, including but not limited to the requirement that Charter School “shall consult with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, parents, and pupils in developing the local control and accountability plan and annual update to the local control and accountability plan.” (Ed. Code § 47606.5(d).)

ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES

Charter School shall offer, at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction set forth in Education Code section 47612.5, and the number of school days required by *California Code of Regulations*, title 5, section 11960.

MATHEMATICS PLACEMENT

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements of the California Mathematics Placement Act of 2015.

TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN

If the Charter School offers Transitional Kindergarten, VLGA will comply with all applicable requirements regarding transitional kindergarten (TK). Students in TK will be exposed to all core subject areas and nurtured through building the social, emotional and academic skills that will help them succeed in elementary school. They will follow the kindergarten curriculum with additional supports to meet them at their developmental level.

Credentialed teachers assigned to a transitional kindergarten classroom must have one of the following pursuant to Ed. Code section 48000(g):

1. at least 24 units in early childhood education or child development, or both;
2. as determined and documented by the local educational agency employing the teacher, professional experience in a classroom setting with preschool age children meeting the criteria established by the governing board or body of the local educational agency that is comparable to the 24 units of education; or
3. a Child Development Teacher Permit, or an early childhood education specialist credential, issued from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

WASC ACCREDITATION

Before Charter School graduates its first class of students in grades 9-12, Charter School shall obtain, and thereafter maintain, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation.

ENGLISH LEARNERS

Charter School shall identify potential English Learners in a timely manner in accordance with all applicable legal requirements. Charter School must provide all English Learners with an effective English language acquisition program that also affords meaningful and equitable access to Charter School's core academic curriculum. Instructional plans for English Learners must be (1) based on sound educational theory; (2) adequately supported with trained teachers and appropriate materials and resources; and (3) periodically evaluated to make sure the program is successful and modified when the program is not successful.

The Charter School's EL Master Plan shall provide a detailed description of Charter School's EL program, and shall address the following:

- How Charter School's EL Master Plan provides all of its English Learners, including but not limited to Long Term English Learners (LTELs) with an effective English language acquisition program as well as meaningful and equitable access to Charter School's core academic curriculum
- How English Learners' specific needs will be identified
- What services will be offered
- How, where, and by whom the services will be provided

- How Charter School will evaluate its EL program each year, and how the results of this evaluation will be used to improve the program, including the provision of EL services

Each year, Charter School shall provide to the District a report on its annual evaluation of the effectiveness of its EL program. Upon request, Charter School shall provide a copy of its current EL Master Plan to the District.

Charter School shall administer the ELPAC annually in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Charter School shall reclassify English Learners in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Charter School shall provide parent outreach services and meaningfully inform parents with limited English proficiency of important information regarding Charter School matters to the same extent as other parents.

GENERAL INFORMATION

<u>General Information Table</u>	
• The contact person for Charter School is:	<i>Dr. Don Wilson, Superintendent</i>
• The contact address for Charter School is:	<i>2900 W. Temple St., Los Angeles CA 90026</i>
• The contact phone number for Charter School is:	<i>(213) 201-4000</i>
• The proposed address (site/location) of the Charter School is:	<i>To Be Provided</i>
• The grade configuration of Charter School is:	<i>TK-12</i>
• The number of students in the first year will be:	<i>170</i>
• The grade level(s) of the students in the first year will be:	<i>TK-9</i>
• Charter School's scheduled first day of instruction in 2025-2026 is:	<i>August 11, 2025</i>
• The enrollment capacity at full roll out is: (Enrollment capacity is defined as the total number of students who may be enrolled in Charter School regardless of student residency.)	<i>1200</i>
• The type of instructional calendar (e.g. traditional/year-round, single track/multi-track, extended day/year) will be:	<i>Traditional</i>
• The bell schedule for Charter School will be:	<i>TK-8: 8:30-3:00 Monday- Thursday, 8:30-2:00 each Friday</i>

	9-12: 8:30-3:40 Monday-Thursday, 8:30-2:00 each Friday
• The term of this Charter shall be from:	July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2030

COMMUNITY NEED FOR PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL

Vista Lago Global Academy (VLGA) is a proposed new charter school that intends to transform the school experience, meet the evolving needs of students in the Lake Elsinore Unified School District and surrounding districts in Riverside County, and ensure that every student in attendance receives a rich, individualized, rigorous and joyous education that prepares him or her to be college and career-ready as a productive and successful global citizen rich in humanity. VLGA will be the seventh school operated by Vista Charter Public Schools, Inc. (VCPS):

- **Vista Charter Middle School (VCMS)**, authorized by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), opened in September 2010; currently serves 375 students in grades 6-8: 85% Hispanic/Latino, 5% Filipino, 2% African American; 92% of students qualified for Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL), 27% English Learners (EL), and 8% Students with Disabilities (SWD).
- **Vista Heritage Global Academy (VHGA)**, authorized by the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE), opened in 2015, and currently serves 325 students in grades 6-8: 97% Hispanic/Latino; 1% African-American, 99% FRPL, 44% EL, 13% SWD and 0.5% foster/homeless youth.
- **Vista Condor Global Academy (Vista Condor)**, also authorized by OCDE, opened fall 2018, currently serves 350 students in grades TK-5: 97% Hispanic/Latino, 1% African American, 1.5% White, 95% FRPL, 50% EL, and 12% SWD.
- **Vista Horizon Global Academy (Vista Horizon)**, authorized by LAUSD, opened in 2019 in the Koreatown neighborhood of Los Angeles and currently serves 150 students in TK-5: 68% Hispanic, 25% Asian, 1% Filipino, 0.3% African American; 1.6% White, 59% FRPL, 51% EL, and 7.5% SWD.
- **Vista Meridian Global Academy (Vista Meridian)**, authorized by OCDE, opened fall 2023, currently serves 175 students in grades 9-11, with plans to expand to ultimately serve students in grades 9-12. Current enrollment is 97% Hispanic/Latino, 3% African American/other; 97% FRPL, 44% EL and 12% SWD.
- **Palm Lane Global Academy (PLGA)**, authorized by the Anaheim Elementary School District, currently serves 300 students in grades TK-6. Enrollment is 97% Hispanic/Latino, 3% African American/other; 97% FRPL, 44% EL and 12% SWD.

In recent years, our schools collectively (Vista Schools) have garnered the following recognitions and success:

- While not required, both of our middle schools have full accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). VCMS received a full six-year accreditation in 2017/18, and VHGA earned a full six-year accreditation in 2021/22.

- Vista Schools has established collaborative partnerships to benefit our students and their families:
 - Community Catalyst Partners (formerly known as Asia Society) and their International Studies Schools Network: As a part of this network, we are provided resources and opportunities to enrich the educational experience for our students through their framework of educating for global competence.
 - Circle Ways: Provides mentoring and coaching support for our Way of Council program.
 - CSU Long Beach School of Education: Educational Affiliation Agreement to support CSULB's Early Fieldwork and Credentialing Program through student observers, student teachers, and the opportunity for Vista staff to guest lecture in certain CSU Long Beach courses.
 - CSU Fullerton Center for Economic Education: CSU Fullerton students guest teach financial literacy concepts at VHGA, and for VHGA students participate in their annual Stock Market Olympiad and Titan Fast Pitch events.
 - Pepperdine Graduate School of Education and CSU Northridge School of Education: Vista LA schools host and mentor student teachers.
 - IFA-China: Partnership agreement to create sister schools and educational exchanges with schools in China.
 - Easter Seals: partners with our SWD team to help prepare our students with workforce skills.
 - Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County: provides dentists and dental services to VHGA students at the school site free of charge to their families.
 - Loaves & Fishes X10: provides food bank with free food and basic supplies to families in need at Vista.
 - Olive Crest: provides parenting classes for VLGA parents free of charge.
 - Future Generations Now: provides all Vista students with free tutoring and other services. It also provides service opportunities for our students.
 - Blessings in a Backpack: provides weekend meals to our students who might not have access to healthy meals during the weekend. We receive shipments of foods weekly and these are distributed to students.
 - California Policy Center: provides parents classes on how the educational system works, called the "Education Commandments."
 - Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce, Silverlake Chamber of Commerce: VHGA is a member of the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce, and VCMS is a member of the Silverlake Chamber, which both provide a multitude of networking opportunities to local businesses and community organizations as VHGA and VCMS establish a greater presence in the Los Angeles and Santa Ana communities.
 - Search to Involve Pilipino Americans Organizations: provides educational opportunities and workshops for our students and families
 - El Centro del Pueblo: provides our students and families with resources, food pantry, counseling, drug and gang prevention and intervention and summer jobs for our youth.
 - Saban Clinic: provides health resources to our families.

- Koreatown Youth Community Center: provides our students and families with resources, counseling, education, drug and gang prevention and intervention and summer jobs for our youth.
- Central City Neighborhood Partners: provides tutoring for our students and financial literacy classes for our families. They also have immigration support services.
- Bresee Foundation: provides athletics participating opportunities for our students.
- MTSS SWIFT FIT – The SWIFT Center for Education at the University of Kansas, a partner with OCDE on their Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS) Initiative, rated VHGA with a 90% composite overall score in just our second year of the program (2018-19), up from a 75% in our first year of MTSS implementation (2017-18). The SWIFT-FIT is a “Fidelity of Implementation” tool to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of MTSS programs. This assessment contains 51 features within 5 domains (Administrative Leadership, Multi-Tier Support, Integrated Education, Family Engagement, and Inclusive Policy).

Leadership Team

Donald S. Wilson, Ed.D., Superintendent

Prior to joining Vista Public Charter Schools in 2016, Don Wilson worked for LAUSD for almost 30 years. He most recently served as an Instructional Director in the Intensive Support and Innovation Center under Superintendent Tommy Chang and as Instructional Director for Linked Learning. In this role, he supervised 20 schools ranging from elementary to high school. Prior to that he served as the principal at Wonderland Avenue Elementary School, where he increased student achievement five years in a row, making Wonderland one of the highest ranking schools in the state. He also served as APEIS at 3rd Street Elementary School, Administrative Coordinator at Santa Monica Blvd. Community Charter, and ELD/Title I Coordinator at Manchester Ave Elementary. He has 17 years of classroom experience as an elementary school teacher. Dr. Wilson completed a double Bachelor's Degree at Brigham Young University in English and Spanish Literature and received his Master's in Educational Leadership and Curriculum Design from Cal State Northridge. In 2011 he received the California Distinguished School Award for his work with Arts in Education and Way of Council, an innovative program that increases the social/emotional intelligence of students while focusing on oral language development. He also received the ACCIPIO Administrator of the Year Award for his work with diversity in education. In 2013 he was accepted into and completed the highly regarded SUPES Academy, a program designed to promote and train future superintendents.

Collin Felch, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent

Dr. Felch started his career as a math teacher at the Ambassador School of Global Leadership in Los Angeles. In 2013, Dr. Felch was named an LAUSD and Los Angeles County Teacher of the Year. Also in 2013, Dr. Felch served as an International Judge on the English Talent Television Show in China, Star of Outlook. In 2014, Dr. Felch served as a Math Instructional Coach for the Intensive Support and Innovation Center (ISIC) of LAUSD where he worked directly with 26 different schools to support math teachers, provide professional development, and enhance instruction in math. The following year, Dr. Felch was promoted again to become Assistant Principal at the Communication and Technology School to lead and serve youth in South Los

Angeles. In 2016, Dr. Felch completed his Ed.D. at the University of Southern California. His dissertation was on “How Principals of International Studies High Schools Promote Global Competence.” In 2017, Dr. Felch became the Principal of Vista Heritage, and he helped open Vista Condor in 2018 as its founding Principal. In 2022, Dr. Felch was promoted to Assistant Superintendent of Vista Charter Public Schools, and in 2023, Dr. Felch was promoted to Deputy Superintendent of Vista Charter Public Schools. Dr. Felch is thrilled to continue to serve the Vista Family and each of its school communities.

Karen Amaya, Assistant Superintendent

Ms. Amaya’s journey in education began in July of 2002 as a teacher at a conversion charter school in East Hollywood. Having grown up in that community, Mrs. Amaya was passionate about giving back by developing students not only academically but emotionally as well. While teaching in her own classroom, Mrs. Amaya understood the importance of empowering students as leaders and therefore planted the seed for the development of the school’s Student Council, which still exists at that school today. Her drive to make an impact in the larger school community motivated her to step out of the classroom to pursue school leadership. She has served in various leadership capacities such as Curriculum Specialist, School Administrator, Assistant Principal, and Principal before serving as Assistant Superintendent for Vista Charter Public Schools. At Vista, her focus on building a positive school culture and developing trust amongst staff has resulted in an atmosphere that allows for all stakeholders--students, teachers and staff--to thrive. Mrs. Amaya is a passionate school leader who believes in creating a transformative school experience where every student is valued. She received her B.A. in Spanish from the University of Southern California and received her M.A. in Education. In 2014, she completed her Administrative Services credential program at CSUDH’s Charter and Autonomous School Leadership Academy. In 2018, Mrs. Amaya was featured in the Most Inspiring Stories series of Voyage LA magazine. When she’s not busy serving Vista schools, you can find Mrs. Amaya supporting her son at his soccer games or her daughter at her volleyball tournaments.

Erika K. Najera, Director Special Education and Pupil Services

Ms. Najera started her work in the area of Special Education at a conversion Charter School in the East Hollywood area 18 years ago. There she served as a Special Day Class teacher for students with Mild/Moderate Disabilities in grades Kinder – 2nd , then moving into the RSP Teacher role for grades 3rd – 6th . Erika came to Vista Charter Middle School in 2014, where she continued to support students and families in the area of Special Education as the RSP Teacher for grades 6th – 8th . She received her B.A. in Latin American Studies from Cal State LA and earned her Special Education with an Autism Authorization Credential from the Los Angeles County Office of Education. In 2019, she earned her M.A. in Educational Leadership along with her Administrative Services Credential from Cal State Dominguez Hills. This provided her with the opportunity to work and provide services to more students within the Vista Charter Public Schools as the Special Education Coordinator for the LA Region. Mrs. Najera currently serves all Vista Public Schools as the current Director of Special Education and Pupil Services. During her downtime, Mrs. Najera enjoys time with her two young children going to local theme parks or enjoying a good book.

Catherine Real, Ed.D., Director of Counseling, College & Careers

Dr. Real has had a 26-year career in education with a focus on creating equitable access to college and career opportunities for her students. She began her career in the Walnut Valley Unified School District as a French teacher and high school Counselor, Instructional Dean, and the only female Principal in Diamond Bar High School's 41 year history. In 2015, she moved to the Monrovia Unified School District as the Director of Counseling, College, & Careers where she developed opportunities in Career Technical Education and a model Early College program in collaboration with Citrus Community College that earned the 2019 Golden Bell Equity and Access Award from the California School Board Association. Most recently, she has come to Vista Charter Public Schools where she was the Principal of Vista Meridian Global Academy, a start-up high school focusing on a transformative experience that prepares students in an underserved area of Santa Ana so that they develop the skills and network necessary to become leaders in addressing global issues. Dr. Real has transitioned into the role of Vista Charter Public Schools' Director of Counseling, College, & Careers where she focuses on creating critical partnerships that will enable students to participate in internships, job site visits, mentorships, free college courses, and develop their professional network while still in high school.

Dr. Real completed her undergraduate studies at UCLA, her M.S. in Secondary Education at CSU Fullerton, her M.A. in School Counseling at Azusa Pacific University, and her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership at USC. Her doctoral research focused on improving student emotional, behavioral, and cognitive engagement through career technical education, rigorous career preparation, and access to the social capital necessary for career success.

Luis Hernandez, Chief Information Officer

Mr. Hernandez began working in education in 2006 within LAUSD. Throughout his career, he has held various positions providing vital insight into how to support students and communities through extracurricular activities and career education courses. Throughout his time at LAUSD, he has accomplished many goals, which include piloting Cyberpatriots, a national cybersecurity competition, for the middle school division, but also took a middle school team to the national finals. Joining Vista Charter Public Schools in 2017, he has been able to support a new group of students by exposing them to new careers and opportunities through CTE courses. The courses included cybersecurity, 3D animation, photography, robotics, business, art, computer science courses, and much more. In 2022 he was promoted to Chief Information Officer, where he is now in a position to make a much greater impact for all students within Vista Charter Public Schools where his goal is, first and foremost, providing opportunities for students to be exposed to various career fields through CTE and STEAM education.

Zareh Adjemian, Database Administrator

Mr. Adjemian started at Vista Charter Public Schools in August 2010, he now serves as the Database Administrator. He is responsible for the Student Information System, academic and compliance reporting, collecting, maintaining, and integrating student and staff data on demographic and academic levels. He also supports students and teachers with access to education technology. Zareh holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Physics from the D.A.E. University of Tehran, Iran. From the business owner to the director of a multinational textile company to the CEO/CFO of a clothing manufacturing company, Zareh has done it all. Life experience and his commitment to children's education drive him to do what he does at Vista on a daily basis. He is continuously striving to expand his knowledge and master new

technologies. He recently received a Master of Scheduling certificate from California State University-Dominguez Hills. Zareh is the founder and editor in chief, of Oragark Armenian Periodical, reporting local and community news to thousands of subscribers from 2006 to date. He was executive director of the ACF Glendale Youth Center for over ten years. He has and continues to serve on the boards of various nonprofit organizations. During his free time, Zareh loves family BBQs and going on walks with his sweet dog Ooloonk.

Anabelle Medina, Business & HR Manager

Ms. Medina had a diverse and enriching career journey. Currently, she is serving as the Business & HR Manager at Vista Charter Public Schools, where she has been working for the past 6 years. Her career began in 2000 with the Los Angeles Unified School District, where she had the opportunity to work in various departments gaining valuable experience and knowledge at different levels of the education system for over 10 years. She transitioned to El Rancho USD where she developed her organizational and administrative skills serving as an Office Manager. Her journey continued to Beverly Hills USD where she initially worked as a Payroll and Benefits Technician and was subsequently promoted to the role of Accounts Payable Specialist. Her career path led her to higher education at Glendale Community College, where she took on the role of Financial Aid Technician and assisted students access the financial resources they needed for their education. Before joining VCPS, she contributed to the Alvord USD in the Human Resources department, broadening her experience in HR processes and policies. Ms. Medina's journey has been marked by continuous growth, learning and passion, which have provided a strong foundation in business, finance, and human resources.

Board of Directors

Paul Vieyra, Residential Real Estate Agent

Mr. Vieyra has been a Residential Real Estate agent serving Los Angeles, San Gabriel Valley, and North Orange County for the past 10 years. Prior to real estate, Mr. Vieyra worked in Middle Market Commercial Banking for more than 15 years, focused on relationship banking and contributing to a "Critical Thinking Group" that worked on improving core processing and compliance reporting for federal and state regulators. Mr. Vieyra earned an Associate's degree from East Los Angeles College.

Jody Molodow, Secretary, (Retired) Special Education Coordinator for Charter Schools, LAUSD

Ms. Molodow worked for over 40 years with LAUSD, where her responsibilities included teaching special education students with challenges ranging from physical to severe educational needs. She also worked as a Coordinator for Gifted and Talented students and an Advisor in both the Early Education and Infant and Toddler programs. For the last six years of her administrative career with LAUSD, she served as the Special Education Coordinator for Charter Schools. Starting when she was a teenager, Ms. Molodow has volunteered with groups such as Los Angeles Blind Children's Center and Special Olympics. Ms. Molodow is a graduate of the University of Southern California with a B.S in Social Science/English and an M.S. in Education/Special Education.

Geronimo Gaytan, Parent, Palm Lane Elementary Charter School

Mr. Gaytan is a founding parent of Palm Lane Elementary Charter School, the second parent trigger school in the State of California. Mr. Gaytan worked tirelessly to help the parents of Palm Lane convert the school into a charter school. He has served with dedication and loyalty on the school board since that time and continues to be a powerful advocate for parents at all Vista Charter Public Schools. Mr. Gaytan is a proud employee of Disneyland where he has worked for many years and is held in high regard by his supervisors and employees in the food services division. Mr. Gaytan has a child enrolled at Palm Lane Elementary Charter School.

Mimi Kim, CEO, ChefDance LLC

Ms. Kim is CEO of ChefDance, a world-class culinary event company that started in Park City in 2004 during the Sundance Film Festival. Prior to founding ChefDance, LLC, Ms. Kim financed and operated as a financier of various entertainment properties in Los Angeles, including the Highlands, Mint and Lure. She co-founded and served as the CEO of a software company, World Streaming Networks, which was sold in June 2001. Prior to World Streaming Networks, Ms. Kim founded Hunter Global Ventures in 1997; she currently facilitates both public and private investments in the technology, communications, retail and real estate sectors. Earlier in career, she worked as a strategic planner in the syndication and acquisition department for FX, a Fox cable network, and on Wall Street for six years as a corporate bond trader at Goldman, Sachs & Co.; as a vice president in corporate bond product management at Lehman Brothers; and as a corporate analyst at Merrill Lynch, all in New York. She has a B.A. in Economics and East Asian Studies from Barnard College and Master's in Finance and International Banking from Columbia University.

Michele Bauer-Bean, Principal, Seaside Elementary School (Torrance)

Ms. Bauer-Bean is a highly experienced educator who currently is the Principal of Seaside Elementary School in the Torrance Unified School District. She has been involved with education since her freshman year in college, when she was awarded a Graduate Fellowship as an undergraduate student for her work at the USC Nursery School. Ms. Bauer-Bean has worked in a variety of educational settings including a Korean community school, LAUSD, The Buckley School, The Mirman School for Highly Gifted Students, Pomona Unified School District and the Torrance Unified School District.

Ms. Bauer-Bean briefly left education to attend Pepperdine University School of Law in the late 1990's. While there, she was awarded a Darling Foundation Scholarship for her work in public service. After earning her law degree and license, she returned to education as a school administrator. She has secured grants for building libraries, computer labs and music classes, secured free services by creating partnerships with local universities in the area of health screenings, counseling, and academic tutoring and helped sites implement intervention systems and gain Gold Ribbon Award recognition. Ms. Bauer-Bean holds a Bachelor's of Science in General Studies from the University of Southern California and a J.D. from Pepperdine.

STUDENT POPULATION TO BE SERVED

TARGET POPULATION

VLGA anticipates serving students in the areas where we have drawn demographic data from, including Elsinore Elementary School (K-5), Machado Elementary School (K-5), Railroad Canyon Elementary School (K-5), Elsinore Middle School (6-8), Terra Cotta Middle School (6-8), Elsinore High School (9-12), and Temescal Canyon High School (9-12).

The District boundaries are comprised of Lake Elsinore, Canyon Lake, Wildomar and unincorporated portions of Corona and Perris.

According to the California School Directory, Elsinore Elementary School currently serves a student population comprised of the following.

Enrollment	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	EL	Foster Youth
569	88.8%	42.0%	0.2%

The current demographic makeup of the school is shown below.

2021-22 Student Enrollment by Student Group	
Student Group	Percent of Total Enrollment
Female	52.0
Male	48.0
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.0
Asian	1.4
Black or African American	2.6
Filipino	0.2
Hispanic or Latino	85.0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.2
Two or More Races	2.4
White	8.1
English Learners	42.9
Foster Youth	0.2
Homeless	8.1
Migrant	0.0
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	90.5
Students with Disabilities	13.4

According to the California School Directory, Machado Elementary School currently serves a student population comprised of the following.

Enrollment	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	EL	Foster Youth
564	89.9%	28.4%	1.4%

The current demographic makeup of the school is shown below.

2021-22 Student Enrollment by Student Group	
Student Group	Percent of Total Enrollment
Female	46.7
Male	53.3
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.0
Asian	0.3
Black or African American	3.3
Filipino	0.2
Hispanic or Latino	86.8
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.3
Two or More Races	1.5
White	7.5
English Learners	28.1
Foster Youth	1.4
Homeless	9.8
Migrant	0.0
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	85.4
Students with Disabilities	13.0

According to the California School Directory, Railroad Canyon Elementary School currently serves a student population comprised of the following.

Enrollment	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	EL	Foster Youth
832	75.6%	28.7%	0.5%

The current demographic makeup of the school is shown below.

2021-22 Student Enrollment by Student Group	
Student Group	Percent of Total Enrollment
Female	51.9
Male	48.1
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.1
Asian	0.8
Black or African American	4.6
Filipino	1.0
Hispanic or Latino	81.0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.5
Two or More Races	3.3

White	8.7
English Learners	33.4
Foster Youth	0.5
Homeless	7.0
Migrant	0.0
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	76.7
Students with Disabilities	11.5

According to the California School Directory, Elsinore Middle School currently serves a student population comprised of the following.

Enrollment	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	EL	Foster Youth
960	71.6%	11.5%	0.4%

The current demographic makeup of the school is shown below.

2021-22 Student Enrollment by Student Group	
Student Group	Percent of Total Enrollment
Female	48.4
Male	51.4
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.0
Asian	1.5
Black or African American	2.5
Filipino	1.6
Hispanic or Latino	76.1
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.3
Two or More Races	3.7
White	14.3
English Learners	12.7
Foster Youth	0.4
Homeless	4.5
Migrant	0.0
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	71.9
Students with Disabilities	10.2

According to the California School Directory, Terra Cotta Middle School currently serves a student population comprised of the following.

Enrollment	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	EL	Foster Youth
1,074	72.2%	9.1%	0.9%

The current demographic makeup of the school is shown below.

2021-22 Student Enrollment by Student Group	
Student Group	Percent of Total Enrollment
Female	45.4
Male	54.6
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.0
Asian	1.3
Black or African American	2.2
Filipino	1.0
Hispanic or Latino	77.4
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.3
Two or More Races	3.4
White	14.4
English Learners	11.9
Foster Youth	0.9
Homeless	8.5
Migrant	0.0
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	73.1
Students with Disabilities	13.7

According to the California School Directory, Elsinore High School currently serves a student population comprised of the following.

Enrollment	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	EL	Foster Youth
2,198	61.2%	3.8%	0.4%

The current demographic makeup of the school is shown below.

2021-22 Student Enrollment by Student Group	
Student Group	Percent of Total Enrollment
Female	48.3
Male	51.7
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.3
Asian	1.2
Black or African American	4.5
Filipino	1.8
Hispanic or Latino	61.5
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.4
Two or More Races	5.5
White	24.8

English Learners	4.7
Foster Youth	0.4
Homeless	5.5
Migrant	0.0
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	64.2
Students with Disabilities	13.9

According to the California School Directory, Temescal Canyon High School currently serves a student population comprised of the following.

Enrollment	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	EL	Foster Youth
2,218	55.1%	3.3%	0.7%

The current demographic makeup of the school is shown below.

2021-22 Student Enrollment by Student Group	
Student Group	Percent of Total Enrollment
Female	49.9
Male	50.1
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.1
Asian	3.1
Black or African American	4.9
Filipino	2.8
Hispanic or Latino	56.9
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.4
Two or More Races	5.5
White	26.2
English Learners	4.8
Foster Youth	0.7
Homeless	2.7
Migrant	0.0
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	53.6
Students with Disabilities	9.5

There is a community need for Vista Lago Global Academy, based on four major data points:

1. According to the 2023 California School Dashboard, Lake Elsinore Unified School District schools, especially those that serve the specific neighborhoods where VLGA intends to locate, with the exception of Elsinore High School in ELA, are all performing significantly below the state average in both Math and ELA.

LEUSD School	2023 ELA Achievement	2023 Math Achievement
Elsinore Elementary	71.9 Points Below Standard	82.9 Points Below Standard

Machado Elementary	60 Points Below Standard	73.9 Points Below Standard
Railroad Canyon Elementary	35.8 Points Below Standard	42.9 Points Below Standard
Elsinore Middle	52.8 Points Below Standard	89 Points Below Standard
Terra Cotta Middle	52 Points Below Standard	96.4 Points Below Standard
Elsinore High	3.5 Points Above Standard	83 Points Below Standard
Temescal Canyon High	14.9 Points Below Standard	82.3 Points Below Standard

2. There are only two K-8 charter schools currently operating in Lake Elsinore, both of which are at least 6-10 miles away from the neighborhood VLGA intends to locate, and neither charter school currently operates high school grades.
3. Based on the data below from the City of Lake Elsinore, the population in the city is projected to grow from 72,440 to 83,136 in the next 5 years and from 72,440 to 93,234 in the next 10 years.
4. When speaking with prospective parents in Lake Elsinore, there has been a demand for VLGA, including specific interest and feedback in the following areas:
 - a. High School Charter School Option
 - b. Dual Enrollment opportunities to receive college credit while still in high school
 - c. Smaller class sizes
 - d. Effective parent communication
 - e. School environment where all students feel a sense of belonging
 - f. Before and after school programs
 - g. Transportation to and from school for students

By comparison, Vista Charter Public Schools operates a TK-12 charter school program in the Rampart District of Los Angeles, , where the population is 57% Hispanic/Latino, 17% Asian, 2.6% Black, and 21% White. According to Census data, 29% of adult residents over age 25 have less than a 9th grade education, almost half (44%) have not earned a high school diploma, and only 21% of residents hold a Bachelor's degree or more.¹ An overwhelming majority of the population (76%) speak a language other than English at home, with 26% of the population speaking English "less than well." A third of the families (34%) with children under the age of 18 are living in poverty, and half (54%) the population is foreign-born.² Median income is \$27,563 with 34% of families with children under 18 were living below the federal poverty line in the past 12 months;³ in 2023, the federal poverty line for a family of four is \$30,000.⁴ Notably, according to Living Wage Calculator, a project of Dr. Amy K. Glasmeier, Professor of Economic Geography at MIT, a family of four in Los Angeles County with two full-time working adults needs each adult to earn \$28.04/hour to be self-sustaining (not needing public assistance).⁵ The federal poverty line rate equates to just \$6.30/hour. In other words, significantly more than 34% of families in our community are living in poverty based on the economic realities of the area.

¹ <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

² <https://factfinder.census.gov> (2017 American Community Survey)

³ <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

⁴ <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>

⁵ <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06037>; the calculator uses "a market-based approach that draws upon geographically specific expenditure data related to a family's likely minimum food, childcare, health insurance, housing, transportation, and other basic necessities (e.g. clothing, personal care items, etc.) costs.

As another point of comparison, Vista Charter Public Schools operates a second TK-12 charter school program in Santa Ana, California and Anaheim, California.

Vista's Orange County schools serve a diverse student body from the greater Santa Ana community, represented by students from 21 zip codes, with the majority of students residing in the following areas: 92701, 92703, 92704, 92706, and 92707.

As summarized in the following table, our Orange County students are predominantly Latino, with an average of one-third from low socioeconomic status households. The surrounding communities have a young population, with an average of 20 percent of persons represented by those 5 to 17 years old. Approximately one-quarter of young adults (ages 18-24 years) have not attained a high school diploma or equivalent, and among and adults 25 years and older an average of 45% did not complete grade 9 or were high school drop outs.

Zip Code	Children under 18 living in households receiving public assistance within past 12 months	Persons 18-24 years with less than high school diploma or equivalent	Persons 25 years and older with less than 9th grade education or high school dropout	Persons 5-17 years old⁶	Hispanic or Latino origin⁷
92701	37.6%	25.6%	57%	20.2%	85.6%
92703	33.4%	21.0%	51.4%	19.9%	76%
92704	36.9%	18.2%	42.5%	20.3%	69.6%
92706	20.5%	19.9%	35.3%	20.8%	69.3%
92707	26.5%	15.7%	43.3%	17.1%	80.8%

Vista's Orange County School serve a population that is 78% Hispanic, 16% Asian (with a large Vietnamese population in the area), 0.5% Black, and 5% White. According to Census data, 31% of adult residents over age 25 have less than a 9th grade education, more than half (51%) have not earned a high school diploma, and only 8% of residents hold a Bachelor's degree or more.⁸ An overwhelming majority of the population (87%) speak a language other than English at home, with 54% of the population speaking English "less than well." A quarter of the families (26%) with children under the age of 18 are living in poverty, and half (51%) the population is foreign-born.⁹ Median income is \$52,970 with 26% of families with children under 18 were living below the federal poverty line in the past 12 months;¹⁰ in 2019, the federal poverty line for a family of four is \$25,750.¹¹ Notably, according to Living Wage Calculator, a project of

⁶ 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

⁷ Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin: 2010 Census Summary File 1

⁸ <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

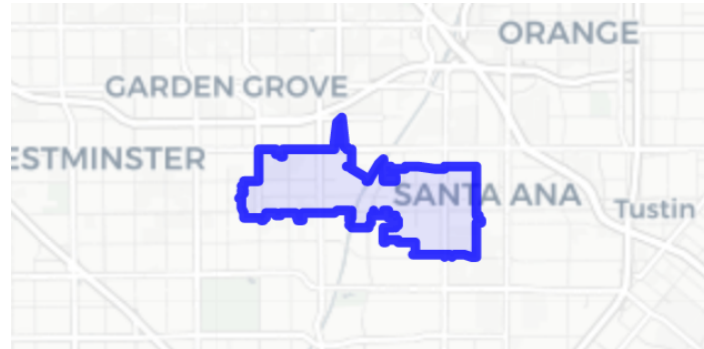
⁹ <https://factfinder.census.gov> (2017 American Community Survey)

¹⁰ <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

¹¹ <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>

Dr. Amy K. Glasmeier, Professor of Economic Geography at MIT, a family of four in Orange County with two full-time working adults needs each adult to earn \$20.21/hour to be self-sustaining (not needing public assistance).¹² The federal poverty line rate equates to just \$5.00/hour. In other words, significantly more than 26% of families in our community are living in poverty based on the economic realities of the area.

100% of our Orange County students qualified for FRPL, with many experiencing extreme poverty, including housing and food instability. We know that our families face myriad challenges that impact our students on a daily basis, thus we work hard to ensure every Vista



school is a safe and engaging place where students – and their families – feel a sense of community and belonging, with support to help them realize better futures for themselves.

Total enrollment at all current Vista Charter Public Schools is currently 1,655.

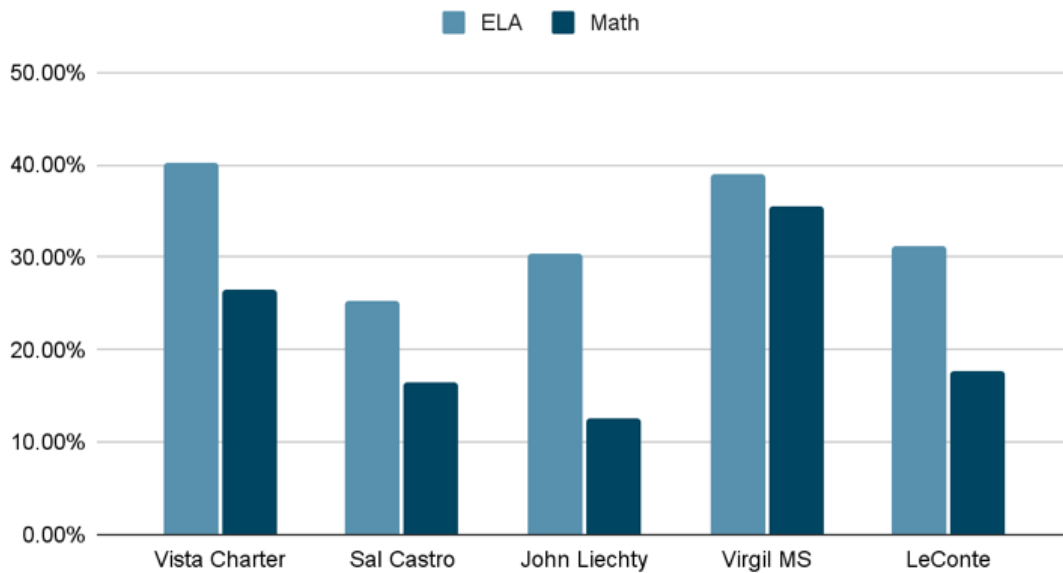
VLGA WILL MEET THE SPECIFIC EDUCATION INTERESTS, BACKGROUNDS AND CHALLENGES OF THE STUDENTS IT WILL SERVE

Beyond the demographic characteristics of the target community that are detailed above, and the demographics and performance of the existing traditional public schools in the target neighborhood, the specific educational interests, backgrounds or challenges of students in the community are well-known to VLGA based on our thirteen years of experience serving students with similar (and often greater) challenges. We know our students experience high rates of childhood trauma borne out of their experiences with poverty, including strains on the family such as housing and food instability.

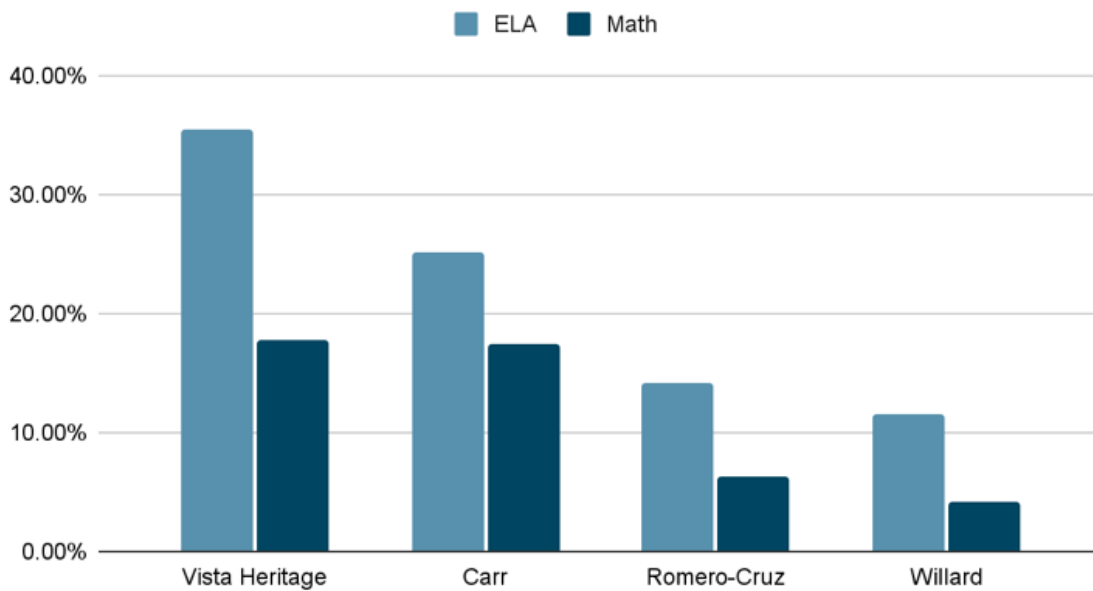
Our schools in Los Angeles and Santa Ana have a history of outperforming neighboring schools that our students would otherwise attend if Vista Charter Public Schools was not an option for them. In 2019, prior to the global pandemic, students in our schools that had been in operation for multiple years scored higher in the Smarter Balanced Assessment for Math and ELA. In some cases, our achievement was higher by double digit gains.

¹² <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06037>; the calculator uses “a market-based approach that draws upon geographically specific expenditure data related to a family’s likely minimum food, childcare, health insurance, housing, transportation, and other basic necessities (e.g. clothing, personal care items, etc.) costs.

Comparison Data: 2019 Los Angeles



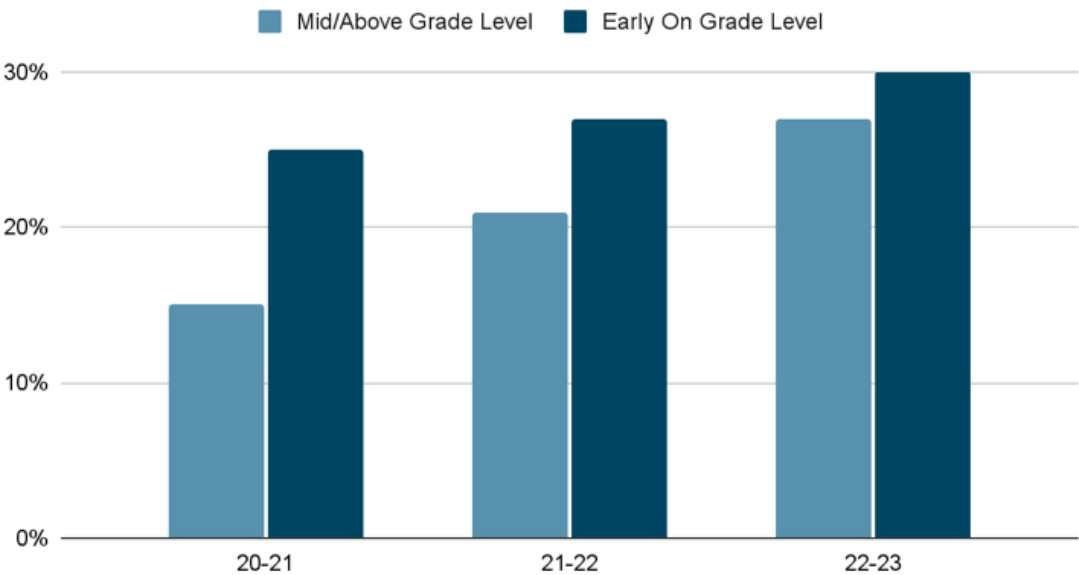
Comparison Data: 2019 Santa Ana



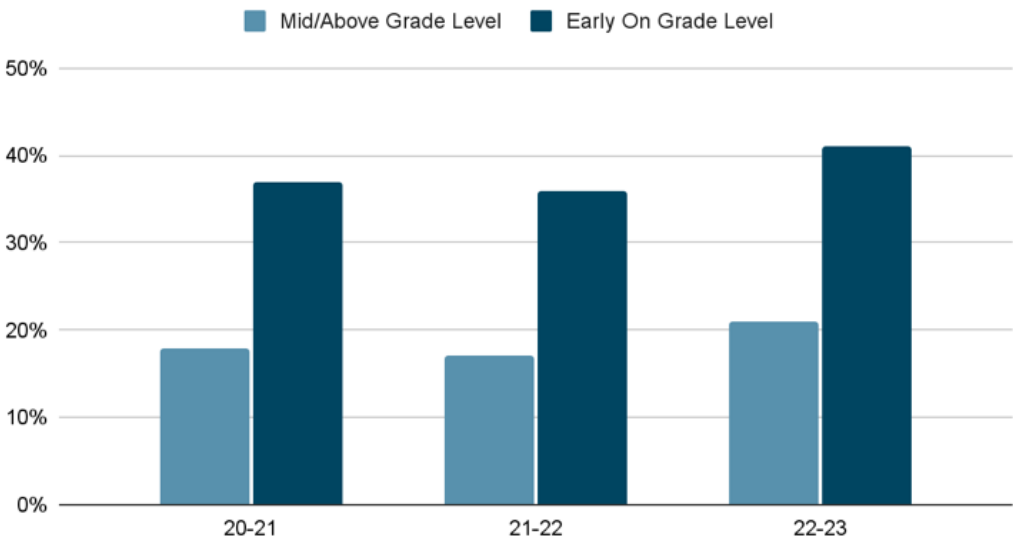
Along with the rest of the state, our schools have experienced learning loss due to the pandemic. However, data indicates that student achievement continues to trend upward and our 2023 data shows that our growth is comparable to our neighboring schools, and higher in some cases.

Our internal diagnostic data indicates that our percentage of students who are Early on, mid or above grade level by the end of year diagnostic has been growing steadily in both Math and ELA over the last 3 years. This is also reflected in our smarter balanced data.

Post-Pandemic Growth: iReady Reading



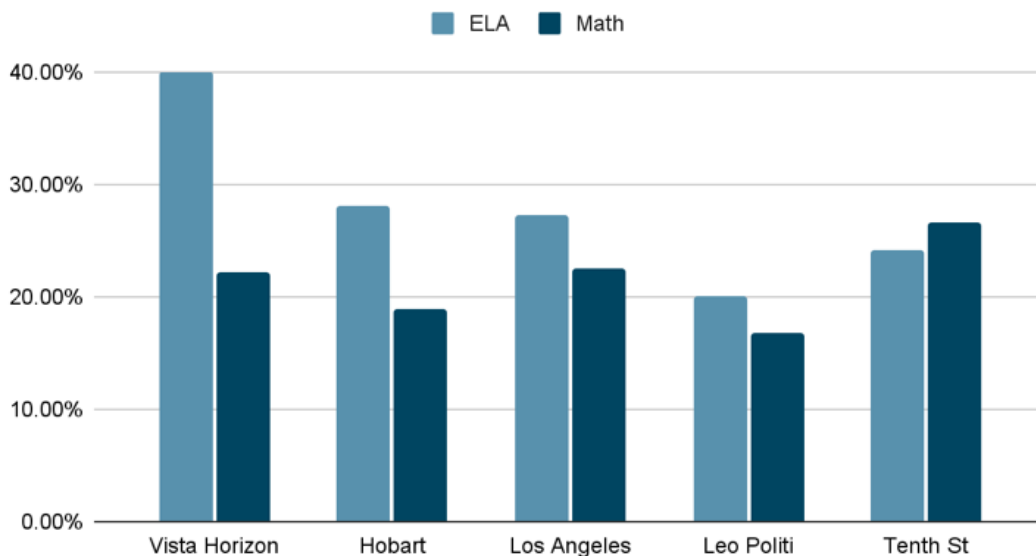
Post-Pandemic Growth: iReady Math



While the state has 50.3% of students making progress towards English language proficiency per the CA Dashboard, we have schools with 57.6%, 53.6%, 52% of students making progress toward English language proficiency.

Moreover, our K-5, Vista Horizon Global Academy, our youngest school in Los Angeles which opened in the same year as the pandemic, also boasts higher scores than local schools. This is a true testament to the effective implementation of our practices and programs and continued commitments to serving the needs of our students and local communities, which we intend to do in Lake Elsinore.

Comparison Data: Vista Horizon Global Academy



Notably, all of the foregoing data is pre-pandemic; we are only beginning to learn the full impact of the pandemic on our youth. One study from March 2021 concluded that:

- More than 13,000 middle and high school students consistently disengaged in fall 2020. An additional 56,000 did not actively participate on a daily basis.
- Two in three students are falling behind in literacy and math.
- Black and Latino students have been disproportionately affected.¹³

Especially alarming is the “warning flag” raised by the study’s authors: “Within the next four years alone, 40,000 current LAUSD high school students or more are at risk and could potentially not earn their high school diploma.”¹⁴ We believe this impact extends to every community, not just the greater Los Angeles area. The National Alliance on Mental Illness has also collected data and reporting on the impacts of the pandemic on our children and youth,¹⁵ including this, from the New York Times:

¹³ Blume, H. *LAUSD students suffered ‘alarming’ academic harm during pandemic, report says*, L.A. Times, March 31, 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-03-31/lausd-covid-data-show-alarming-learning-harm-report-on-December-15>, 2021.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ <https://namica.org/school-during-the-pandemic-mental-health-impacts-and-help-for-students-and-families/>.

The shuttering of the American education system severed students from more than just classrooms, friends and extracurricular activities. It has also cut off an estimated 55 million children and teenagers from school staff members whose open doors and compassionate advice helped them build self-esteem, navigate the pressures of adolescence and cope with trauma....mental health experts worry about the psychological toll on a younger generation that was already experiencing soaring rates of depression, anxiety and suicide before the pandemic....¹⁶

The impact of traumatic events on a child's ability to learn and develop is a common challenge and impediment to accessing opportunity for students. National data indicates that one in four children experience a traumatic event in their lifetime that can affect learning and development;¹⁷ one study on the mental health of students in LAUSD (pre-*pandemic*) revealed that *98% of students* reported experiencing at least one traumatic event over the past 12 months and around 50% suffered moderate-to-severe PTSD from family and neighborhood traumas like the death of a loved one, poverty, a parent suffering addiction or incarceration, or gang violence.¹⁸

Lack of affordable, quality child care means most of these children arrive in public elementary schools without the having had the benefits of quality early learning programs and are thus already behind their peers across the State. VCPS are designed quite intentionally to serve these students. At VCPS, teachers, students, and families are all united around the same goal - college and a choice-filled life.

Based on our years of experience working with this community, and our success in achieving strong outcomes for these students, we are confident that VLGA will offer families who reside in the District an option for their students to attend a high-performing public high school that is carefully designed to meet their needs, developed from the strong foundation that VCPS has established. VCPS is founded on the vision of improving educational and life outcomes for students in communities where poverty and crime rates are high, and educational attainment and outcomes in local public schools are low.

¹⁶ Levin, D. *in a World 'So Upside Down,' the Virus Is Taking a Toll on Young People's Mental Health*, N.Y. Times, May 20, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/20/us/coronavirus-young-people-emotional-toll.html>

¹⁷ The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, "Facts & Figures". Retrieved from <http://www.nctsn.org/resources/topics/facts-and-figures> on 6/26/17

¹⁸ The Need for School Mental Health Services in LAUSD. Retrieved from <http://achieve.lausd.net/Page/2170> on 6/26/17

VLGA WILL MEET THE INTENT OF THE CA CHARTER SCHOOLS ACT OF 1992

Building on the success VCPS has established over the past decade, the new Charter School will operate in accordance with the Charter Schools Act of 1992, and consistent with the intent of the California Legislature “to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish all of the following”:¹⁹

(a) Improve pupil learning: through extensive research and the Framework for Student Engagement (explained below), through a unique combination of global competence, STEAM preparedness, and Social Emotional learning.

(b) Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving: led by the Student Support Team, the Charter School will provide a Multi-Tiered System of Supports for all learners, including those who are academically low achieving, with targeted intervention and support including flexible class grouping, adaptive online learning programs, extended days and intervention/enrichment groups in order to increase learning opportunities for all students.

(c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods: by providing comprehensive and ongoing professional development and coaching to all of our instructional staff, teachers will be encouraged to differentiate instruction for all students using a variety of instructional strategies rooted in the work and research of experts.

(d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site: by providing teachers with the time and support to collaborate and select specific curriculum for lessons and plan differentiated learning based on student data to ensure each individual student’s needs are met.

(e) Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system: VLGA will offer families in the Lake Elsinore community a choice to enroll their grades 9-12 children a small school alternative to the neighborhood resident schools, with a global and STEAM focus that includes CTE Pathways in Health Science, Business and Sustainability Leadership.

(f) Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems: with the Charter School striving to meet ambitious goals each year for student achievement and success detailed in the charter petition and annual Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), with transparent accountability to the VCPS Board of Directors, the charter authorizer, and all stakeholders.

(g) Provide vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools; while we do not subscribe to “competition” between public schools, VCPS is committed to collaboration with other schools in the District to disseminate our best practices in meeting the needs of underserved students. (Cal. Ed. Code Section 47601.)

¹⁹ CA Ed. Code § 47601.

VLGA MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CHARTER SCHOOLS ACT AND THIS CHARTER MUST BE APPROVED

In accordance with the recently amended provisions of the California Education Code, we respectfully submit that the Board of the Lake Elsinore Unified School District should find that this charter petition to establish VLGA for a five-year charter term must be approved. As detailed in the Education Code:

(c) In reviewing petitions for the establishment of charter schools pursuant to this section, the chartering authority shall be guided by the intent of the Legislature that charter schools are and should become an integral part of the California educational system and that the establishment of charter schools should be encouraged. The governing board of the school district shall grant a charter for the operation of a school under this part if it is satisfied that granting the charter is consistent with sound educational practice and with the interests of the community in which the school is proposing to locate. The governing board of the school district shall consider the academic needs of the pupils the school proposes to serve. The governing board of the school district shall not deny a petition for the establishment of a charter school unless it makes written factual findings, specific to the particular petition, setting forth specific facts to support one or more of the following findings . . .²⁰

We address each of the eight potential findings²¹ in turn:

Criteria	Met/Not Met	Notes
(1) VLGA presents [a <u>sound</u>] educational program for the pupils to be enrolled in the charter school.	Met	See Elements 1-3, 6 and 10. Our research-based program will offer a rigorous, standards-aligned educational program for grades 9-12.
(2) VLGA demonstrably [<u>is likely to successfully implement</u>] the program set forth in the petition.	Met	See Elements 4-5, Tabs 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13; the Founding Team has extensive, diverse experience and expertise – including founding and leading the five existing Vista charter schools -- that will support the design, development and implementation of successful new charter school.
(3) The petition contains the number of signatures required by subdivision (a).	Met	See Tabs 1 and 5 (teacher signatures, credentials and resumes from NUMBER teachers, well in excess of the 50% required based on Y1 enrollment of 170 students with six teachers on staff).E
(4) The petition contains an affirmation of each of the conditions described in	Met	See Assurances, Affirmations and Declarations (before Element I).

²⁰ Education Code §47605(c).

²¹ Education Code §47605(c)(i)-(viii).

subdivision (e).		
(5) The petition contains reasonably comprehensive descriptions of Elements 1 through 15, as detailed in the Education Code.	Met	See Elements 1-15.
(6) The petition contains a declaration that the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code.	Met	See Assurances, Affirmations and Declarations (before Element 1) and Element 13.
(7) The charter school is <u>[demonstrably likely to serve the interests]</u> of the entire community in which the school is proposing to locate. Analysis of this finding shall include consideration of the fiscal impact of the proposed charter school. A written factual finding [for denial] under this paragraph shall detail specific facts and circumstances that analyze and consider the following factors: (A) The extent to which the proposed charter school would substantially undermine existing services, academic offerings, or programmatic offerings. (B) Whether the proposed charter school would duplicate a program currently offered within the school district and the existing program has sufficient capacity for the pupils proposed to be served within reasonable proximity to where the charter school intends to locate.	Met	See narrative just below this table.
(8) The school district <u>[is positioned]</u> to absorb the fiscal impact of the proposed charter school. A finding that the district cannot absorb the fiscal	Met	LEUSD has a <u>positive</u> certification, thus (8) does not apply. ²³

²³ California Department of Education. Interim Status. Accessed on August 28, 2021. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fi/ir/interimstatus.asp>.

impact of the new charter school is satisfied if it has a qualified interim certification pursuant to Section 1240 and the county superintendent of schools, in consultation with the County Office Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team, certifies that approving the charter school would result in the school district having a negative interim certification pursuant to Section 1240, has a negative interim certification pursuant to Section 1240, or is under state receivership. Charter schools proposed in a school district satisfying one of these conditions shall be subject to a rebuttable presumption of denial.²²		

Regarding the seventh criteria considering the “fiscal impact” of VLGA on the District, while we reserve the option to apply for a Proposition 39 co-location, our intent is to occupy a private facility as identified herein. For our long-term facility’s needs, we are working with the city of Lake Elsinore to identify this suitable property in the community to develop. As a matter of facilities or operations, VLGA will have a negligible impact on the District.

While many authorizing districts may have concerns about the fiscal impact of new charter schools on their own bottom line as they face declining enrollment, our enrollment of 1,200 students by the time we reach full capacity should not have a negative impact on a school district that has approximately 21,000 students.

VLGA will offer a unique and coordinated approach to student learning, parent engagement and community support.

- Vista’s Framework for Engagement
- Partnership with and curricula from Community Catalyst Partners International Student Study Network (ISSN)
- CTE Pathways in Business, Health Science, and Sustainability Leadership.
- Advisory/Global Hour for *daily* personalized targeted supports and *daily* tutoring during Zero Period.
- Full-time on-site School Psychologist and additional psycho-social supports and SEL throughout the program, including Way of Council.

VLGA’s particular combination of approaches for engaging, personalized, data-driven instruction with a focus on global competencies, STEAM integration, MTSS, integrated and designated ELD, intensive parent engagement strategies including home visits, and intensive teacher PD and coaching with Formal PD, Collaborative Planning Time, PLCs, Coaching,

²² Education Code § 47605(c).

Instructional Rounds, etc. will build upon the success of our existing elementary, middle and high school programs to offer a seamless TK-12 learning experience to the students of the Lake Elsinore Unified School District.

ENROLLMENT PLAN

While we cannot with 100% accuracy predict enrollment for each year, for purposes of planning our budgets and operations conservatively, the following are our enrollment projections for the term of this charter.

	<i>2025-26</i>	<i>2026-27</i>	<i>2027-28</i>	<i>2028-29</i>	<i>2029-30</i>	<i>Max Capacity</i>
	10	20	30	40	50	50
	20	40	60	75	75	75
	10	30	50	70	75	75
	10	20	40	60	75	75
	10	20	30	50	75	75
	10	20	30	40	75	75
	10	20	30	40	75	75
	25	50	75	100	100	100
	20	30	55	85	100	100
	20	25	35	60	100	100
	25	50	75	100	100	100
		35	60	85	100	100
			45	70	100	100
				55	100	100
	170	360	615	930	1200	1200

GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY

VLGA believes that all cultures matter. Our unique global perspective combined with a STEAM focus will teach students to honor other cultures and perspectives, to fully embrace their own cultural heritage and, and to build the technical skills to compete in the 21st Century.

MISSION AND VISION

The mission of VLGA is to create a college and career preparatory learning environment that allows students to have power in developing their identity within personal, interpersonal and educational realms as they pursue a pathway of study in Health Science, Business or Sustainability Leadership. We will provide a quality education for all students by creating a learning community that involves students in their development of the knowledge, skills,

attitude, behaviors, aspirations, and beliefs needed to be successful in college and careers as well as the development of life-long learning skills.

VLGA's students will have power in the establishment of their identities. They will create the vision of who they are, the path that they choose in life, and the reason they have chosen it. They will be considered critical constructors of knowledge in an ever-changing and interconnected society. Their learning and development will be constructed and fostered in an environment that focuses on individual strengths, need, and desires through a differentiated approach.

We will achieve our mission and vision based on extensive research and the Framework for Student Engagement (explained below), through a unique combination of global competence, STEAM preparedness, and Social Emotional learning. We see these areas not as separate foci, but rather as a nested symbiotic grouping that works together to transform the school experience.

The Framework for Engagement has been developed by our Superintendent, Dr. Donald Wilson, and a team of USC scholars as an important lens through which all programs and practices are developed and selected. This framework necessitates that a shift in instructional practice is required to ensure the personalized learning experience is created to develop globally competent students. This shift in practice is commonly referred to as a move away from the "sage on the stage" model, in which the teacher directly delivers instruction through lecturing, to the "guide on the side," in which teachers act as a coach and facilitate a more personalized learning experience and is based on a constructivist view in which, optimally, the classroom provides a series of experiences that prompt students to actively construct their own knowledge and learning.²⁴ At VLGA, we will use this as an important lens through which all programs, processes, and practices are chosen and developed.

The VCPS global educational approach combines teaching global competencies through Community Catalyst Partners' International Study Schools Network.²⁵ We believe that globally competent students have broad skill sets with the disciplines that are becoming increasingly important to access the American dream: science, technology, engineering, and math. The arts allow students to access the creative heart of these disciplines and are an important part of developing a world-consciousness and ethos that keeps the needs of humanity at the center of our students' "why" questions. When students are given a context for their learning (global education), and the tools to excel and apply them to the real world (STEAM), the outcome is deep engagement and a life-long love of learning.

Finally, through carefully designed school structures, policies and programs, VLGA will provide our students with a learning environment and social-emotional learning to help them develop

²⁴ Parsons, J., & Taylor, L. (2011). Improving student engagement. *Current issues in education*, 14(1). Vygotsky, L. (1987). Zone of proximal development. *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*, 5291, 157. Zepke, N., & Leach, L. (2010). Improving student engagement: Ten proposals for action. *Active learning in higher education*, 11(3), 167-177.

²⁵ Asia Society. Center for Global Education International Studies Schools Network. Accessed from <https://asiasociety.org/international-studies-schools-network>.

into self-motivated, competent, global citizens. Kagan strategies,²⁶ Way of Council²⁷ and other acclaimed programs help engage our students and develop their capacity for success.

AN EDUCATED PERSON IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Developed at the turn of the 20th century, our current educational system was designed to meet the needs of the industrial revolution, with its emphasis on factory and assembly-line production jobs.²⁸ Unfortunately, a person time-traveling from 1918 to 2018 would feel too much at home, too familiar with the classroom culture at many schools across California and our nation. Too many students are still asked to sit quietly for six hours each day, as their teachers lecture, or they are asked to work silently on isolated skills and have faith that these will somehow be relevant in their adult lives.

This pedagogical style may have been appropriate when our country needed workers able to do the same task, over and over, on one part that would eventually be one piece of a car, boat, or machine. Those jobs met the needs of an industry-based society; workers today need the technical skills to manage—and succeed—in an increasingly complicated high-tech and automated world. On a daily basis, the media reports on the effects of this new economy and what it means to be a qualified worker today.²⁹ Workers in traditional occupations are experiencing some of the most profound impacts, as car manufacturing plants, factories, and coalmines close, giving way to innovations in manufacturing and energy development. A 2013 Oxford University study predicted that roughly 700 common jobs are susceptible to future automation.³⁰ Another recent study out of University of Redlands' Institute for Spatial Economic Analysis showed that approximately 60% of the Southern California workforce is vulnerable to being replaced by automation in the next 10 to 20 years.³¹ The world around us is rapidly evolving, and so our schools must also evolve.

Mastery on standardized tests and traditional approaches to the acquisition of knowledge are not sufficient for today's youth. With an ever-widening opportunity gap preventing youth from contributing meaningfully in today's society and economy, we must step back and reassess both *how* children at different stages of development learn and the environments that best nurture learning. Schools with experiential and hands-on learning models – *that is, where students are building the independence to think deeply, test ideas, solve problems, and reflect on their own learning and growth*– are teaching us something profound about student learning and potential. It is increasingly clear that both academic (up to and through college) and life success in the 21st

²⁶ Kagan, S. (2003). Kagan structures: Research and rationale in a nutshell. *Kagan Online Magazine*.

²⁷ Ways of Council. The Council Path. Accessed from <https://waysofcouncil.net/the-council-path/>.

²⁸ Spring, J. (2017). *American education*. Routledge.

²⁹ McKinsey Global Institute. (2017). Technology, jobs and the future of work. Accessed from <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/employment-and-growth/technology-jobs-and-the-future-of-work>.

³⁰ Frey, C. B., & Osborne, M. (2013). The future of employment.

³¹ Semuels, A. (2017). The Parts of America Most Susceptible to Automation. *The Atlantic*. Accessed from: <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/05/the-parts-of-america-most-susceptible-to-automation/525168/>.

century demands the development of deeper learning, cultural competency, and social emotional skills that develop both our humanity and our career-readiness.³²

At VLGA, we believe that if students are to successfully enter into college and career, they should be educated in a way that prepares them to be adaptable, creative, critical thinkers; they must be equipped with the basic attributes and technological skills that will allow them to pursue current innovative occupations, and they must be nimble enough to take advantage of opportunities that may not even exist yet. VLGA's unique educational approach will combine teaching global competencies in tandem with a STEAM curriculum, thus providing our students both the social capital and technological skills to ethically compete in rigorous post-secondary schools and a global economy.

We believe that 21st century competence starts with global competence.³³ Preparing all students for college, work and civic roles requires the ability to compete, connect, and cooperate on an international scale. Global competence starts by being aware, curious, and interested in learning about the world and how it works.³⁴ Students will be able to ask globally significant questions, analyze evidence from multiple sources, and develop an argument that draws defensible conclusions. Students will recognize that because they have a unique perspective that someone else may not share, it is essential to listen and consider views that are divergent from their own.

Students who are 21st century-ready and globally competent effectively communicate their ideas with diverse audiences, often through the use of appropriate technology.³⁵ By applying what they have learned, our students will translate their ideas into appropriate actions to discover solutions to local and global challenges.

Virtually every major issue in the 21st century—from climate change to national security to public health—has a global dimension. In this age of technology, information is shared globally almost instantaneously. And, with over 200 million migrants worldwide, migration and immigration are creating societies that are enormously diverse, linguistically and culturally. More than ever, people, cultures, and nations are interdependent. Schools must therefore prepare students to solve problems on a global scale and participate effectively in a global economic and civic environment. Put simply, schools must prepare students to be *globally competent*.

VLGA, as a part of the VCPS organization, will be a member of the Community Catalyst Partners' International Student Study Network (ISSN), which will serve as a foundation for our global studies. Community Catalyst Partners is the leading educational organization dedicated to promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among peoples, leaders, and institutions of Asia and the United States in a global context. Since its inception, Community Catalyst Partners' ISSN has built a broad network of high-performing, globally oriented schools

³² National Research Council. (2013). *Education for life and work: Developing transferable knowledge and skills in the 21st century*. National Academies Press.

³³ Deardorff, D. K. (Ed.). (2009). *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence*. Sage.

³⁴ Pusch, M. D. (2009). The interculturally competent global leader. *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence*, 66-84.

³⁵ Hutchison, A., & Beschorner, B. (2018). Mobile Devices and Multimodal Textual Practices. In *Mobile Technologies in Children's Language and Literacy: Innovative Pedagogy in Preschool and Primary Education* (pp. 83-97). Emerald Publishing Limited.

that demonstrate what a rigorous global education can do for a largely low-income, urban student population. VLGA will work with the ISSN to provide a rich, global curriculum that engages students by helping them to investigate and address real-world problems, communicate ideas, and weigh diverse perspectives.³⁶ Community Catalyst Partners and the ISSN schools have designed a robust approach to performance-based learning and assessment that has implications well beyond the network, offering lessons for policymakers and practitioners concerned about preparing students to live and work in an increasingly complex world.

Supported by a foundation of knowledge and understanding developed through rigorous disciplinary and interdisciplinary study, the 21st century learner is globally competent and able to do the following:

Investigate the World. Globally competent students ask and explore critical questions and "researchable" problems that are *globally significant*, addressing important phenomena and events that are relevant in their own communities and communities across the globe. Globally competent students can articulate the significance of their questions and know how to respond to questions by identifying, collecting, and analyzing credible information from a variety of local, national and international sources. They can connect the local to the global, for example, by explaining how a local issue like their school recycling program is one part of a global process with economic, social, and environmental relevance.³⁷

Weigh Perspectives. Globally competent students recognize that they have a particular perspective to which others may or may not subscribe. Importantly, such students are able to articulate and explain the perspectives of other people, groups, or schools of thought and identify influences on these perspectives, including how differential access to knowledge, technology, and resources can affect people's views. Their understanding of others' perspectives is deeply informed by historical knowledge about other cultures as well as by contemporary events. They can compare and contrast their perspectives with others, and, where appropriate, integrate these diverse viewpoints to construct a new, deeply considered one.³⁸

Communicate Ideas. Globally competent students understand that audiences differ on the basis of culture, geography, faith, ideology, wealth, and other factors, and that they may see different meanings in the same information. They can effectively communicate, verbally and non-verbally, with diverse audiences. Globally competent students are able to situate themselves in a variety of cultural contexts, organize and collaboratively participate in diverse groups, and work effectively toward a common goal. Globally competent students are media and artistically savvy; they know how to choose and effectively utilize appropriate technology and media to communicate with disparate audiences, including through respectful online social networking. While English remains the dominant language of business and trade, speaking another language is important for collaborating across borders. Students receive Spanish language instruction as well as literacy in English. Building literacy in English and Spanish reinforces pride in our

³⁶ Asia Society. Center for Global Education International Studies Schools Network. Accessed from <https://asiasociety.org/international-studies-schools-network>.

³⁷ Mansilla, V. B., & Jackson, A. (2013). Educating for global competence: Learning redefined for an interconnected world. *Mastering Global Literacy* (5-27). New York: Solution Tree.

³⁸ Ibid.

students' primary language (mostly Spanish) and validates the diverse cultures they come from. VLGA will also provide access to language instruction for an Asian language once enrollment increases to capacity.

Take Action. What skills and knowledge will it take to go from learning *about* the world to making a difference *in* the world? First, it takes seeing oneself as capable of making a difference. Globally competent students see themselves as players, not bystanders. They're keenly able to recognize opportunities-- from targeted human rights advocacy to creating the next out-of-the-box, must-have business product we don't even know we need. Globally competent students ethically and creatively envision and weigh options for action, assess the potential impact of that action, take into account diverse opinions and potential consequences of the action, and show courage to execute a plan and reflect on it later.

Apply Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Expertise. Global competence requires that students master content knowledge detailed in the California Common Core State Standards and apply appropriate methods of inquiry within and across disciplines as historians, scientists, and artists. Global competence also requires being equipped to understand prevailing world conditions, concerns, and trends through an interdisciplinary lens. A competitive advantage will go to those students who are aware of global events, can comprehend the intersections of environmental, financial, social, and other systems, and understand how the balance of power between societies and cultures has significant short- and long-term consequences. Globally competent students are life-long learners. They are able to adapt, contribute knowledge, and participate in dialogues about a rapidly evolving world.

Finally, we note that the three college/career pathways offered by VLGA (Health Science, Business and Sustainability Leadership) are each of critical importance and relevance in real time world events. The current Covid-19 pandemic, global challenges relating to climate change, and debates over international trade and business are all receiving heightened attention in the media and public eye. Our students will be able to engage in meaningful, dynamic learning that motivates them to see a role they can play in participating in these ongoing debates and discussions and having a real impact on the world around them.

HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS

At VLGA, we believe that learning best occurs when students are engaged academically, socially and emotionally. Student engagement will be at the heart of the VLGA learning experience. We see engagement as an act that connects us to each other and to the physical world. Engaged students are focused, actively involved in school's social and educational opportunities, and academically successful.³⁹

While there have been some overall improvements for all students of all races, the achievement gap has persisted, with a majority of Black and Latino students across the United States still

³⁹ Shernoff, D. J., Csikszentmihalyi, M., Schneider, B., & Shernoff, E. S. (2014). Student engagement in high school classrooms from the perspective of flow theory. In *Applications of flow in human development and education* (pp. 475-494). Springer, Dordrecht.

lagging far behind their White counterparts.⁴⁰ There is increasing academic interest and emphasis on the importance of supportive instructional strategies such as scaffolding and formulating safety nets for at-risk students.⁴¹ Research has increasingly demonstrated that engagement is a critical factor in positive student outcomes.⁴² This is crucially important as many researchers regard the opposite of engagement as disengagement,⁴³ which is a primary factor in poor performance, dropout rates, and even prison for Black and Latino boys.⁴⁴ Multiple studies have shown a significant correlation between engagement and achievement.⁴⁵ With researchers suggesting that between 25% and 66% of students may be disengaged,⁴⁶ engagement may be the North Star for promising practices that address the needs of at-risk students.

A priority for VLGA is to close the achievement gap for our target student population, historically underrepresented students. Research that drives the design for our educational program is based on conclusions for how learning best occurs for these at-risk student populations.⁴⁷ Research identifies the lack of students' social capital as one of the main factors that contributes to performance gaps for urban students. Stanton-Salazar (1997) defines social capital as institutional resources and opportunities, such as knowledge of school programs, academic tutoring and mentoring, and how to access assistance with career decision-making and college admission.⁴⁸ For a great number of economically disenfranchised students attending urban schools, access to social capital is severely limited, if not completely absent from their social context.⁴⁹ Therefore, VLGA will prioritize increasing our students' social capital within the design of our educational program.

VLGA will use a framework applied in recent studies examining the role of engagement in outperforming urban schools. This framework consists of three separate but interrelated types of student engagement: (a) emotional, (b) behavioral, and (c) cognitive.⁵⁰ The researchers found

⁴⁰ Torlakson, P. I. T. (2013). Recommendations for transitioning California to a future assessment system. *Sacramento, CA. California Department of Education.*

⁴¹ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

⁴² Shernoff, E. S., Kratochwill, T. R., & Stoiber, K. C. (2003). Training in Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs): What are school psychology programs teaching?. *Journal of School Psychology, 41*(6), 467-483.

⁴³ Fredricks, J. A., & McColskey, W. (2012). The measurement of student engagement: A comparative analysis of various methods and student self-report instruments. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 763-782). Springer, Boston, MA.

⁴⁴ Fenning, P., & Rose, J. (2007). Overrepresentation of African American students in exclusionary discipline the role of school policy. *Urban Education, 42*(6), 536-559.

⁴⁵ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: what is it? Why does it matter? *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement.*

⁴⁶ Finn, J. D. (1989). Withdrawing from school. *Review of educational research, 59*(2), 117-142. Parsons, J., & Taylor, L. (2011). Improving student engagement. *Current issues in education, 14*(1).

⁴⁷ Christenson, S. L., Reschly, A. L., Appleton, J. J., Berman, S., Spanjers, D., & Varro, P. (2008). Best practices in fostering student engagement. In *Best practices in school psychology V*(pp. 1099-1120). National Association of School Psychologists.

⁴⁸ Stanton-Salazar, R. D. (1997). A social capital framework for understanding the socialization of racial minority children and youths. *Harvard educational review, 67*, 1-40.

⁴⁹ Roderick, M., Nagaoka, J., & Coca, V. (2009). College readiness for all: The challenge for urban high schools. *The future of children, 19*(1), 185-210.

⁵⁰ Appleton, J. J., Christenson, S. L., & Furlong, M. J. (2008). Student engagement with school: Critical conceptual and methodological issues of the construct. *Psychology in the Schools, 45*(5), 369-386.

that when emotional, behavioral, and cognitive engagement are optimized, students can experience a state of “flow” wherein students are profoundly absorbed in a task to the point of losing awareness of time and space.⁵¹

Behavioral engagement. Behavioral engagement is generally defined quantitatively through attendance rates, office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions.⁵² It may also be measured qualitatively and includes paying attention, responding to teacher’s questions, asking for help, and discipline issues such as following rules and acting respectfully toward teachers and classmates.⁵³ Research is clear that behavioral engagement has a significant effect on achievement.⁵⁴ This strong correlation to achievement gives hope to the idea that learning how to manipulate engagement behaviors may provide important pathways to narrowing or closing the achievement gap.

Emotional engagement. There is a strong correlation between behavior and emotional engagement, which is commonly defined as identification and students’ feeling a part of school or class community.⁵⁵ Multiple studies affirm the connection between student attitudes about school and participation rates; students rated their engagement higher in schools and classrooms where mutual respect was fostered, strong discipline policies guided cultural norms, and teachers actively sought to build strong relationships with students.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Fredricks, J. A., & McColskey, W. (2012). The measurement of student engagement: A comparative analysis of various methods and student self-report instruments. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 763-782). Springer, Boston, MA. Shernoff, E. S., Kratochwill, T. R., & Stoiber, K. C. (2003). Training in Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs): What are school psychology programs teaching?. *Journal of School Psychology, 41*(6), 467-483.

⁵² Finn, J. D. (1989). Withdrawing from school. *Review of educational research, 59*(2), 117-142. Fredricks, J. A., & McColskey, W. (2012). The measurement of student engagement: A comparative analysis of various methods and student self-report instruments. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 763-782). Springer, Boston, MA.

⁵³ Finn, J. D. (1989). Withdrawing from school. *Review of educational research, 59*(2), 117-142. Parsons, J., & Taylor, L. (2011). Improving student engagement. *Current issues in education, 14*(1). Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

⁵⁴ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA. Furlong, M. J., Whipple, A. D., Jean, G. S., Simental, J., Soliz, A., & Punthuna, S. (2003). Multiple contexts of school engagement: Moving toward a unifying framework for educational research and practice. *The California School Psychologist, 8*(1), 99-113. Parsons, J., & Taylor, L. (2011). Improving student engagement. *Current issues in education, 14*(1).

⁵⁵ Appleton, J. J., Christenson, S. L., & Furlong, M. J. (2008). Student engagement with school: Critical conceptual and methodological issues of the construct. *Psychology in the Schools, 45*(5), 369-386.

⁵⁶ Shernoff, E. S., Kratochwill, T. R., & Stoiber, K. C. (2003). Training in Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs): What are school psychology programs teaching?. *Journal of School Psychology, 41*(6), 467-483. Appleton, J. J., Christenson, S. L., & Furlong, M. J. (2008). Student engagement with school: Critical conceptual and methodological issues of the construct. *Psychology in the Schools, 45*(5), 369-386. Parsons, J., & Taylor, L. (2011). Improving student engagement. *Current issues in education, 14*(1). Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

Cognitive engagement. Cognitive engagement is generally seen as a student's investment in learning.⁵⁷ In this way, teachers may perceive students to be engaged due to their behavior, but still not achieving due to an overall lack of cognitive engagement in the work. Cognitive engagement is demonstrated through student behaviors such as persistence, going the extra mile, extending learning on their own, and using self-regulation strategies to accomplish tasks and guide learning.⁵⁸

Theory of Flow and Engagement. Research on Flow Theory is a critical philosophical component of the VLGA experience. Flow Theory was first proposed by Csikszentmihalyi (1990) in *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*.⁵⁹ A state of flow can best be described as total absorption and immersion in an activity. A student in flow exhibits intense concentration, interest, and enjoyment.⁶⁰ When a person is in flow, he or she can stay engaged in an activity and disregard time, food, and other interests or needs. In flow, a student feels not only pleasure in the activity, but more importantly, and for educational implications, successful and competent.⁶¹

One of the main principles of Flow Theory is that students feel a deep sense of success about an activity that forces them to stretch themselves just beyond their limit.⁶² This state of optimal engagement can be traced to the work of Lev Vygotsky, a psychologist who introduced the notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).⁶³ ZPD is described as the bridge between what a student cannot do and what a student could do with a little help, a theory reflected in the VLGA experience. Self-efficacy also has a positive effect on engagement, which in turn affects overall achievement. VLGA will help students achieve this state by providing them with mastery experiences that scaffold key information and modeling by those that have already been successful in a given task.⁶⁴ Further, we recognize the importance of understanding which instructional practices show the strongest promise in helping students achieve a state flow in their learning.

Nowhere is this capacity to engage deeply in a task or endeavor more critical than in the high school years. Their experience with flow will empower VLGA's high school students to engage in rigorous tasks independently and fully. The capacity to experience flow can also be defined as a set of critically important executive functioning skills that will serve our graduates well at the post-secondary level where their learning will be largely self-directed.

⁵⁷ Fredricks, J. A., & McColskey, W. (2012). The measurement of student engagement: A comparative analysis of various methods and student self-report instruments. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 763-782). Springer, Boston, MA.

⁵⁸ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

⁵⁹ Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper & Row.

⁶⁰ Parsons, J., & Taylor, L. (2011). Improving student engagement. *Current issues in education*, 14(1).

⁶¹ Shernoff, E. S., Kratochwill, T. R., & Stoiber, K. C. (2003). Training in Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs): What are school psychology programs teaching?. *Journal of School Psychology*, 41(6), 467-483.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *Problems of general psychology*.

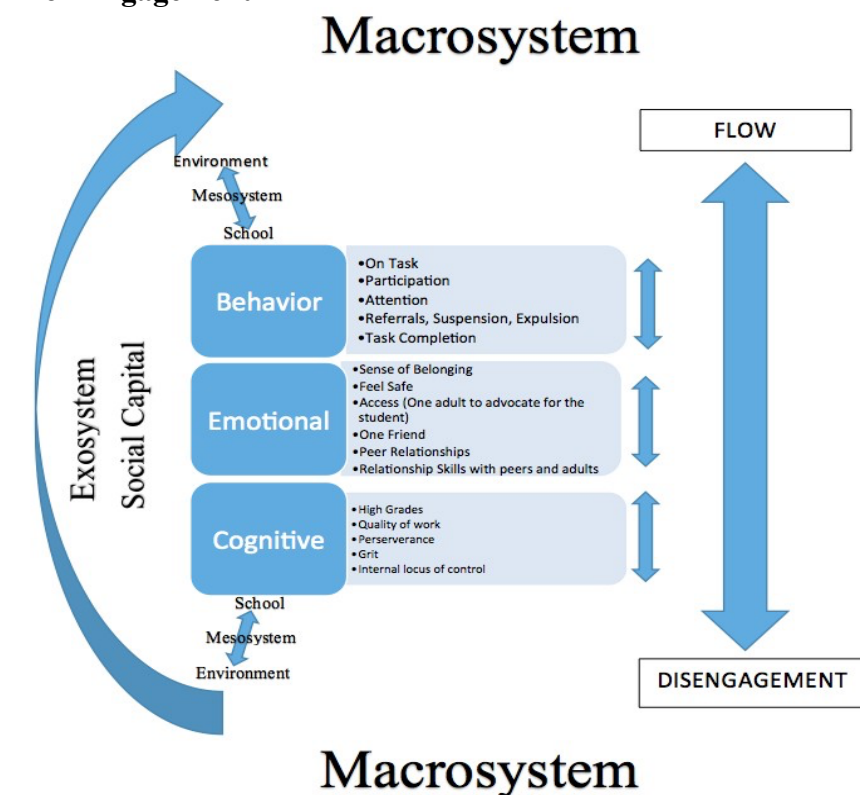
⁶⁴ Furlong, M. J., Whipple, A. D., Jean, G. S., Simental, J., Soliz, A., & Punthuna, S. (2003). Multiple contexts of school engagement: Moving toward a unifying framework for educational research and practice. *The California School Psychologist*, 8(1), 99-113.

At VLGA all programs, processes, and procedures will be evaluated using the Framework for Engagement before adoption, with the belief that increasing engagement in the three domains drives increases in our students' joy and passion in their education, develop a life-long love of learning, and, ultimately, bridge the achievement gap. This framework is based on the work of our Superintendent, Dr. Donald Wilson, and a team from the University of Southern California that conducted an extensive review of the literature on engagement and achievement, with a close look at the work of Urie Bronfenbrenner (Neal & Neal, 2013).⁶⁵ Bronfenbrenner's *Ecological Systems Theory* explores the interrelated nature of nested systems in human development.⁶⁶ Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory includes the macrosystem, exosystem, meso- and microsystems. These systems and their influence on human development are included in the conceptual framework (see chart below). The macrosystem, or attitudes and ideologies of the culture, combine with a student's microsystem in which emotional, behavioral, and cognitive engagement plays a significant role in his or her academic achievement. The flow chart below presents a visual representation of this theory.

⁶⁵ Neal, J. W., & Neal, Z. P. (2013). Nested or networked? Future directions for ecological systems theory. *Social Development*, 22(4), 722-737.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Framework for Engagement



In short, the framework provides the bases of the pedagogical stance that our school must provide instruction that gives students the opportunity to build social and emotional capital, as well as acquire strong academic and technical skills. The three domains of engagement must be present to increase student engagement and increase social capital for our students. Students learn best with programs that provide engagement in multiple domains. For instance, while Kagan Cooperative Strategies provides structures to increase cognitive engagement, they are embedded in social/emotional strategies like complimenting a partner, greetings, and thanking teams and partners after working together. Further, they address behavioral issues of staying on task, participation, and attention. Another example of how VLGA will support high student engagement is through Way of Council, which grants students many opportunities to reflect about how their own thinking affects outcomes, and thus, increases cognitive engagement.⁶⁷ Importantly, Way of Council has been shown to decrease behavioral issues and give students the tools to solve interpersonal issues.

THE REQUIREMENTS OF CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE § 47605(B)(5)(A)(II)

VLGA will pursue the following school-wide and subgroup outcome goals, based on the state priorities detailed in California Education Code § 52060(d). Student performance and achievement of school-wide, subgroup and individual student progress will be measured by multiple and varied summative and formative assessments that are aligned to state and federal

⁶⁷ Ways of Council. The Council Path. Accessed from <https://waysofcouncil.net/the-council-path/>.

standards (including the new Common Core) and reflect proficiency measures required by the CAASPP, as well as state priorities detailed in California Education Code § 52060(d).

The following chart details the Charter School’s goals as of this petition submission, for all pupils (including statistically significant subgroups) pursuant to California Education Code § 52052, for each of the eight (8) state priorities identified in California Education Code § 52060(d), including specific annual actions the school will take to achieve each of the identified annual goals. We note that as required under the California Education Code, VLGA’s stakeholders will engage in a collaborative process each year to update and prepare an annual Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) as a basis for prioritizing allocation of funds. The following is intended to be illustrative of the goals and actions we anticipate at this point in time.

LCFF STATE PRIORITIES	
GOAL #1	
CONDITIONS OF LEARNING All VLGA students will have access to a high-quality education program taught by qualified teachers.	Related State Priorities: ☒ 1 ☐ 4 ☒ 7 ☒ 2 ☐ 5 ☐ 8 ☐ 3 ☐ 6 Local Priorities: ☐: ☐:
Specific Annual Actions to Achieve Goal	
Priority 1 (Basic Services) <i>Priority 1 Outcome 1— Degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned pursuant to Education Code section 44258.9, and fully credentialed in the subject areas and for the pupils they are teaching.</i> - VLGA will hire, supervise, evaluate and retain qualified teaching staff. - VLGA will ensure verification of proper credentials and DoJ clearance prior to start of employment. - VLGA will actively recruit qualified teachers reflecting student ethnic demographics <i>Priority 1 Outcome 2— Pupils have access to standards-aligned instructional materials pursuant to Education Code section 60119.</i> - VLGA will provide appropriate, standards-aligned (including CA CCSS and the academic content and performance standards) textbooks/curriculum materials. - VLGA will review alignment of instructional materials to standards. - VLGA will maintain an annual inventory of instructional materials and respective purchase of materials. - VLGA budget will be reviewed every year to ensure adequate budget for instructional materials is in place. <i>Priority 1 Outcome 3— School facilities are maintained in good repair pursuant to Education Code section 17002(d).</i> - VLGA facilities will be maintained and cleaned by custodial staff - VLGA will do annual and monthly facility inspections to screen for safety hazards.	

- VLGA will utilize Site Inspection Lists and provide daily general cleaning and spot checks by custodial staff

Priority 2 (Implementation of State Standards)

Priority 2 Outcome 1— Implementation of academic content and performance standards and English language development standards adopted by the state board for all pupils, including English learners.

- VLGA will participate in ongoing professional development on the implementation of CCSS and new CCSS-aligned assessments.
- VLGA will provide CCSS-aligned ELA and math instruction using integrated ELD and designated instructional strategies to all students, including ELs.
- VLGA will provide PD to teachers examining CAASPP, Renaissance, and other state and internal assessment scores, into reports and regularly review progress to build on our data driven decision making.

Priority 7 (Course Access)

Priority 7 Outcome 1— Pupil enrollment in a broad course of study that includes all of the subject areas described in Education Code section 51210 and subdivisions (a) to (i), inclusive, of Section 51220, as applicable, including A-G approved courses, AP courses, and programs and resources as needed to support progress toward graduation. (Priority 7)

- VLGA will ensure all academic areas will be available to all students, inclusive of all subgroups, and all grades.
- VLGA will provide 1:1 technology (Chromebooks) to ensure access to web resources and curriculum tools.
- VLGA will hire, train, supervise and evaluate qualified counseling staff to ensure students have equitable access to A-G courses and make annual progress toward graduation.
- VLGA staff and administration will review student enrollment in AP courses and ensure all students have equitable access to enroll in AP courses

Expected Annual Measurable Outcomes

Priority 1 Outcome 1: All teachers will be properly certified and assigned.

Metric/Method for Measuring: % of courses and Teachers at VLGA appropriately assigned and with appropriately credentialed personnel.

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Hispanic/Latino	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
English Learner	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Students with Disabilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Priority 1 Outcome 2: All VLGA students (including all statistically significant subgroups) will have access to standards-aligned materials and technology

Metric/Method for Measuring: % of VLGA students who will have sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials.

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Hispanic/Latino	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

English Learner	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Students with Disabilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Priority 1 Outcome 3: VLGA facilities will be maintained and cleaned through a contract with custodial staff and include daily spot checks and Site Inspection Lists, pursuant to Education Code section 17002(d). Metric/Method for Measuring: % of items on the Site Inspection Lists and daily spot checks that are in compliance/good standing						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%
Hispanic/Latino	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%
English Learner	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%
Students with Disabilities	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%
Priority 2 Outcome 1: VLGA will ensure the implementation of academic content and performance standards for all core subjects with 100% math and ELA Common Core Implementation. Metric/Method for Measuring: Purchased textbooks/curriculum; curriculum pacing and lesson plans; teacher observations.						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Hispanic/Latino	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
English Learner	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Students with Disabilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Priority 7 Outcome 1: All VLGA students, including all significant subgroups, will have access to a broad course of student (English Language Arts, Math, History, Science, World Languages, Advisory, Health/PE, visual/performing arts, CTE Pathways, and additional electives) outlined in the charter petition, including A-G and AP courses. Metric/Method for Measuring: % of access to all available programs and services outlined in charter petition.						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Hispanic/Latino	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
English Learner	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Students with Disabilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

LCFF STATE PRIORITIES

GOAL #2

PUPIL OUTCOMES

Every VLGA student will have the right to a personalized and individualized education.

Related State Priorities:

☐ 1	☒ 4	☐ 7
☐ 2	☐ 5	☒ 8
☐ 3	☐ 6	

Local Priorities:

- ☐:
☐

Specific Annual Actions to Achieve Goal

- *Priority 4 (Pupil Achievement)*
 - *Priority 4 Outcome 1 – Performance on standardized tests and overall schoolwide assessments such as the new CA Dashboard*
- *VLGA will provide highly qualified instructional personnel and Education Specialists to implement high-quality instruction with continuous monitoring by the Principal and central office personnel.*
- *VLGA will provide comprehensive professional development to support student achievement.*
- *VLGA will analyze CAASPP and other state and internal assessment scores at least quarterly to review progress towards annual targets.*
- *Priority 4 Outcome 2 – Share of English learners that become English proficient*
- *See above; plus: VLGA will implement the Vista Public Schools English Learner Master Plan.*
- *VLGA will provide high qualified and experienced teachers with appropriate EL authorization who will continuously monitor instruction and achievement of ELs*
- *VLGA will identify English Learners by proficiency level, ensure ELD instruction is aligned to the new standards, and monitor student progress in program implementation.*
- *VLGA will provide professional development related to EL support, including ELPAC training and re-designation criteria.*
- *VLGA will ensure re-designated ELs will continue to be supported via a multi-tiered system including support for struggling readers.*
- *Priority 4 Outcome 3- English learner reclassification rate*
- *Same as Priority 4 Outcome 2 above, plus:*
- *VLGA budget will be reviewed every year to ensure adequate budget for appropriate EL instructional materials is in place.*
- *VLGA will add additional supports for our EL students through exam preparation, differentiation, teacher coaching, and additional tutoring to meet EL student instructional needs*
- *Priority 4 Outcome 4– All high school students, including all subgroups, will make adequate progress on the SAT/ACT standardized assessment, including taking the PSAT 10 and PSAT in 10th and 11th grades, respectively.*
- *All teachers will engage in ongoing professional development and training in instructional strategies, along with targeted intervention for students needing additional support in reading improvement and math, including EL and SWD, for CCSS in ELA/ELD, math, NGSS and prep test support*
- *All teachers will review standardized and internal benchmark assessments to identify areas of strength and growth and implement instructional strategies accordingly*

-
- *Priority 4 Outcome 5 – All students, including all subgroups, will make adequate progress toward A-G completion*
- *VLGA will ensure all high school students enroll in courses that meet A-G completion requirements through individualized student counseling and progress reviews periodically throughout the year.*
-
- *Priority 4 Outcome 6 – All students, including all subgroups, will make adequate progress toward AP course completion and passing the AP exam and/or CTE Pathway completion.*
- *VLGA will ensure all students will have access to enroll in a variety of AP/CTE Pathway courses in their chosen Pathway.*
- *VLGA will provide ongoing professional development for AP/CTE Pathway courses and ensure rigorous instruction to promote proficiency and improve pass rates on AP exams and final course grades.*
- *Priority 8 (Other Pupil Outcomes)*
-
- *Priority 8 Outcome 1— VLGA will offer all students, including all subgroups, a rigorous, high-quality STEAM curriculum.*
- *VLGA will provide three CTE pathways in Health Science, Business and Sustainability Leadership for students to complete dual enrollment and work-based learning experiences.*
- *VLGA will provide resources, professional development, time and materials for all students to engage in meaningful, hands-on learning in STEAM activities via PLTW curriculum and other “best practices” STEAM learning opportunities.*
- *VLGA will educate its students to be globally competent through its partnership and resources with Community Catalyst Partners’ International Studies Schools Network. Through this model students will learn to 1) Investigate the World, 2) Recognize different perspectives, 3) Communicate their ideas, and 4) Take Action.*

Expected Annual Measurable Outcomes

Priority 4 Outcome 1: VLGA students, including all significant subgroups, will meet or exceed state averages, or nearby similar comparison schools, along with annual targets for growth on the CAASPP (and comparable assessments for students with special needs) in the areas of ELA and Mathematics.

Metric/Method for Measuring: Scale scores and proficiency/growth targets for all students, including all numerically significant student subgroups, in ELA and Math on the CAASPP assessment system based on prior year data.

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	N/A	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual

		<i>LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>
Hispanic/Latino	<i>N/A</i>	<i>School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>
English Learner	<i>N/A</i>	<i>School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>	<i>School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.</i>

Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	N/A	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.
Students with Disabilities	N/A	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet/exceed state average or nearby similar comparison schools and annual targets for growth set in the VLGA annual LCAP on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.
Priority 4 Outcome 2: EL students will advance at least one level on the ELPAC each year. Metric/Method for Measuring: EL proficiency rates will meet or exceed state average on the ELPI, or nearby similar comparison schools, as demonstrated on ELPAC assessments and ELPI indicator						

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
English Learners	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Baseline established with first year of ELPAC testing: meet/exceed state ELPI average or nearby similar comparison schools, along with annual growth target set in VLGA's annual LCAP</i>	<i>Meet/exceed state ELPI average or nearby similar comparison schools, along with annual growth target set in VLGA's annual LCAP</i>	<i>Meet/exceed state ELPI average or nearby similar comparison schools, along with annual growth target set in VLGA's annual LCAP</i>	<i>Meet/exceed state ELPI average or nearby similar comparison schools, along with annual growth target set in VLGA's annual LCAP</i>	<i>Meet/exceed state ELPI average or nearby similar comparison schools, along with annual growth target set in VLGA's annual LCAP</i>

Priority 4 Outcome 3: VLGA will ensure EL reclassification rate will meet or exceed the local District's reclassification rate.

Metric/Method for Measuring: EL reclassification rates

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
English Learners	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Baseline established with first year of reclassifications: meet/exceed District rate.</i>	<i>Percentage of students reclassified each year will meet or exceed local District rate.</i>	<i>Percentage of students reclassified each year will meet or exceed local District rate.</i>	<i>Percentage of students reclassified each year will meet or exceed local District rate.</i>	<i>Percentage of students reclassified each year will meet or exceed local District rate.</i>

Priority 4 Outcome 4: VLGA students, including all significant subgroups, will meet or exceed growth targets for SAT/ACT college prep exams

Metric/Method for Measuring: SAT/ACT test scores

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>
Hispanic/Latino	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>
English Learner	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will</i>

				<i>meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>meet or exceed local District average</i>
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>
Students with Disabilities	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>SAT/ACT scores will meet or exceed local District average</i>
Priority 4 Outcome 5: Graduating seniors will have successfully completed courses that satisfy the UC/CSU A-G requirements. Metric/Method for Measuring: Percentage of graduating seniors who have successfully completed course that satisfy the UC/CSU A-G requirements.						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025- 2026	2026- 2027	2027- 2028	2028- 2029	2029- 2030
All Students	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>A-G percentage rates will meet or exceed District Average</i>	<i>A-G percentage rates will meet or exceed District Average</i>
Hispanic/Latino	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>A-G percentage rates will meet or exceed District Average</i>	<i>A-G percentage rates will meet or exceed District Average</i>
English Learner	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>A-G percentage rates will meet or exceed District Average</i>	<i>A-G percentage rates will meet or exceed District Average</i>
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>A-G percentage rates will meet or exceed District Average</i>	<i>A-G percentage rates will meet or exceed District Average</i>

Students with Disabilities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	A-G percentage rates will meet or exceed District Average	A-G percentage rates will meet or exceed District Average
Priority 4 Outcome 6: Students enrolled in AP courses and/or CTE Pathways will make adequate progress toward AP/CTE course completion Metric/Method for Measuring: Student transcripts, AP enrollment and AP exam pass rate data, CTE Pathway enrollment and CTE certification						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025- 2026	2026- 2027	2027- 2028	2028- 2029	2029- 2030
All Students	TBD with first AP test results. CTE Pathway completion %s will be TBD with first graduating class	N/A	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average N/A	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average N/A	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average CTE Pathway completion % rates will meet or exceed local District average	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average CTE Pathway completion % rates will meet or exceed local District average
Hispanic/Latino	TBD with first AP test results. CTE Pathway completion %s will be TBD with first graduating class	N/A	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average N/A	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average N/A	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average CTE Pathway completion % rates will meet or exceed local District average	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average CTE Pathway completion % rates will meet or exceed local District average
English Learner	TBD with first AP test results. CTE Pathway	N/A	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local	AP pass rates will meet or exceed local

	completion %s will be TBD with first graduating class		<i>District average</i> <i>N/A</i>	<i>District average</i> <i>N/A</i>	<i>District average</i> <i>CTE Pathway completion % rates will meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>District average</i> <i>CTE Pathway completion % rates will meet or exceed local District average</i>
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	TBD with first AP test results. CTE Pathway completion %s will be TBD with first graduating class	<i>N/A</i>	<i>AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average</i> <i>N/A</i>	<i>AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average</i> <i>N/A</i>	<i>AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average</i> <i>CTE Pathway completion % rates will meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average</i> <i>CTE Pathway completion % rates will meet or exceed local District average</i>
Students with Disabilities	TBD with first AP test results. CTE Pathway completion %s will be TBD with first graduating class	<i>N/A</i>	<i>AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average</i> <i>N/A</i>	<i>AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average</i> <i>N/A</i>	<i>AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average</i> <i>CTE Pathway completion % rates will meet or exceed local District average</i>	<i>AP pass rates will meet or exceed local District average</i> <i>CTE Pathway completion % rates will meet or exceed local District average</i>
Priority 8 Outcome 1: All VLGA students will participate in a rigorous, high-quality STEAM curriculum. Metric/Method for Measuring: % of access to STEAM-themed learning; teacher PD logs/receipts; materials inventory lists and receipts; teacher lesson plans; classroom observations						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025- 2026	2026- 2027	2027- 2028	2028- 2029	2029- 2030
All Students	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Hispanic/Latino	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

English Learner	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Students with Disabilities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

LCFF STATE PRIORITIES	
GOAL # 3	
ENGAGEMENT <i>VLGA student academic achievement is supported by parents.</i>	Related State Priorities: ☐ 1 ☐ 4 ☐ 7 ☐ 2 ☒ 5 ☐ 8 ☒ 3 ☒ 6 Local Priorities: ☐: ☐:
Specific Annual Actions to Achieve Goal	
Priority 3 (Parental Involvement) <i>Priority 3 Outcome 1 – Efforts to seek parent input in decision making.</i> - VLGA will engage parents in a series of relevant and interesting workshops related to their student's success, including workshops pertaining to A-G and financial aid for college-bound students. - VLGA will maintain school website as a communication tool for the community. - VLGA will communicate the most important website items via a monthly newsletter that is sent to their home via a hardcopy. - The VLGA Principal will hold monthly Coffee with the Principal meetings to engage and inform parents of important and relevant school-based items and events. Priority 5 (Pupil Engagement) <i>Priority 5 Outcome 1 – School attendance rates and Chronic absenteeism</i> - VLGA parent outreach and communications will stress the importance of attendance and arriving at school on time each day - VLGA's School Psychologist will oversee student attendance and works with the Office Manager and Administrative Team to help improve attendance and decrease habitual truants through home calls, meetings with students and families, home visits, and positive reinforcement incentives. <i>Priority 5 Outcome 2 – Dropout rates</i> - VLGA will offer an engaging and meaningful program that motivates students to stay in school, including electives in the arts, technology and World Languages, and an engaging after-school program and clubs. - VLGA's Principal and the MTSS team will carefully monitor student achievement data on a continuous basis and will identify students who are at-risk of dropping out in order to provide comprehensive intervention and support via our MTSS program. <i>Priority 5 Outcome 3 – Graduation Rates</i> - VLGA will maintain a high annual graduation rate See Specific Annual Actions above for Priority 5 Outcome 2, Dropout Rates. Priority 6 (School Climate) <i>Priority 6 Outcome 1 - pupil suspension rates</i> - VLGA will provide training and support for restorative justice practices and Way of Council	

- VLGA will establish classroom management procedures, foster positive relationships, and help create an atmosphere of trust, respect, and high expectations.

Priority 6 Outcome 2 – pupil expulsion rates

- VLGA will provide training and support for restorative justice practices and Way of Council
- VLGA will establish classroom management procedures, foster positive relationships, and help create an atmosphere of trust, respect, and high expectations.

Priority 6 Outcome 3 – other local measures including surveys of pupils, parents and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness

- VLGA will implement annual surveys to assess stakeholder satisfaction

Expected Annual Measurable Outcomes

Priority 3 Outcome 1: VLGA will increase the number of parents who attend at least 2 events each year (specific goal to be set annually in LCAP).

Metric/Method for Measuring: # of parents attending 2+ events annually

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	N/A	Establish baseline.	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)
Hispanic/Latino	N/A	Establish baseline.	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)
English Learner	N/A	Establish baseline.	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	N/A	Establish baseline.	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)

			at 2-3% annually)	at 2-3% annually)	at 2-3% annually)	at 2-3% annually)
Students with Disabilities	N/A	Establish baseline.	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)	Increase parent participation rate annually (target estimated at 2-3% annually)
Priority 3 Outcome 2: VLGA Parent and Community Engagement Committee will be promoted, and supported to be fully operational and self-sustaining Metric/Method for Measuring: analysis of attendance, Sign In sheets, consistent membership.						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Hispanic/Latino	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
English Learner	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Students with Disabilities	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Priority 5 Outcome 1: VLGA maintain a high attendance rate and low rate of students who are chronically absent Metric/Method for Measuring: Attendance and chronic absenteeism rates						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	District average.	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%); or Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)
Hispanic/Latino	District average.	Maintain high	Maintain high	Maintain high	Maintain high	Maintain high

		attendance rate (>95%); Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)
English Learner	District average.	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%); Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	District average.	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%); Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic

		<i>(estimated target of 1-2% annually)</i>	<i>absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)</i>	<i>decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)</i>	<i>decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)</i>	<i>decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)</i>
Students with Disabilities	<i>District average.</i>	<i>Maintain high attendance rate (>95%); Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)</i>	<i>Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)</i>	<i>Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)</i>	<i>Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)</i>	<i>Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually)</i>

Priority 5 Outcome 2: VLGA will maintain a low dropout rate						
Metric/Method for Measuring: Dropout rate						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>
Hispanic/Latino	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Dropout rate that is the same or lower</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is</i>

		<i>than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>
English Learner	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>
Students with Disabilities	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>	<i>Maintain low dropout rate that is the same or lower than nearby comparison schools.</i>
Priority 5 Outcome 3: VLGA will maintain a high graduation rate Metric/Method for Measuring: Graduation rate						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025- 2026	2026- 2027	2027- 2028	2028- 2029	2029- 2030
All Students	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Graduation rate will be equal to or higher than that</i>	<i>Graduation rate will be equal to or higher than that</i>

					<i>of the District Average.</i>	<i>of the District Average.</i>
Hispanic/Latino	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Graduation rate will be equal to or higher than that of the District Average.</i>	<i>Graduation rate will be equal to or higher than that of the District Average.</i>
English Learner	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Graduation rate will be equal to or higher than that of the District Average.</i>	<i>Graduation rate will be equal to or higher than that of the District Average.</i>
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Graduation rate will be equal to or higher than that of the District Average.</i>	<i>Graduation rate will be equal to or higher than that of the District Average.</i>
Students with Disabilities	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Graduation rate will be equal to or higher than that of the District Average.</i>	<i>Graduation rate will be equal to or higher than that of the District Average.</i>

Priority 6 Outcome 1: VLGA will maintain a low suspension rate that is $\leq 2\%$.

Metric/Method for Measuring: % of student suspensions

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	<i>N/A</i>	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$
Hispanic/Latino	<i>N/A</i>	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$
English Learner	<i>N/A</i>	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	<i>N/A</i>	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$
Students with Disabilities	<i>N/A</i>	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$	$\leq 2\%$

Priority 6 Outcome 2: VLGA will maintain a low expulsion rate that is $\leq 0.5\%$.

Metric/Method for Measuring: % of student expulsions

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
All Students	<i>N/A</i>	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$

Hispanic/Latino	<i>N/A</i>	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$
English Learner	<i>N/A</i>	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	<i>N/A</i>	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$
Students with Disabilities	<i>N/A</i>	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$	$\leq 0.5\%$
Priority 6 Outcome 3: VLGA will have high student, parent, and staff participation rates in the school experience survey and high approval rating on school experience surveys of students, parents, and staff.						
Metric/Method for Measuring: % of participation in school climate survey and survey results						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2025- 2026	2026- 2027	2027- 2028	2028- 2029	2029- 2030
All Students	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Establish high rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) (estimated target 75% annually); Establish stakeholder approval ratings on school climate (estimated target 80% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>
Hispanic/Latino	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Establish high rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) (estimated target 75% annually); Establish stakeholder approval ratings on school climate</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder</i>

		<i>(estimated target 80% annually)</i>	<i>r approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>r approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>r approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>r approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>
English Learner	N/A	<i>Establish high rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) (estimated target 75% annually); Establish stakeholder approval ratings on school climate (estimated target 80% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	N/A	<i>Establish high rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) (estimated target 75% annually); Establish stakeholder approval ratings on school climate (estimated target 80% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>

			<i>school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>
Students with Disabilities	N/A	<i>Establish high rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) (estimated target 75% annually); Establish stakeholder approval ratings on school climate (estimated target 80% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>	<i>Increase rate of participation (overall and by stakeholder group) as needed over previous year (estimated target 2-3% annually); Increase stakeholder approval ratings as needed on school climate (estimated target 2-3% annually)</i>

GOALS FOR ENABLING PUPILS TO BECOME AND REMAIN SELF-MOTIVATED, COMPETENT, AND LIFELONG LEARNERS

VLGA has been designed to ensure that our underserved students are equipped with the skills and attitudes to become self-motivated, competent, lifelong learners. Our emphasis on engagement helps to develop students' intrinsic self-motivation to learn and succeed. VLGA will teach our students to learn *how to learn* as they actively participate in their own learning, appreciating the relevance of their learning not only in their daily lives but also the broader world around them.

Through ongoing professional development focused on how people learn, our teachers will continuously adapt their lessons and classroom experiences to meet students' needs and develop competent, skilled students in alignment with the state content standards. Through project-based learning and our emphasis on STEAM, our students will be continuously refining problem-solving and critical thinking and reflect on both their successes and "failures" as they adapt to a rapidly changing world. These habits of learning will establish a solid foundation for lifelong learning.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION – ELEMENTARY

INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS

At VLGA our instruction focus will be based on our deep research on engagement and will represent a unique combination of Global competence and STEAM preparedness. We see these two areas not as separate foci, but rather as a nested symbiotic grouping that works together to address the needs of the 21st-century learner. We believe that globally competent students are deeply familiar and have broad skill sets with the disciplines that are becoming increasingly important to access the American dream: science, technology, engineering, and math. The arts allow students to access the creative heart of these disciplines and are an important part of developing a world-consciousness and ethos that keeps the needs of humanity at the center of our students' "why" questions. When students are given a context for their learning (global education), and the tools to excel and apply them to the real world (STEAM), the outcome is deep engagement and a life-long love of learning.

VLGA will be only the first step on the road to college and career readiness. We see our elementary focus and mission as one phase of a journey that leads to middle school and beyond. As our two schools in Santa Ana progress and grow, we expect them to develop an additional and shared career-focused theme to further enhance the context for learning. While the additional career emphasis will be a collaborative process that involves teachers and community, it will be in alignment our global and STEAM focus. For example, our K-8 students may choose a medical pathway as a career theme. To fully explore the medical theme, we would construct our projects, lessons, and STEAM instruction around applications in the medical world. We would also seek partnerships with Doctors without Borders to give a global competence context. This curriculum will allow our students to develop broad understandings about possible career paths and the skills they require, and further our mission to produce students with deep humanity and a desire to give back to society. The research is clear that teacher autonomy and leadership is crucial in successful school cultures; therefore, this process will be organic and dependent on collaboration and the needs and strengths of the community as the school matures over its first five years.

GLOBAL COMPETENCY

VLGA will be distinguished by its collaboration and partnership with Community Catalyst Partners' International Studies Schools Network with the goal of becoming an ISSN-certified school by the end of the first five years.

The ISSN comprises schools, serving approximately 16,000 students in eight states. The network includes high schools, 6-12 schools, elementary schools, charter schools, suburban and rural schools, and even one independent school. In keeping with the Community Catalyst Partners' original mission to serve traditionally underserved populations, the majority (63%) of ISSN students are low-income, and 73% are students of color. Four-year graduation rates and student performance rates exceed those in comparable schools. In 2011, ISSN schools had an average

four-year graduation rate of 89%. In addition, evaluators found that ISSN schools outperformed their peers on 71 of 107 total measures (66.4%).

Community Catalyst Partners does not promote a single, prescriptive school design. The starting point for all of its schools is a shared definition of a college-ready, globally competent graduate. The ISSN Graduate Profile describes a student who has mastered the knowledge and skills required for college, has expertise in core content areas from a global perspective, is a proficient thinker and problem solver, can view and analyze issues and events from varying perspectives, can communicate in more than one language and collaborate across cultural boundaries, and fulfills the responsibilities of global citizenship.

VLGA will work with ISSN to develop globally competent students. To help facilitate this effort, Community Catalyst Partners has developed a flexible ISSN School Design Matrix, adaptable to a range of school conditions. The matrix is clearly aligned with the VLGA vision and mission and sets a trajectory for our school’s development across six domains:

Vision, Mission, Culture	This domain addresses the school’s vision, mission and culture of the school as well as the schools' expectations for all students to be ready for college and postsecondary school success.
Student Outcomes	This domain examines the progress being made by all students toward achieving the characteristics defined in the ISSN Graduate Profile.
Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment	This domain describes a consistent global focus throughout the curriculum and across all academic activities. It examines teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students. It also highlights ongoing, performance-based measures of student learning.
School Organization and Governance	This domain considers the degree to which the school is structured to support teaching and learning.
Professional Learning Community	This domain focuses on the systems of collaborative communication and professional development established to improve teaching and learning.
Family and Community Partnerships	This domain explores the family engagement in the school’s educational mission and the connections established with local organizations and institutions.

The detailed matrix includes quality criteria for each domain, with benchmarks that describe beginning, emerging, proficient, and exemplary implementation. Many of the quality criteria describe practices that are common to the small schools movement in general— for example, implementing a student advisory/homeroom program—or that are good practice in any setting—

for example, establishing a clear and consistent grading policy. Other criteria, while not necessarily exclusive to the ISSN, exemplify the international studies approach:

Global content, skills, and perspectives are embedded in the core content areas. Students explore global topics in all of their classes. Curriculum units are often organized around global themes, supporting students to make connections across disciplines.

World languages are part of the experience. VLGA students will be highly proficient in English, have opportunities to strengthen home languages, and be introduced to new languages in extra-curricular and afterschool programs.

Curriculum is student-centered, authentic, globally significant, and connected to real audiences. Students engage in solving real-world, internationally important problems and present their solutions to experts. They are empowered to make decisions about what and how they learn.

Global learning extends beyond the classroom. Students participate in service learning that immerses them in local and global issues, exposes them to professional opportunities, and prepares them as global citizens. They also participate in simulations, such as Model United Nations, and have opportunities to hone their language skills and gain appreciation for differing perspectives through travel, student exchanges, and online learning with international peers.

Teacher professional development is high priority. Teacher teams have dedicated time to develop curriculum, look at student work, and refine their teaching practice together.

VLGA will work with the Community Catalyst Partners' ISSN to further develop or revise (as needed) its curriculum according to the SAGE framework and VLGA guiding principles.

- Student choice: Students have a say in what they learn and how they learn it.
- Authentic tasks: Students perform tasks and investigate questions that adults would perform or study in the real world.
- Global significance: Students study topics, issues, and phenomena of global importance, and gain deep knowledge of countries and cultures other than their own.
- Exhibition to a real-world audience: Students share their work—and receive feedback—from audiences with relevant expertise, in person and on the web.

Lago students will be able to show how their learning experiences helped them achieve global competency in four domains. In 2009, the Asia Society and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) articulated the skills and competencies that researchers, policymakers, educators, and academics identify as crucial for students to master in the 21st century. VLGA will use these competencies as a basis for what globally competent students should be able to do:

1. Investigate the world beyond their immediate environment, framing significant problems and conducting well-crafted, age-appropriate research.
2. Recognize perspectives, including one's own and those of others, explaining the

- nature and origin of these perspectives thoughtfully and respectfully.
3. Communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences, bridging geographic, linguistic, ideological, and cultural barriers.
 4. Take action to improve conditions, viewing themselves as players in the world and participating reflectively.

VLGA will incorporate:

- The ISSN student outcomes and rubrics that address the four domains of global competence in line with the CCSSO Task Force and the California Common Core Standards
- A framework for curriculum design that engages students in solving complex, real-world problems, and provides multiple opportunities to demonstrate growing mastery.
- A process for teachers and students to assess and reflect on their work.
- A platform for teachers to share curriculum and best practices and receive feedback on their work.

The ISSN framework does not tell teachers what to teach or when to teach it; rather, it provides both teachers and students with the frameworks and the tools to make good choices. The primary purpose of the curriculum is to enhance teachers' capacity to develop and transform their own curriculum, a key component of teacher autonomy and job satisfaction. The VLGA will integrate four quality components, in alignment with our vision and mission, into our curricular design:

1. **Clear expectations:** Tasks will be linked to specific Global Performance Standards outcomes, Common Core State Standards, and/or other standards like ISTE. These targets will provide teachers and students with a shared understanding of what proficient work looks like.
2. **Authentic learning experiences:** Students will explore topics and issues that represent the work of real-world professionals.
3. **Student-centered learning:** Teachers and students will share ownership for learning. With feedback from frequent formative assessments, students will understand where they are going and how to get there. They will also be able to make decisions about what they're learning and how they're learning it.
4. **Multiple opportunities to reach mastery:** With multiple assessments embedded in each unit and leading to graduation, students have many opportunities

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ARTS, MATHEMATICS (STEAM)

VLGA will incorporate STEAM instruction into the ISSN framework to build globally competent, 21st century learners. STEAM is an acronym that represents how all topics in subject areas relate to each other and to the real world: science and technology, interpreted through

engineering & the arts, all based in mathematical elements. STEAM education naturally aligns with the VLGA's framework for teaching that is based on natural ways of learning, customizable for all types of students and programs. Significantly, it adds relevancy to learning, and increased engagement for students.

VLGA teachers will use the ISSN rubrics and student outcomes to create STEAM projects that address the four domains of global competence in line with the California Common Core Standards. STEAM is not a separate effort, but a naturally integrate focus that clearly addresses 21st learning in a global context. STEAM provides the skills, while the global outcomes provide the context, through the structure of rubric-based portfolios and process work. Our teachers can better match their learning objectives and goals to the variety of learners they encounter. Embedded within the larger guiding principles of the Macrosystem Framework, STEAM at VLGA will support well-balanced and deeply cooperative teams among educators and students based on a variety of characteristics. STEAM provides another way for both, teachers and students, to use their skills for leading in some areas, while other areas are strengthened through observing and assisting. VLGA educators instruct within their specialty with co-planned thematic units that everyone contributes to, in projects related to the required benchmark concepts and skills.

STEAM, ISSN AND PROJECT LEAD THE WAY

At VLGA, in addition to teacher-created projects and lessons, STEAM will be taught through the Project Lead the Way K-5 Launch program beginning in the School's second year of operation. PLTW Launch is aligned to Next Generation Science Standards and the Californian Common Core State Standards for math and English Language arts. PLTW Launch provides students opportunities to learn through exploration and discovery. Through PLTW Launch, students become hands-on problem solvers and learn to collaborate with their fellow students. In alignment with our workshop model of instruction, teachers and students begin each module with an engaging e-book story that introduces the challenge students will collaborate on to solve. Then, in a series of activities that build upon each other, students are challenged to become confident in trying new things, to learn from mistakes, and to apply what they do know to find solutions.

Instructional staff will receive training in PLTW during the summer. VLGA teachers will receive full PLTW training the summer following our first year. This schedule ensures that VLGA teachers will be trained as a team. As we grow, our teacher contracts will hold new hires accountable to summer training.

However, for the first year, teachers will be able to use the PLTW curriculum roadmap, adopted science curriculum, teacher-created lessons and projects, and the NGSS roadmap to ensure our students receive a STEAM education from the start.

VISTA LAGO GLOBAL ACADEMY SIGNATURE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

At VLGA, we use the Macrosystem Framework as the lens through which all instructional programs and practices are selected. Communication and relationships that extend beyond the

classroom and incorporate a widening circle of adult influence and interaction necessitate a major shift from the current instructional practice of “stand and deliver” that dominates classrooms across America. Studies conducted by Csikszentmihalyi, the creator of Flow Theory and his team, found that students spent approximately 86% in passive lecture style or independent activities (Shernoff et al., 2003). That finding closely mirrors an informal study conducted by leaders in the Los Angeles Unified School District (2009). In the latter study, a group of leading administrators spent time in classrooms observing and tracking how much time students actively participated in academic conversations. The administrators reported that, on average, students had less than two minutes each day for engaging academic dialogue and discussion. With this hyper focus on lecture style instruction, students had fewer opportunities to become engaged through self-discovery and intrinsically motivated learning (Shernoff et al., 2003).

This framework necessitates that a shift in instructional practice is required to ensure the personalized learning experience is created to develop globally competent students. This shift in practice is commonly referred to as a move away from the “sage on the stage” model, in which the teacher directly delivers instruction through lecturing, to the “guide on the side,” in which teachers act as a coach and facilitate a more personalized learning experience and is based on a constructivist view in which, optimally, the classroom provides a series of experiences that prompt students to actively construct their own knowledge and learning (Taylor & Parsons, 2011; Vygotsky, 1987; Zepke & Leach, 2010). At VLGA we use this as an important lens through which all programs, processes, and practices are chosen and developed. Instructional staff will receive extensive professional development, detailed in section on professional development, to ensure that they have the skills necessary to execute this instructional practice. Their professional development will extend to core instructional models that are critical to success of this practice. The following processes and procedures will be integral to the VLGA learning experience:

The Workshop Model. At VLGA, all subjects will be taught based on pedagogy found in the Lucy Calkins Reading and Writing Workshop model. This method structures each lesson with 10 to 15 minutes of teacher-led instruction followed by ample time for student-centered, hands-on learning. A typical lesson across all subject matter starts with student-friendly objectives connected to the CCCS with real-life application, followed by a 10- to 15-minute lesson that offers clear modeling and guided group practice. The remainder of the time is for independent practice and will range from 30 to 50 minutes. While students work independently and/or cooperatively in small groups, the teacher and TA are free to work with small groups and one-on-one instruction. During this time, the teacher and assistant also use formative assessments to guide instructional support and future lessons. This model honors teacher and student autonomy and provides ample choice in alignment with a Constructivist Learning Environment. All of our curricular choices will reflect this framework. Teachers will be fully trained in Reading and Writing Workshop with the expectation of transferring the basic pedagogical skills to all subjects.

Problem-based pedagogy. This model is described as “an atmosphere where there is a dialectic tension and conflict that can promote a learning environment through a process of inquiry and understanding (that) includes concrete experiences, opportunities for reflection,

abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation” (Samson, 2015, p. 158). *VLGA will strategically use this approach with a global and STEAM curriculum that focuses on relevant application by applying learning to solving both local and global issues our students are facing today.* This also provides students the opportunity for active exploration of issues based on real life scenarios and problems.

Project-based learning (PBL). Project-based learning strives to increase relevance by applying real-life problems and issues to a final project outcome that function as an authentic assessment of student learning. Elucidating the relevance of a project has been linked to deeper engagement (Taylor & Parsons, 2011). Providing students opportunities to explore issues that are meaningful in their circumstances and lives motivates them to learn and show more willingness to work through difficult ideas and learning (Samson, 2015).

Because we choose to focus on solid implementation of our core curriculum in the first two years (literacy, math, science, and social studies), VLGA teachers will receive training on PBL through our partnership with the International Schools Study Network (ISSN). The ISSN, in partnership with the Buck Institute, provides on-going professional development and coaching for project-based learning. The eventual expectation will be for all grade levels to have one major PBL project their second year, and two projects (one each semester) by our third year and beyond. Although teachers will be required to facilitate two projects each year, they are encouraged to create multiple, interdisciplinary projects beyond the requirements.

Kagan Cooperative learning and strategies. One key component of experiential or problem-based learning that repeatedly stands out in the literature, as a factor in engagement is the use of cooperative learning strategies. Although some research has indicated that teacher-student relationships are possibly the most important factor in increased student engagement (Furlong et al., 2003), another study that examined the difference in impact of student-teacher relationships, quality of student effort, and peer- to-peer interaction found that “peer interaction had the strongest predictive capacity for engagement and outcomes” (Zepke & Leach, 2010, p. 171). The Vista development team has recognized the importance of both teacher-student and peer-to-peer interactions in designing the school’s instructional approach. Clearly, both are important and are constantly considered when designing Vista’s pedagogy. Student interaction and collaborative learning promotes dialectic practices that support student viewpoints and interests. Cooperative learning has also been found to increase motivation, positive classroom behaviors, social networks, and academic improvements (Finn & Zimmer, 2012; Shernoff et al., 2003). Vista Charter Public Schools currently implements Kagan cooperative learning strategies at both campuses and will continue to do so at VLGA.

At VLGA, all teachers will receive Kagan Cooperative Learning training. Already, embedded into all Vista Charter schools, Kagan Cooperative Learning strategies are designed for implementation across all content and curriculum. Kagan structures involve cooperative interaction, and are designed to efficiently produce engagement, positive social interactions, and achievement because they incorporate four basic principles, the PIES principles:

- **Positive Interdependence:** We are positively interdependent when a gain for one is a gain for another. This dynamic produces a sense of belonging to the same team. In a

traditional setting, students are set against each other in competition to answer questions. With Kagan structures, students work together and learn global attributes of sharing, caring, helping, and empathy.

- **Individual Accountability:** All students are held accountable for learning-- not just the student who raises her hand.
- **Equal Participation:** Because the structures involve every student, each student participates equally throughout the day.
- **Simultaneous Interaction:** All students have an opportunity to verbalize answers and thinking-- as opposed to a traditional class where only one or two students answer any given question.

Kagan Structures are bridges that allow teachers to pass easily from principles to practices, implementing basic principles and visions as part of any lesson, at any grade level, with any curriculum. At VLGA, teachers will learn to use a Kagan structure every time they ask the class a question, thus ensuring equal engagement for all.

Cooperative Learning follows our principles of engagement, is brain compatible, learner centered, and has real-life transfer because they enforce our belief that you learn by doing.

Mastery learning. Mastery experiences develop self-efficacy by allowing students to reflect on where their skill level is at any given time and by using success, partial success, and even failure to point the way toward mastery of a subject or skill (Furlong & Christenson, 2008). Currently, most classrooms see failure as an end in itself-- which results in a failing grade. By allowing students to fail on a task and then reflect on that experience as a stepping-stone to a learning goal fosters a growth mindset, increases resilience, and promotes life-long learning (Bempechat & Shernoff, 2012; Finn, 1989; Pintrich, 2003). At VLGA teachers will receive professional development on the latest developments and research on Master Learning. One site that will be used by VLGA staff to understand and implement Mastery Grading is <http://www.gradingforlearning.wordpress.com>. Developed by Dr. Derrick Chau, he and his team have created a system in tandem with the website to help teachers and schools make the emotional and pedagogical shifts needed to honor child centered and developmentally appropriate.

Science Technology Engineering Arts Math (STEAM): A STEAM education aligns with the VLGA guiding principles in which projects have clear expectations, provide authentic learning experiences, are hands-on and student-centered, and provide myriad authentic ways to demonstrate mastery. Globally, schools are having success with STEAM, teaching academic and life skills in standards-backed, reality-based, personally relevant exploratory learning environments.

STEAM educators have reported feeling rejuvenated by richer work environments. They are able to use a more diverse set of teaching methods and be better facilitators to learners. STEAM empowers educators to meet guidelines in a variety of unique and engaging ways and to meaningfully cross-reference concepts, disciplines, and vocabulary. STEAM educators have the opportunity to teach collaboratively, exchange ideas, have easier preparations for substitutes and have more productive common planning times.

WAY OF COUNCIL AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Schools today are often caught between contradictory existing punitive policies and new mandates for restorative justice. Way of Council is an innovative idea based on ancient community building models that can bridge the chasm between inequity and justice for all our students. In 2009, WestEd conducted an evaluation of the Council in Schools program, which showed the 75% of students involved in Council programs feel more connected to peers and adults on their campus. Secretary Duncan’s historic call for reexamining school discipline and climate has echoed through our state and a called for an end to suspensions for “willful defiance,” asking school leaders to seek alternative disciplinary practices. In this call to action, schools have been looking to identify and implement community building and restorative approaches that transcend traditional discipline.

When the U.S. Department of Education issued “Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline” in January of 2014, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan called for schools to “take deliberate steps to create the positive school climates that can help prevent and change inappropriate behaviors.” In 2004, Bonnie Bernard, in her presentation to the CDE, shared 40 years of research that linked academic achievement to “supportive school environments.” Her research showed that students in schools that develop social competencies, like caring and responsiveness, have a greater chance of overcoming learning deficits. Additionally, schools with high levels of trust are three times more likely to report gains in reading and math scores.

CURRICULAR SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

The curriculum for VLGA is based on the California State Standards, including the Common Core Standards, the Next Generation Science Standards, and the California Curriculum Frameworks.

Subject Areas:

English Language Arts:

At VLGA we believe in a Balanced Literacy approach. This approach is a curricular methodology that integrates various modalities of literacy instruction, aimed at guiding students towards proficient and lifelong reading. The balanced literacy approach is characterized by explicit skill instruction and the use of authentic texts. To this end, we create a learning environment in which our students see themselves as readers and writers, thinkers, listeners, and speakers. This research-based program emphasizes phonemic awareness and phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and writing.

The main components of a balanced literacy program and Readers Workshop approach are the following:

Reading Aloud: Reading aloud is the foundation of the early literacy framework. This is an interactive experience in which readers are engaged in discussing a text throughout the reading. Read-Alouds develop high-level thinking and discourse and are an opportunity to deepen comprehension through discourse and active thinking. Teachers use cognitive resources, such as DOK and Bloom's levels that motivate students to think critically about the text, increasing rigor and raising the caliber of conversation. By being immersed in a variety of well-chosen texts, children not only learn to love stories and reading but they also learn about written language.

Word Study: Word study refers to the deliberate investigation of words and includes: sight words, phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary development. Word study takes place in settings where the teacher directs children's categorization and understanding of how words work through routines, direct instruction, and word sorts. Teachers provide whole group, small group and center instruction throughout the literacy period. Teachers work toward automaticity and flexibility and constantly return to meaningful texts and prompt students to use new knowledge in reading and writing settings.

Mini-Lessons: Reading and writing mini lessons are approximately 10 minutes in length and provide daily direct and explicit instruction. The mini-lesson uses a clear and consistent structure that incorporates connections, teaching, active engagement, and a link to real-life application. The mini-lesson is always drawn from a unit of study or responding to a class need, and refers to a text for instructional clarity such as a read-aloud or shared reading.

Conferring: This is an opportunity for teachers to meet with students in order to discuss and document the specific needs and progress of the individual reader. The teacher may review a skill or strategy from a previous conference or may set a new goal with the student. Conferences with students can be based on formal (pre-and post- assessments) and informal (observations and Reader's Response Journal) data.

Questions during a conference can be focused on the data collected, or can be used as a means to decide what levels the individual still needs to work on and an opportunity to set goals for the student's reading level.

Chart 2: Components of Balanced Literacy Model

Read Aloud	Comprehension, vocabulary, fluency	I do (model)
Guided Reading	Comprehension, vocabulary	We do (guided)
Shared Reading	Fluency, comprehension	We do (shared)
Independent Reading	Comprehension	You do
Word Study	Decoding, fluency	(all)

Shared reading: Designed to include the whole class or a small group, this activity involves students reading a common text with teacher support. It provides many opportunities for incidental learning about the way written language works. The text is re-read over the course of several days with various teaching points in mind. Fluency is a key goal of this component and ultimately leads to higher levels of comprehension.

The context created by shared reading is totally supportive of young readers as they begin to attend to the details of print while still focusing on meaning and enjoyment. In shared reading, emerging readers get a chance to behave like readers and learn to appreciate and enjoy the process.

Guided reading: Guided Reading places the child in a more formal instructional situation and is the foundation of the literacy curriculum. The teacher works with a small group of students who have similar reading processes. The teacher selects and introduces new books and supports the children in reading the whole text to themselves. Teachers offer constructive guidance, giving the child the opportunity to problem-solve while reading for meaning.

Independent reading: Students learn by doing, and during independent time they are granted ample time to read a “just right” book of their choice and practice reading strategies taught in the mini-lesson. “Just Right” books are books that are at the current reading level of the student or just slightly above. Classroom readers and books are all clearly labeled with reading levels in accordance with the Fountas and Pinnell Reading Assessments and other normed leveled libraries, like Scholastic.

Shared and interactive writing: Interactive or shared writing provides an authentic setting in which the teacher can explicitly demonstrate how written language works. First, the teacher and students work together to discover a reason for writing. Once purpose is established, the teacher helps students gain control over the conventions of print that writers need to communicate their messages in written language.

Writers Workshop: Guided writing, or Writer Workshop, is another way for teachers to help children learn to write; in this course the children construct their individual pieces of writing with teachers (and eventually) peer guidance, assistance, and feedback. The teacher may have individual conferences with children or call them together first for a mini lesson on an aspect of writing from topic selection to composition to punctuation to letter formation.

Assessment: A balanced reading program uses both formative and summative assessment. Vista will use the Fountas and Pinnell research-based assessment every six weeks to assess reading skills and literacy.

We meet the needs of our English Learner population via specific supports and strategies across the curriculum and an instructional day designed to foster their English Language proficiency. These strategies might include but are not limited to: providing comprehensible input for ELLs, making lessons visual, linking new information to prior knowledge, determining key concepts for each unit and defining language and content objects for each lesson, modifying vocabulary instruction, using cooperative learning strategies, and modifying testing and homework.

We dedicate daily literacy blocks to ELD for all English Learners, grouped by ability/proficiency level, e.g., ELD levels 1 and 2 are in the same group, Level 3 and 4 students are in the same group, and Level 5 and English proficient students (EOs). We recognize that English Proficient students may include IFEP and RFEP students who are grouped together. This targeted ELD instruction for approximately 80 minutes each week enables targeted English Language instruction in the context of grade-level literacy development. Teachers have access to resources from programs such as *Launch to Literacy* and *Link to Literacy* to support instruction for English Learners.

Mathematics:

Mathematics and quantitative reasoning skills will be central to the curriculum at VLGA. At all grade levels, students will participate in engaging, hands-on math activities that require critical thinking, problem-solving, and conceptual understanding. VLGA will hold high expectations for all students in math development and will provide ample support for students to reach these expectations. California's Common Core Content and Practice Standards and the California State Priorities will provide a foundation for work in math.

A cohesive math curriculum, such as Ready Math and Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI), will promote math fluency and accuracy as well as conceptual understanding of important mathematical ideas and mathematical reasoning. Hands-on activities and materials in the classroom, as well ties to PBL, will help students to recognize the connections between math concepts and the world around them.

As is true across the curriculum, differentiation will be used by teachers to account for the variety of mathematical experiences and skills in a typical classroom. Through the Individualized Learning Plan, each student will regularly identify strengths and areas for growth, and teachers will provide opportunities for flexible pacing and grouping in service of meeting diverse student needs. Pre-assessment and ongoing assessment will be crucial to ensure that each student is

suitably challenged and receives the support he or she needs. If a student continues to excel at a rapid pace, that student will be guided and encouraged to explore math concepts on a deeper level related to his or her interests.

The math curriculum will be mapped to the CCSS at each grade level. And, in developing curriculum, teachers will draw from a variety of high-quality resources and renowned math educators who are aligned to VLGA's vision and guiding principles for 21st-century learners. Ready Math and Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) are examples of current scientifically supported resources that emphasize conceptual understanding, communication about math, and authentic problem solving and will be considered in a school-wide math program.

Science and Engineering:

The science program at VLGA will emphasize inquiry, curiosity, collaboration, scientific literacy, and, especially, relevance and application to real-world problems. VLGA will use the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which emphasize and align to our goals through inquiry-oriented investigations, real-life application, and interdisciplinary thinking about scientific concepts (www.nextgenscience.org). Project Lead the Way curriculum, Amplify programs are currently adopted and are aligned with NGSS standards and VLGA's guiding principles and goals. Students will have many opportunities to explore their own science and engineering ideas in labs, on field trips, and in the on-campus maker-space being developed.

Students will follow the eight practices of science and engineering that the Next Generation Science Standards Framework identifies as essential for all students:

- Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
- Developing and using models
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Using mathematics and computational thinking
- Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
- Engaging in argument from evidence
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Students will learn the principles of engineering design to identify strategies for solutions. Following the hands-on of PLTW or Amplify science curriculum, students will participate in an engaging and challenging curriculum. Science and engineering skills will be assessed through diagnostic assessments that will focus on the key terms and ideas of a unit.

Social Studies:

The Social Studies curriculum will be globally focused and build students' understanding of themselves and the world around them. Using investigation, thematic units, and essential questions, the Social Studies curriculum will naturally build upon students' prior knowledge and experience, honor and celebrate their diverse backgrounds and cultures, and deepen their self-awareness and sense of place in an ever-increasingly global society.

The California Common Core State Standards and the recently adopted California State Framework for Social Studies and History (2016) will provide a foundation for students' learning, and will be supplemented by teacher-created lessons to ensure that history and social sciences reflect students' cultures and identities. The curriculum will include four main social science disciplines, including: (1) History, (2) Geography, (3) Civics, and (4) Economics. Students will learn to distinguish fact from opinion, connect cause and effect, and examine history through a variety of lenses and perspectives.

Social studies will be presented in four interconnected formats:

1. Within the reading program through informational texts
2. Through personal and informational writing and research in the writing program
3. Via integrated, thematic units of instruction
4. Through interdisciplinary project-based learning

Physical Education:

Physical Education (PE) is critical for student learning and for maintaining personal well-being. The physical education program at VLGA will be an integral part of our mission to address the needs of the whole child and to develop life-long habits of fitness and wellness. Students will be exposed to a variety of physical movement activities that will suit diverse learning styles and skills.

PE will take place daily during class time. This time will allow students to develop awareness of their bodies and of how physical fitness and exercise can contribute to their overall happiness and wellness. For example, students may learn how physical activity can relieve stress or help with focus.

A unique feature of the VLGA physical education program is our relationship with All It Takes, a non-profit dedicated to teaching young people to practice honor, acceptance, compassion, and respect. Over the course of our first five years we will incorporate the Leadership Development Through Physical Education (LDTPE), a supplemental curriculum meant to enhance current elementary physical education programming.

With the addition of experiential education philosophies and activities, along with language development that supports Emotional Intelligence and Literacy, VLGA will integrate social/emotional training with physical activity. PE activities will contribute to an integrated social-emotional program as students practice and demonstrate greater capacity with communication skills, cooperation, empathy, purposeful inclusion, fairness, teamwork, increased confidence, and growth in resilience and self-efficacy.

Mission Driven Arts Education

From the earliest renderings found in the caves of Lascaux, France, to the installations of Rauschenberg, human beings have been using artistic expression to find meaning, express self,

communicate messages and seek answers. All cultures and peoples have participated in the arts, conveying significant meaning through their artifacts and artistic traditions in music, dance, visual arts, literature, and drama.

Art is a universal language that provides all students with connections to other civilizations. It provides factual, interpretive, and emotive contexts for historical events. Art is more than an act or artifact; it is a bridge that integrates the various, and often disparate, compartments of our lives. It develops sensitivity to one's surroundings and the intricacies that enable self-discovery and understanding of the human condition.

At VLGA, we will not view art only as an independent activity with a subset of standards and skills, but rather as a humanistic strand that runs throughout our curriculum. It will allow us to reach across the cultural, financial, and digital divides that separate our students from the "wider class." Through the arts, we will develop a sense of self in our students and a respect for the many cultures from which they come, while providing valuable links to new cultures. The arts will also allow us to make academic connections across the curriculum and provide cohesiveness to thematic planning that gives our second language learners one of the major scaffolds to gaining content and academic understanding.

Art integrated with social studies, literature, and writing can deepen students' understanding of social studies content, literary concepts, and writing and art techniques. Understanding how and why Monet's observations about the changing light and atmosphere led him to paint the series *Haystacks in a Field* throughout the different seasons, easily leads to a deeper understanding of the scientific renderings of Darwin, the poetics of Emerson, or the human compassion of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*. These insights, in turn, provide our students with motivation and skills to produce their own scientific, social, and cultural observations about the world around them. Understanding how Bach used rhythm and pattern to produce the *Inventions* by inverting mathematical sequences only opens up understanding of and motivation to explore the logical beauty of math or the astounding design of DNA and marvel at the meaning and interconnections these studies have in our daily lives.

VLGA will strive to provide our students the tools they need to produce meaning within artistic endeavors. These skills will be embedded throughout the day and placed in the context of meaningful experiences. For instance, while exploring the theme of *How Do Families Remember Their Past* (second grade social studies standards, 2016) or learning to write autobiographies in *Workshop*, our students might learn about proportion, symmetry, observation and various media, such as drawing, painting, collage, and installation, to produce self- or family portraits. Dramatic play is used extensively to enhance understanding; from our students' first explorations in kindergarten to the in-depth, cross-curricular and thematic studies to be carried out by our upper grade students, the building blocks of theatric expression is developed as a means, not an end.

At VLGA we will be committed to music education and its cross-curricular implications, providing a systematic approach to the skills it requires. Once our school population has reached 400 students, we will have a full-time music teacher who will deliver instruction to our students on a weekly basis. This opportunity is extremely important, as many of our students will not

have access to these skills outside of the school setting. Through our music program, our students will acquire basic knowledge of musical history, composers, theory, reading musical notation and the skills and mechanics of singing. These skills will be advanced with a school-wide choral program.

Vista Charter Public Schools currently works with the Hollywood Arts Foundation, the Getty Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Los Angeles Opera. These resources extend beyond our students and can serve our staff through professional development opportunities on our campus and at their sites. Importantly, our relationships within the Los Angeles arts community are helping us create new connections as we grow into Lake Elsinore.

Technology:

Technology will be an important global strand that runs throughout our curriculum. It will allow us to reach across the cultural, financial, and digital divides that currently separate our students from gaining full access to the American dream. Most of our students will not have full Internet and computer access in their homes. To level the playing field, VLGA students will be provided a Chrome Book or similar device starting in the first grade. Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten classrooms will be equipped with enough devices to teach basic computer skills and for projects, when appropriate. Starting in the third grade, students will be allowed to take devices home for select projects with increasing opportunities for home use in preparation for our middle school experience which will allow all students greater flexibility for daily use.

VLGA will extensively utilize Google Classroom and Google Apps for Education for students and teachers. These Google services are provided free of charge to the school. Students and families will also have access to the school's Learning Management System and online portfolio. In addition to investing in Chromebooks for the students, the school will provide WIFI access in all areas of the campus and implement Internet security software that complies with the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA). In addition to integrated technical skills, VLGA is committed to digital safety. Students will receive instruction in developing digital literacy skills, including self-regulation, curiosity, and responsibility in an extraordinarily connected world. Cyber-bullying and cyber-safety will be addressed yearly for all VLGA students. VLGA will ensure that students understand and exercise good judgment as they navigate the infinite amount of information that exists online. This approach is in line with our focus on social- emotional skills, as students must learn how, when, and why the Internet can support their personal and academic growth.

CONTENT AREA TEXTBOOKS

The following table outlines the initial textbook adoptions planned for grades transitional kindergarten through five in the core content areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Science and Science.

Grade Level	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Social Science	Science

TK-5	Writer's and Reader's Workshop based on the Lucy Calkins model Leveled Reading Library	Ready Math	CA Vistas: MacMillan/McGraw-Hill	Amplify Science

SCHOOL YEAR

The instructional day at VLGA is designed to reflect the school's mission and values. The academic calendar will comply with the annual instructional minutes requirements set forth in Education Code Section 47612.5(a). The proposed school calendar for 2025-2026 will include 180 instructional days and 190 teacher workdays (180 instructional, five summer Professional Development and five school-year Professional Development days).

The information below outlines our proposed calendar. The calendar seeks to align with Lake Elsinore Unified School District's calendar to ensure that parents with students at multiple sites are not inconvenienced with scheduling conflicts. What follows is a prospective schedule based on information we have at this time; however, it is possible that certain details may change depending on what will best serve the students.



VISTA LAGO GLOBAL ACADEMY

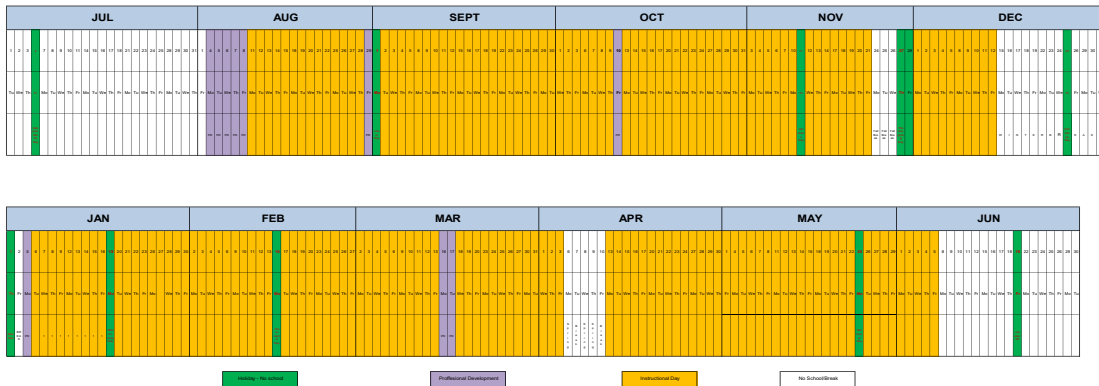
A Vista Charter Public School

2025-2026 Instruction Calendar

Superintendent: Donald Wilson Ed. D.

Deputy Superintendent: Collin Felch Ed. D.

Assistant Superintendent: Karen Arnsperger



Daily and weekly schedules:

Time	Activity
7:00 am to 8:30 am	Morning Care
8:30 am to 9:15 am	Group Instruction (Math)
9:15 am to 9:35 am	AM Recess/Snack
9:35 am to 11:35 pm	Instructional/Work Time (Readers/Writers workshop,
11:35 pm to 12:15 pm	Lunch/Noon Recess
12:15 pm to 3:00 pm	Instructional/Work Time (Science/Tech, Social Studies, PE, Friday Council)
3:00 pm	Dismissal
3:00 pm to 6:00 pm	After-School Care

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

At VLGA, we will consider professional development critical to the success of our students. However, all schools, and especially a new school, have numerous mandates and initiatives to implement each year—such as technology programs, teacher evaluation, and preparing for and reviewing test data. Thus, professional development is a high priority. At VLGA, our

professional development schedule and plan will minimize the number of initiatives each year to focus on consistent professional development that can delve deep into issues that have a direct impact on student learning and achievement. At VLGA, we understand that effective professional development needs to be consistent; the one-time professional development approach traditionally used by school districts has been shown to be less effective than ongoing professional development (Castillo, 2011; Coleman, 2014). At VLGA, professional development will be directly applicable to classroom practices (such as promoting global competence) in order for teachers to maximize the usefulness of the training, learning Kagan strategies to increase collaborative processes, and Way of Council training to ensure rich social/emotional environments for our students (Castillo, 2011; Coleman, 2014).

VLGA will have both short-term and long-term professional development plans that promote deep learning and strong implementation of its programs.

VLGA Professional Development Approach

The heart of a transformative educational school experience is in profound and sustainable pedagogical change. At VLGA, we do not believe programs are the answer to transformative education, but carefully chosen programs can serve as foundational learning labs where teachers acquire the tools and strategies that, when mastered, will create the conditions for creative and academic freedom.

At VLGA, our curriculum and instructional program is guided by three signature practices we believe can transform the school experience: Reader's and Writer's Workshop, Kagan Cooperative Strategies, and Way of Council. Teachers receive professional development in each of these practices, detailed below. Teachers and administrators also receive training in integrating the ISSN framework into their teaching. Our partnership with ISSN will include the benefit of collaboration with other network schools and additional services. Administrative and instructional staff will participate in professional development that will include the following:

Site visits: VLGA will host a site visit during its first and third years in the network. Visits are conducted by a group of four to six network principals and consultants, who spend two and a half days at a school, visiting classrooms, conducting focus groups and interviews, and reviewing curriculum maps, student and staff handbooks, and other artifacts that capture the work of the school. At the end of the visit, the host school receives a 40-page report with feedback on each area of the ISSN School Design Matrix. That report becomes a tool to guide strategic planning and ongoing improvement efforts. The visits also serve as a rich professional development opportunity for the visiting principals. VLGA will work with the District to incorporate the resulting feedback into on-going oversight and district evaluation.

National network meetings: Community Catalyst Partners hosts biannual meetings for ISSN school leaders, where they conduct a study tour of a network school, participate in targeted learning activities, and have time to connect and share ideas. Every school sends someone—the principal, an assistant administrator, or both—to every meeting. Many principals make the time to attend both meetings themselves, because the events provide a rare opportunity to connect with peers, exchange ideas, solve common challenges, and learn together in a safe community.

Regional events: Based on the needs and interests of schools, regional coordinators offer additional trainings and events for ISSN educators to connect within a geographic region. These are opportunities for teachers to share feedback on curriculum, for administrators to support each other in solving common problems of practice, and for all staff to gain new skills and knowledge relevant to the global studies mission.

Professional Development: Way of Council

The Way of Council encourages deep and honest communication. Based on indigenous, worldwide “cultural dialogical” practices including Native American traditions observed and recorded by Benjamin Franklin, as well as contemporary organizational management practices, Council is a formal, structured process of sitting in a circle and passing a talking piece in response to a prompt from the facilitator. At VLGA, we teach students the “four intentions” of council – to speak from the heart, to listen from the heart without judgment, to speak spontaneously without planning, and to keep it lean so everyone has time with the talking piece. Council is a non-hierarchical forum for discussion. Instead of standing at the board delivering instruction, teachers sit with students in the circle. This allows participants to hear each other in a way that is sorely lacking in the traditional school and classroom culture.

Council is the best tool we have found to help children appreciate the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and opinions of their classmates. Regular use of council promotes a classroom culture where children learn to connect meaningfully with their peers and with adults. Being “in council” helps students develop attention, concentration, and listening skills; to express themselves fully and appropriately; and to “suspend” preconceptions. Importantly, at VLGA, Council is not contained to the classroom, but used as a tradition and protocol for increasing teacher, parent, and community buy-in and engagement. Participating in council has the same benefits for adults in a school community – at staff, committee, teacher/parent, or community meetings. Teachers at VLGA agree that governing the school using council as a tool helps us model the adult behaviors we wish to encourage in students.

In simple terms, what you have at VLGA in Council is a systemic, community- building practice, one that moves toward the State’s priorities for personalization and creating safe, caring environments. Council provides a structured dialogic practice that creates opportunities for the voices of all school stakeholders to be heard, considered, and acted upon: students, staff, parents, and community members. In classrooms, along with creating community by providing students opportunities to acknowledge their commonalities and celebrate differences, Council practice facilitates the development of social-emotional skills—such as self-expression, empathy, and cooperation—as it brings relevance, connection, and meaning to academic curriculum and standards.

At VLGA, Way of Council is supported by:

- Continuous Training from Circle Ways
- Experienced council mentors to all participating teachers

- Monthly professional developments linking council to state learning standards in all academic disciplines and to Restorative Justice policies and practices
- Monthly staff councils
- Parent presentations and parent council facilitation
- Yearly retreat in conjunction with all Vista Charter Public Schools

Professional Development: Readers' and Writer's Workshop

VLGA espouses a workshop model, which creates the conditions where mastery grading, PBL, problem based pedagogy, and cooperative learning can co-exist daily.

At VLGA, we believe Writers' and Readers' Workshop are at the heart of this approach. Teachers who are trained in Workshop not only have a solid framework and curricular map that addresses the Common Core and student mastery of a subject, they also acquire the building blocks of solid instruction that can be transferred to other subject areas. Writer's workshop is the right combination of direct and explicit instruction that our at-risk students need and employs an empowering and engaging constructivist approach our at-risk students deserve. This is not an untried approach, but one that Dr. Wilson, Vista Lago founder, has great expertise in.

Currently Vista Charter Public Schools receives services provided by Raphael Consulting, but leave open the possibility of using another high quality service based on service and price. Here is the breakdown of services typically contracted:

List of Professional Development Services

Institutes- provide a great opportunity to provide staff with basic course training in reading or writing workshop. During these days, consultants explain the philosophy of workshop teaching as well as teach you about the parts of the workshop. Teachers also have the opportunity to learn by being engaged in an adult reading or writing workshop during our institutes. This allows participants to be in their students' shoes and learn by doing.

Labsite days: One model classroom is chosen for each grade level involved. Teachers on a grade level go into this "labsite classroom" to watch demonstrations and to practice their teaching with support from the consultant. During the debriefing session for each grade level either before (to plan a lesson together) or after (to reflect on the lessons observed), teachers can ask questions, look at student work and/or other classroom artifacts. Generally the labsite is between 45 minutes and 1 hour and the debriefing session is between 30 and 45 minutes.

Planning days: Teachers are given a minimum of one hour and a half & a maximum of an entire day to sit with the consultant and plan an upcoming unit of study for reading or writing. The teachers meet with the consultant in grade level teams and plan these units using the Common Core State Standards. During this time teachers can set goals for their units, plan teaching points, develop charts, gather resources and plan celebrations.

One on One-Coaching Days: The school sets up a schedule for the consultant to visit with each classroom teacher during their workshop time. The consultant gives individualized feedback and coaching during this time to each teacher.

Administrative PD Days: The consultant facilitates learning walks/instructional rounds with administrators and literacy coaches to help the administrative team give helpful feedback to teachers in specific areas. The consultant also works with the administrative team to look at student data from writing folders and notebooks, running records and reading levels for each classroom.

Workshop Days: These days are tailored to our school's individual needs as they arise. The school can decide on a topic to focus on and the consultant can give a presentation to the entire staff or to groups of the staff on that topic. Topics can range from: planning effective mini lessons that address the Common Core State Standards, conferring with writers and propelling them towards independence, building a curriculum for writing partnerships, a unit of study in reading or writing and many more. This can be done on a staff PD day or during Bank Time Sessions on shortened school days. This is used to develop consistency as a school and to create a dialogue across grade levels. This is also a time for teachers to do vertical planning.

Parent Workshops- Many schools are excited at the prospect of including parents in their professional development. At VLGA, we tailor parent workshops to fit our parent population. During these workshops, parents can learn about workshop teaching and how teaching reading and writing is very different from how they learned. They can also learn ways to support their young readers and writers at home and help them continue to be independent. Oftentimes, they will also have the opportunity to engage in their own reading and writing with our consultant's support. These workshops can be given in both English and in Spanish.

Professional Development: Kagan Cooperative Structures

All teachers will receive training in implementing Kagan structures. This training will ensure that teachers have the skills to pass easily from principles to practices, implementing basic principles and visions as part of any lesson, at any grade level, and with any curriculum. Teachers will learn to use the Kagan structures every time they ask the class a question.

TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN - ELEMENTARY

VLGA will incorporate a strong transitional kindergarten (TK) program for all 4-year old students beginning in Fall 2025, with curriculum aligned to the California Preschool Learning Foundations (Foundations) developed by the California Department of Education, (Senate Bill (SB) 858 (Chapter 32, Statutes of 2014)). Students in TK may be integrated in Kindergarten classrooms. The TK program will use the same curriculum as our kindergarten program, but pacing and instructional delivery will be monitored through data-driven differentiation based on student needs, including slower pacing than the K students. We will employ strong practices in early childhood development like language development, fine and gross motor development, and a foundational background in mathematics, science and social studies.

Teachers first assigned to a TK classroom after July 1, 2015, must have been issued at least one credential by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), and shall, by August 1, 2020, have one of the following:

- At least 24 units in early childhood education, or childhood development, or both; or
- As determined by the LEA [Charter School] employing the teacher, professional experience in a classroom setting with preschool age children that is comparable to the 24 units of education described above
- A child development permit issued by the CTC.

A TYPICAL DAY - ELEMENTARY

The following provides an example of what a day in the life at VLGA might look and feel like for a student. Schools are dynamic, human-centered organizations and, while schedules and basic routines will have consistency, no two days will look exactly alike. The following description strives to highlight unique features of a VLGA day, but is solely demonstrative.

Miguel, a second-grade student, gets dropped off by his mother and walks across the parking lot to VLGA. He looks up and sees the school mural and remembers the assembly they just had where his principal reminded them about what their school mascot symbolizes. He loves the new big word his principal taught them

Miguel loves the days when the kids from the middle school get to be their reading buddies. He looks down at his own uniform and sees the school logo and thinks, “It’s just like my principal and teacher tell me...when we work together, that is when we can transform the world.” Miguel wants to make his teacher and mom proud and transform the world one day. He then remembers that they are working on a project to learn about water conservation and are going to use the sand tables again and make a hypothesis about erosion.

Miguel isn’t even at the door yet, but he is excited and beaming with pride to be at VLGA.

Miguel’s mother leans down and kisses him on the forehead. “Mijo,” she says, “Aquí te dejo. I get to have coffee with the principal and other parents this morning. Your principal is going to tell us all about the great things your school is doing and then we have committee meetings. But I will see you later, today I get to volunteer in your class.”

Miguel quickly kisses his mom again, but is happy to be in line with his friends in front of his classroom. Ms. Amaya is standing at the door greeting each student as they come into the room. Miguel shakes his teacher’s hand and says, “Good morning, Ms. Amaya!” Ms. Amaya smiles and thanks him for such a pleasant morning greeting.

Miguel walks into the class and puts his backpack away. He gets his Chromebook off the cart and sits at his desk next to the other three students on his class team. He looks at his team table cards and remembers to greet his shoulder and face partner with a warm welcome and a compliment. No sooner do they finish their greetings when Ms.

Amaya starts the class off with a Kagan community building activity. They have been learning about their family tree and history, and it doesn't surprise Miguel that the activity involves sharing things he loves about his family. The computer-generated Kagan spinner on the screen in front of the class stops on two. Miguel feels disappointed he doesn't get to start, but congratulates his shoulder partner. Each one of his team members gets to share, and they remember to complement each other after they share. "I love the story about your big sister, Miguel," his partner tells him, and Miguel beams with pride—not for the first time this morning, and it's not even 8:15 yet.

8:30

Ms. Amaya calls all the students to the front of the room to find their place on the carpet next to their literacy partners. She reminds them to bring their writing journal with them.

Miguel grabs his reading journal and heads to the carpet. He can't wait to see what his teacher is going to do today in Writer's Workshop.

Ms. Amaya gets right to the point, "Writers, remember yesterday when we talked about making our writing more exciting for the reader? Today I want to show you one way to do that. One thing that great writers do to engage their readers is to surprise them by making inanimate objects—remember that is something that is not living like a rock or a mountain, or something that is not human, like a dog or animal—act like a human.

When an author does this, we call it personification. Today, I'm going to show you how to use personification to make the stories you are working on more exciting for your readers."

Ms. Amaya knows how important modeling is and has planned for it and says, "Let me show you some examples of how published authors have done it."

Ms. Amaya pulls out three books, and says, "Let's see how some of our favorite published authors use personification in their writing to engage us as readers. The first one is *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein, and Miguel remembers when his teacher read that to them. She picks out a small passage and reads it to the class and shows how the author gives the tree human attributes and feelings. She says, "This makes me love the tree so much." She explains how personification helps the reader feel sad and happy for the tree by the end of the story. She shares two more examples. This only takes a few minutes, and then she clearly repeats the day's objective, "So, remember authors...Great writers sometimes use personification to engage and excite their readers. Watch me now, as I try to use personification in the story I am writing."

Ms. Amaya sits before her story, which she has projected onto the screen, and starts to read, "The little boy was racing all around the woods chasing butterflies until he got so tired he had to sit on an old tree stump."

"Hmmm," Ms. Amaya thinks out loud to herself, I wonder what would happen if the tree stump could talk." She starts to write, "As the winded boy sat..." She crosses out "sat" and says, "He's tired from running around, so he is really going to plop down." She writes instead, "plunked down hard on the stump." She continues, "The little boy heard someone

scream “Ouch, that hurt!” The little boy looked around the woods, but didn’t see anybody. “Oh my gosh, you are so heavy. At least you could have asked for my permission.” This time the boy heard the voice come from under him, down by his feet and he jumped so high, he nearly hit his head on the branch of a nearby tree.”

The whole class laughs, and so does Ms. Amaya. But, she quickly turns back to the lesson, “Do you see how I gave the tree stump a voice and made it react like a human? I used personification when I did that. I think it’s time for you to give personification a try. Take out your stories and, for the next 60 seconds, I want you to look for inanimate objects in your stories where you might use personification to excite and engage your reader.”

Right away, Miguel and his partner open their journals and search for inanimate objects in their stories. Miguel found two and can’t wait to share. Another bell goes off and the teacher asks if anyone needs more time. She tells them to use one finger for a little more time, two for a lot, or just raise their whole hand if they are ready. Everyone is ready.

A bell the goes off. “Ok, you and your partner will use the *Kagan* Rally Robin structure to share all of your ideas. Don’t forget, you share one idea and then your partner shares one until you don’t have any more ideas left or the timer goes off. If you finish before the timer, please use the rest of the time to ask your partner probing questions. She spins the partner button and says, “Partner A begins.”

The class is suddenly abuzz with conversation and sharing. Miguel and his partner share all their ideas, but the bell hasn’t gone off. Miguel says to his partner, “I really like your idea of using personification with your family car! What do you think your car might say or do to make it seem like a person?” The partners are deep in conversation when the buzzer goes off, and they look up at Ms. Amaya. Ms. Amaya had been going from pair to pair during the time, and says, “I really love how so many of you found great places to use personification in your writing!” She goes on to share a few examples that she heard.

“Please turn to your partners and thank them for sharing their thoughts and ideas with you.” Once this lesson concludes, Ms. Amaya says, “So remember, authors, great writers use personification in their stories to engage the reader and make their writing exciting and interesting. How many of you will try to use personification in your stories today?” Hands fly up. It has been 12 minutes since the lesson began, and the class is ready for a change.

“Let’s go back to our desks and work on your stories. I’m going to set the timer for 30 minutes today. You are really building up you writer’s stamina, and I’m so proud of all of your efforts.”

While the students work on their stories, Ms. Amaya calls a small group to work with her. She had read the writing journals over the weekend and noticed a small group was still struggling with strong openings. She has a small lesson to help them along. Later, she calls Miguel up for a one-on-one conference and works with him on breaking his story into paragraphs, but soon the five-minute bell rings. It’s almost time for recess.

Recess

The TA walks the class over to the gymnasium. Miguel is excited because he has been playing soccer with his friends, but no sooner do they start than his friend says something mean and they start to argue. Soon, a crowd is starting to gather, but quickly the TA is there and gently asks Miguel and the other boy to come over to the Way of Council bench. He reminds them about their peace pledge and asks them to use the Peace Talk Protocol. When they are ready, they can go back and play. Miguel and his partner look up at the plaque. The TA helps them to read it together:

- Sit face to face
- Share: This is what happened, this is what I wanted to happen, this is how I can make things better
- Speak and listen from the heart
- Use a talking piece

The boys go through the protocol, and within a few minutes are laughing and hugging each other. There is still time to play, and they race off together.

Instructional Time

Back at class, Ms. Amaya is sitting at her teaching station. She tells the class to grab the Just Right book they are reading and come to the carpet. Miguel loves Reader's Workshop. It is just like Writer's workshop, but he gets lots of time to read his new favorite book. Ms. Amaya teaches a mini lesson about inference and uses lots of examples from her read aloud. Soon, the class has practiced, and they get to read. While the class reads their books silently, Miguel is asked to join the TA. She says that she thinks he has made so much progress and that he might need to re-think his Just Right books. She has him read a passage from the Fountas and Pinnell leveled reading inventory and then another. He is so excited to learn, he has jumped two levels from L to N. She asks him if he would like to pick out an N book. He does, but he wants to finish the book he is reading. She quickly replies, "Oh, of course, I can never leave a book when I love it. Sometimes, I'm even sad when I finish it, because I love the characters so much. Has that ever happened to you?" Miguel goes to the leveled library to pick a book, but he is excited to go onto his Chromebook and see all the other N level books he might choose from, too.

After Reader's Workshop, Ms. Amaya gathers the class for a quick community builder. She picks a Kagan strategy that gets the kids moving a bit, as they have been sitting and reading for almost 30 minutes straight. After the two-minute activity, she calls them to the carpet for math.

Math is structured just like Readers and Writers Workshop. Teachers at VLGA will understand that you learn by doing, not by listening, so the lesson is structured to maximize independent and guided work time. It starts with a real-life connection; usually to a project the class is working on or something they might need in life, is followed by a mini lesson with a clear objective, guided group practice, independent work time with students being called to small group instruction, or one-on one as indicated my formative

assessments. Some days the math mini lesson is drawn from adopted math program, but today they are using CGI. The students work on using math skills to solve word problems.

Miguel loves CGI Fridays because he gets to show how he solves difficult work problems in multiple ways; with a mathematical sentence, an English sentence, a drawing, or with the math tool manipulatives. His favorite part is at the end of the work time at the class conference. He hopes that today he can come up with a new way of solving the problem and that his teacher will share it with the class. When a student finds a new way to do something, it is called by the student's name. Miguel hopes to have "Miguel's Way" up on the math wall again, so he can show his mom what a great mathematician he is.

Lunch

Miguel loves his classroom, but maybe not as much as lunch. The cafeteria always has such great food, and he is proud that his school serves a "homemade" meal every day that is healthy and good! After they eat, they all go and play. There are no problems today, and that is good, because the last few days some kids in his class were mean to each other and some even cried. Too soon, the bell rings, and it is time for class.

After Lunch Friday Council

When Miguel gets back to his class, the furniture has been rearranged. The desks are against the wall, and the chairs are in a circle. In the middle of the circle is the council table. It is covered in a beautiful tablecloth. It is the one his mother brought back from Guatemala. Miguel beams with pride that his teacher loved her gift. The low table is covered with a few flowers in a vase, the dedication bowl, and talking pieces the class has brought in to share.

Everyone sits quietly in the circle, and Ms. Amaya asks if anyone would like to make a dedication. A few students make dedications by walking up and dropping a stone into the bowl; as they do, they dedicate the Council to their moms. Miguel is a little nervous, but remember how much he misses his family dog that recently passed. He quietly walks up, drops a stone into the dedication bowl, and says, "I dedicate this to my dog that died this year." As Miguel walks back to his seat, the students and Ms. Amaya raise their hands and wiggle their fingers in silent support.

Ms. Amaya reminds them that in Council they are to speak from the heart, listen from the heart, be spontaneous and not worry about how good their story might be, and to be lean so everyone in the circle can say what is in their heart.

Ms. Amaya starts by talking about what happened this week during lunch and recess breaks. She says that being mean to each other can sometimes be called bullying. She then tells the class about a time when she was bullied in the second grade and how it made her feel. After her framing story, she says to the circle, "So today, fellow global citizens, tell the circle a story of a time when you were bullied and how it made you feel.

But, maybe, if you are feeling brave, you can tell a story of a time when you bullied someone and how that made you feel.”

For the next 30 minutes the talking piece is passed. Miguel remembers what happened at recess and shares that story. Some kids are brave and tell about how when they were a bully, and how that made them feel bad inside. Council winds down with a witness round, in which students can witness something that touched them during the circle and then a closing. Sometimes Councils are fun, but today it was serious. Miguel decides he is going to try really hard not to be a bully, as he realized that his classmates feel the same thing he does when he gets bullied. The Council is over and Ms. Amaya has the class stand up and sing the song they have been working on. They all help put the class back to normal. They are so excited, because they are going to do their science experiments next.

Science and Technology

Miguel never thought about being a scientist before, but he is having so much fun that he now thinks he will study science in college. Today is really special, too, because his mom is a special science helper. She does this every Friday. Miguel can tell how much his teacher likes his mom, and this makes him love his teacher even more.

Students are exploring how the surface of the earth is always changing. They are introduced to different types of maps and explore how these maps convey different information about the world in which they live, including where water is found on Earth. Miguel and his team introduce the design problem when faced with the challenge of helping a community threatened by a potential landslide. They have been investigating the different forces that shape the surface of the Earth and have designed solutions to limit the impact of erosion on a fictional community that is located at the bottom of a hill recently destabilized by a fire. Even though the town they are working for is fictional, Miguel remembers how Ms. Amaya showed them what happened in the hills surrounding Lake Elsinore after the drought and fires and when all the rain came in the winter.

Miguel thinks his team’s drawings and ideas were some of the best solutions in the class, but he also likes a lot of the other ideas. Soon, they build their prototypes and test them. The tests are fun, but Miguel has to think really hard as his teacher pushes his team to consider failure points of data to identify aspects of the design solution that can be improved. He knows this part of science is important, and he wants to help his team, because next week they are going to present their solutions and suggestions for improvement to their classmates and then to their sister school classmate via Zoom at the American School in Guatemala City. Their sister school friends told them that they have had bad mudslides there, too. Miguel hopes that their solutions can help their friends in Guatemala. Even though presenting is hard, Miguel likes getting feedback, because, as a global citizen, he knows that understanding different perspectives is important. He also loves science because it helps him design real solutions for real- world problems.

End of the day

Miguel can't believe how fast the day went. It seems like he was just eating breakfast. In fact, he thinks he might have been in FLOW today. His teacher always tells him that FLOW is the best part of learning and that you know you are in flow when you are thinking hard, having fun, and forget about everything else except what you are doing. Miguel is sure he was in FLOW today during Writers Workshop and science. He tells Ms. Amaya that he was in FLOW a lot today and thanks her for being his favorite teacher ever. Ms. Amaya thanks Miguel for taking his learning so seriously and thanks his mom for her help. She asks his mom if she is able to use the Learning Management System and lets her know there will be another parent-training coming up soon. Normally, Miguel would go to the after-school program, but on Friday's his mom takes him home with her. Miguel walks across the parking lot with his mom Miguel takes one last look at the murals on the school and reflects on how his day was all about bringing the heart and the mind together to make the world a better place for himself, his family, and even his friends in Guatemala. He is, once again, beaming with pride to be a Vista Lago student.

Instructional Design

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN – MIDDLE SCHOOL

At VLGA we are committed to transforming the school experience.

Teachers who push students academically and demand high standards not only increase engagement, but also cultivate students' sense of being cared for and, ultimately, raise student achievement. At VLGA, our pedagogical practices and programmatic choices form the conditions for rigorous academics and warm supportive mentoring in symbiotic relation. The VLGA approach is one in which children learn by doing under the guidance of a strong mentor/teacher. We are dedicated to hiring successful teachers who balance high standards and academically rigorous expectations with constant availability for help and academic guidance.

As students move through each grade, they experience a well-rounded, holistic, and global curriculum with a STEAM focus. Mastery of basic academic standards is important and necessary, but in and of itself is an insufficient goal for our students. Low-income students of color, perhaps more than any other group of young people, benefit from an intellectually engaging, rigorous curriculum designed to cultivate flexible thinking and broad knowledge of the world on a global scale. Our students must break barriers of discrimination that too often define who we are. VLGA adheres to the guiding principles of the traditional Japanese holistic approach "Chi-Toku-Tai" which espouses: academic prowess, moral, physical, and mental health. When the needs of the whole child are addressed, a zest and love for life and all its possibilities is the outcome.

At VLGA, we create social-emotional and educational conditions and structures that are strictly aligned with the research on engagement (see above). Research on the positive correlation of strong student engagement with higher student achievement is clear and drives our instructional

design. While engagement is “easily understood by practitioners as being essential to learning,”⁶⁸ the bridge from theory to application is often difficult. At VLGA our instructional foci are based on our deep research on engagement and represent a unique combination of global competence and STEAM preparedness. We see these two areas not as separate foci, but rather as a nested symbiotic grouping that works together to address the needs of the 21st century learner.

GLOBAL COMPETENCY

VLGA is distinguished by its collaboration and partnership with Community Catalyst Partners’ International Studies Schools Network (ISSN), with the goal of becoming an ISSN-certified school by the end of the first five years. The ISSN currently includes a variety of different grade levels and types of schools serving approximately 16,000 students in eight states. In keeping with the Community Catalyst Partners’ original mission to serve traditionally underserved populations, the majority (63%) of ISSN students are low-income, and 73% are students of color. Four-year graduation rates and student performance rates exceed those in comparable schools. In 2011, ISSN schools had an average four-year graduation rate of 89%. In addition, evaluators found that ISSN schools outperformed their peers on 71 of 107 total measures (66.4%).

Community Catalyst Partners does not promote a single, prescriptive school design. The starting point for all of its schools is a shared definition of a college-ready, globally competent graduate. The ISSN Graduate Profile describes a student who has mastered the knowledge and skills required for college, has expertise in core content areas from a global perspective, is a proficient thinker and problem solver, can view and analyze issues and events from varying perspectives, can communicate in more than one language and collaborate across cultural boundaries, and fulfills the responsibilities of global citizenship.

VLGA works with ISSN to develop globally competent students. To help facilitate this effort, Community Catalyst Partners has developed a flexible ISSN School Design Matrix, adaptable to a range of school conditions. The matrix is clearly aligned with the VLGA Academy vision and mission and sets a trajectory for our school’s development across six domains:

Vision, Mission, Culture	This domain addresses the school’s vision, mission and culture of the school as well as the schools' expectations for all students to be ready for college and postsecondary school success.
Student Outcomes	This domain examines the progress being made by all students toward achieving the characteristics defined in the ISSN Graduate Profile.

⁶⁸Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment	This domain describes a consistent global focus throughout the curriculum and across all academic activities. It examines teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students. It also highlights ongoing, performance-based measures of student learning.
School Organization and Governance	This domain considers the degree to which the school is structured to support teaching and learning.
Professional Learning Community	This domain focuses on the systems of collaborative communication and professional development established to improve teaching and learning.
Family and Community Partnerships	This domain explores the family engagement in the school's educational mission and the connections established with local organizations and institutions.

The detailed matrix includes quality criteria for each domain, with benchmarks that describe beginning, emerging, proficient, and exemplary implementation. Many of the quality criteria describe practices that are common to the small schools movement in general— for example, implementing a student advisory/homeroom program—or that are good practice in any setting— for example, establishing a clear and consistent grading policy. Other criteria, while not necessarily exclusive to the ISSN, exemplify the international studies approach:

Global content, skills, and perspectives are embedded in the core content areas. Students explore global topics in all of their classes. Curriculum units are often organized around global themes, supporting students to make connections across disciplines.

World languages are part of the experience. VLGA students are highly proficient in English, have opportunities to strengthen home languages, and be introduced to new languages in extra-curricular and afterschool programs.

Curriculum is student-centered, authentic, globally significant, and connected to real audiences. Students engage in solving real-world, internationally important problems and present their solutions to experts. They are empowered to make decisions about what and how they learn.

Global learning extends beyond the classroom. Students participate in service learning that immerses them in local and global issues, exposes them to professional opportunities, and prepares them as global citizens. Service Learning at VLGA is linked to the Global Performance Outcomes (GPO's) described in the section above regarding ISSN. Service learning directly addresses two of the GPO's: "Recognizing Different Perspectives" and "Taking Action." The curriculum is designed to allow students to apply learning to solving real world and local problems with an emphasis relevant global issues outlined in the United Nations Goals for Sustainability and other school identified world problems. Some examples of this might be students applying principles and learning from STEAM in project-based learning to address the issues of water scarcity, climate change, overuse of plastics, sustainable agriculture, etc. Model

UN is another example of how students participate in Service Learning. Additionally, classrooms are equipped with the technology (Smart Board type technology and 1:1 Chromebook program) for online learning and exchanges with other students and classrooms around the world to collaboratively take action on relevant global issues.

Opportunities for field trips are an integral part of the Vista experience and are planned according to grade level content and age appropriateness for length of time.

VLGA works with the Community Catalyst Partners' ISSN to further develop or revise (as needed) its curriculum according to the "SAGE" framework and VLGA guiding principles.

Student choice: Students have a say in what they learn and how they learn it.

Authentic tasks: Students perform tasks and investigate questions that adults would perform or study in the real world.

Global significance: Students study topics, issues, and phenomena of global importance, and gain deep knowledge of countries and cultures other than their own.

Exhibition to a real-world audience: Students share their work—and receive feedback—from audiences with relevant expertise, in person and on the web.

VLGA students can show how their learning experiences helped them achieve global competency in four domains, as detailed more fully above in the section on An Educated Person in the 21st Century:

Investigate the world beyond their immediate environment, framing significant problems and conducting well-crafted, age-appropriate research.

Recognize perspectives, including one's own and those of others, explaining the nature and origin of these perspectives thoughtfully and respectfully.

Communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences, bridging geographic, linguistic, ideological, and cultural barriers.

Take action to improve conditions, viewing themselves as players in the world and participating reflectively.

The ISSN framework does not tell teachers what to teach or when to teach it; rather, it provides both teachers and students with the frameworks and the tools to make good choices. The primary purpose of the curriculum is to enhance teachers' capacity to develop and transform their own curriculum, a key component of teacher autonomy and job satisfaction. VLGA integrates four quality components, in alignment with our vision and mission, into our curricular design:

Clear expectations: Tasks are linked to specific Global Performance Standards outcomes, Common Core State Standards, and/or other standards like ISTE. These targets provide teachers and students with a shared understanding of what proficient work looks like.

Authentic learning experiences: Students explore topics and issues that represent the work of real-world professionals.

Student-centered learning: Teachers and students share ownership for learning. With feedback from frequent formative assessments, students understand where they are going and how to get there. They also make decisions about what they're learning and how they're learning it.

Multiple opportunities to reach mastery: With multiple assessments embedded in each unit and leading to graduation, students have many opportunities.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ARTS, MATHEMATICS (STEAM)

VLGA incorporates STEAM instruction into the ISSN framework to build globally competent, 21st century learners. STEAM is an acronym that represents how all topics in subject areas relate to each other and to the real world: science and technology, interpreted through engineering & the arts, all based in mathematical elements. STEAM education naturally aligns with VLGA's framework for teaching that is based on natural ways of learning and is customizable for all types of students and programs. Significantly, it adds relevancy to learning, and increased engagement for students.

A STEAM education aligns with the VLGA guiding principles in which projects have clear expectations, provide authentic learning experiences, are hands-on and student-centered, and provide myriad authentic ways to demonstrate mastery. Globally, schools are having success with STEAM, teaching academic and life skills in standards-backed, reality-based, personally relevant exploratory learning environments.⁶⁹

VLGA teachers use the ISSN rubrics to create STEAM projects that address the four domains of global competence in line with the California Common Core Standards. STEAM is not a separate effort, but a naturally integrated focus that clearly addresses 21st learning in a global context. STEAM provides the skills, while the global outcomes provide the context, through the structure of rubric-based portfolios and process work. Our teachers can better match their learning objectives and goals to the variety of learners they encounter. Embedded within the larger guiding principles of the Framework for Engagement, STEAM at VLGA supports well-balanced and deeply cooperative teams among educators and students based on a variety of characteristics. STEAM provides another way for both teachers and students to use their skills for leading in some areas, while other areas are strengthened through observing and assisting. VLGA educators instruct within their specialty with co-planned thematic units to which everyone contributes, in projects related to the required benchmark concepts and skills.

Project Lead the Way. At VLGA, in addition to teacher-created projects and lessons, STEAM is taught through the acclaimed Project Lead the Way Gateway 6-8 program.⁷⁰ PLTW Gateway is aligned to Next Generation Science Standards and the California Common Core State Standards

⁶⁹STEAM Education. STEAM FAQ for Educators. Accessed from: <https://steamedu.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/STEAM-FAQ-Educators-11Nov15.pdf>

⁷⁰ Project Lead the Way. PLTW Gateway (6-8) <https://www.pltw.org/our-programs/pltw-gateway>

for math and English Language Arts. PLTW Gateway provides students opportunities to learn through exploration and discovery. Through PLTW Gateway, students become hands-on problem solvers and learn to collaborate with their fellow students. In alignment with our workshop model of instruction, teachers and students begin each module with an engaging e-book story that introduces the challenge students will collaborate on to solve. Then, in a series of activities that build upon each other, students are challenged to become confident in trying new things, to learn from mistakes, and to apply what they do know to find solutions.

Instructional staff receive training in PLTW during the summer.

Student Use of Technology. VLGA believes that, to be a globally educated, 21st century student and citizen, students must have technology infused throughout the curriculum. Thirty-five years ago, education responded to *A Nation at Risk*,⁷¹ which argued that knowledge of the New Basics is the foundation of success after graduation. The world has dramatically changed, and our low-income and at-risk students now face a Digital Divide that, if not addressed, will widen the achievement gap. Technological literacy is now an essential element in our students' futures. Our students must be able to use technology as an integrated life skill, not as a separate subject or in isolation.

While technology offers extraordinary potential for learning and bringing global awareness, research has clearly indicated that technology is not, and cannot be, treated as the be-all-end-all, but rather becomes a powerful tool when used to support learning through collaborative projects and other authentic learning experiences.⁷² This is why, at VLGA, we work to find the most effective ways to harness the potential of technology as a comprehensible, yet powerful, tool for students.

At VLGA, technology integration is based upon the International Society for Technology in Education's National Educational Technology Standards for Students.⁷³ The ISTE Standards are the benchmarks for learning, teaching, and leading in the digital age, and are widely recognized and adopted worldwide. They work in concert to transform education with a uniquely global perspective. The standards are designed around age band articulation that is in alignment with the VLGA developmental and child-centered approach. Students utilize a variety of technology tools to access, manipulate, exchange and create information, and demonstrate learning. Tools such as the Internet, word processors, databases, spreadsheets, publishing software, media editors, and so forth are integrated into the curriculum. Students are required to utilize

71 Gardner, D. P., Larsen, Y. W., Baker, W., Campbell, A., & Crosby, E. A. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform* (p. 65). Washington, DC: United States Department of Education.

72 See, e.g., Ahmed Kahn, T., *How Technology Can (And Does) Improve Education*, TrustRadius, March 28, 2019 <https://www.trustradius.com/buyer-blog/how-technology-improves-education>; Towns, S. *Technology is Not Cure-All for Education's Problems*, Governing, March 2011 <https://www.governing.com/columns/tech-talk/col-technology-not-cure-all-solution-to-educations-problems.html>

73 International Society for Technology in Education. ISTE Standards. Accessed from: <https://www.iste.org/standards>.

technology as an outcome in their coursework. They will also be equipped to determine in their Digital Portfolio, what tools they are interested in learning and incorporating into their class projects. Through online learning and benchmark assessments, students will be prepared to take computer-based CAASPP and other assessments.

At all VCPS, the Google Classroom (LMS) has been adopted to create a safe cyber environment where these important modern relationships can happen without fear of abuse. Through Google Classroom, teachers safely communicate with students and parents through a platform that is monitored for abuse and is private to the school community. Parents and school administrators monitor daily activity and keep abreast of their student's progress and important issues that might arise. Further, through this system, the school can easily check for any cyber-abuse or bullying that may occur.

SCHOOL STRUCTURE TO PROMOTE A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

At VLGA, the key to teacher and student happiness is promoting a culture of joyous learning. It is not confined to the classroom, but concerns the entire physical environment, the social system, the atmosphere, and norms and values.⁷⁴ Research on emotional engagement suggests school climate is of paramount importance to a student's academic achievement.⁷⁵ The research conducted on outperforming urban schools has demonstrated that they have been successful at creating a sense of connectedness and belonging that is pervasive throughout the school's organizational culture. These caring relationships exist not only among teachers and students, but among the faculty members of the school and are often included as part of the school's mission statement. Teachers at such schools are perceived by students to have a caring personality, and in turn, this motivates students to work harder for them. At VLGA, a school-wide focus on connectedness and cultural relevance is sustained through the teacher-student interactions in classrooms both in instruction and in management as well as school-wide discipline policies and practices.⁷⁶ Innovative features of our school design are enumerated below.

⁷⁴ Creemers, B. & Reezigt, G. (1996). School level conditions affecting the effectiveness of instruction. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 7, 197–228

⁷⁵ See, e.g., Jonathan Cohen on School Climate: Engaging the Whole Village, Teaching the Whole Child, The Challenge: A Publication of the U.S. Dept. of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, https://www.schoolclimate.org/themes/schoolclimate/assets/pdf/cohen_onschoolclimate_iv1%20copy.pdf (“Over the last 30 years a growing body of empirical research has shown that a positive and sustained school climate is associated with and may be predictive of positive youth development, effective risk prevention and health promotion efforts, student learning and academic achievement, increased student graduation rates, and teacher retention.”)

⁷⁶ Fenning, P., & Rose, J. (2007). Overrepresentation of African American students in exclusionary discipline the role of school policy. *Urban Education*, 42(6), 536-559. Coleman, J. C. (2014). A study of a professional development initiative to increase cultural competency.

Small and Safe Learning Communities. Extensive research has looked at the implications of school size.⁷⁷ Research suggests that small to medium-size schools provide greater opportunities for deeper interpersonal relationships between students and teachers and among peers, for enhanced student participation, and for increased attendance. All of these are leading factors in student engagement.⁷⁸ Smaller schools promote conditions for higher levels of student engagement. This model is ideal in sustaining a small community, and is an economically sound ratio allowing the school financial flexibility and strength to accomplish its extensive goals. The physical design of the school prioritizes flexibility and creates multifaceted spaces that allow students to drive their own learning, exhibit agency and choice, and feel safe and welcome at school each and every day.

Central to the teacher-student relationship is the teacher's commitment to creating a safe atmosphere that allows students to take academic risks and reach beyond their current ability.⁷⁹ A supportive environment that pushes students not only fosters motivation, but also helps students feel competent, take ownership of their learning, and serves as a positive predictor of interest in classes and even pursuing academic goals.⁸⁰

School discipline and safety. While school culture and discipline have a strong regulatory role in facilitating engagement, they can also play an environmental role in student behaviors such as disrespect, poor attendance, fighting, and other disruptive and problem behaviors. Attentive and constructive culture and discipline facilitates engagement by focusing on services, interventions, and program development, and identifying at-risk students who would benefit from those programs.

77 Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA. Furlong, M. J., Whipple, A. D., Jean, G. S., Simental, J., Soliz, A., & Punthuna, S. (2003). Multiple contexts of school engagement: Moving toward a unifying framework for educational research and practice. *The California School Psychologist*, 8(1), 99-113. Marks, H., Louis, K. S., & Printy, S. (2000). The capacity for organizational learning: Implications for pedagogical quality and student achievement. *Understanding schools as intelligent systems*, 239-266.

78 Darling-Hammond, L., & Plank, D. N. (2015). *Supporting Continuous Improvement in California's Education System*. Policy Analysis for California Education, PACE. Finn, J. D. (1989). Withdrawing from school. *Review of educational research*, 59(2), 117-142. Furlong, M. J., & Christenson, S. L. (2008). Engaging students at school and with learning: A relevant construct for all students. *Psychology in the Schools*, 45(5), 365-368.

79 Samson, P. L. (2015). Fostering student engagement: Creative problem-solving in small group facilitations. *Collected Essays on Learning and Teaching*, 8, 153-164.

80 Furlong, M. J., Whipple, A. D., Jean, G. S., Simental, J., Soliz, A., & Punthuna, S. (2003). Multiple contexts of school engagement: Moving toward a unifying framework for educational research and practice. *The California School Psychologist*, 8(1), 99-113. Shernoff, E. S., Kratochwill, T. R., & Stoiber, K. C. (2003). Training in Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs): What are school psychology programs teaching?. *Journal of School Psychology*, 41(6), 467-483.

Significantly, even the perceptions of unsafe school environments can lead to student dissatisfaction and disengagement.⁸¹ Marks notes that “a positive school environment is favorable to learning by being normed for respect, fairness, safety, and positive communications.”⁸² In another study, strong school discipline was found to have a significant impact on school engagement, but that arbitrary or overly strict policies like our current trend towards zero tolerance actually have a negative overall effect on engagement and achievement.⁸³ These policies are perceived as unfair and can lead to even higher dropout rates.

At VLGA, creating a safe environment with structured discipline policies is essential. Too many at-risk students start down the school-to-prison pipeline precisely because of overly punitive policies that undermine student self-worth and are not aligned with the stages of child development.⁸⁴ We use Way of Council to foster conditions of empathy, respect, kindness, and love in the classroom and the school itself. VLGA also uses principles of Restorative Justice to teach children how to grow and learn from a mistake. The humanity and dignity of every child is paramount and the discipline and safety policies are always reflective of this deeply held belief.

Way of Council. The Way of Council encourages deep and honest communication. Based on indigenous, worldwide “cultural dialogical” practices including Native American traditions observed and recorded by Benjamin Franklin, as well as contemporary organizational management practices, Council is a formal, structured process of sitting in a circle and passing a talking piece in response to a prompt from the facilitator. At VLGA, we teach students the “four intentions” of council – to speak from the heart, to listen from the heart without judgment, to speak spontaneously without planning, and to keep it lean so everyone has time with the talking piece. Council is a non-hierarchical forum for discussion. Instead of standing at the board delivering instruction, teachers sit with students in the circle. This allows participants to hear each other in a way that is sorely lacking in the traditional school and classroom culture.

Council is the best tool we have found to help children appreciate the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and opinions of their classmates. Regular use of council promotes a classroom culture where children learn to connect meaningfully with their peers and with adults. Being “in council” helps students develop attention, concentration, and listening skills; to express themselves fully and appropriately; and to “suspend” preconceptions.

81 Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

82 Marks, H., Louis, K. S., & Printy, S. (2000). The capacity for organizational learning: Implications for pedagogical quality and student achievement. *Understanding schools as intelligent systems*, 239-266.

83 Furlong, M. J., Whipple, A. D., Jean, G. S., Simental, J., Soliz, A., & Punthuna, S. (2003). Multiple contexts of school engagement: Moving toward a unifying framework for educational research and practice. *The California School Psychologist*, 8(1), 99-113.

84 Salole, A. T., & Abdulle, Z. (2015). Quick to punish: An examination of the school to prison pipeline for marginalized youth. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, (72/73), 124.

Importantly, at VLGA, Council is contained to the classroom, but is used as a tradition and protocol for increasing teacher, parent, and community buy-in and engagement. Participating in council has the same benefits for adults in a school community – at staff, committee, teacher/parent, or community meetings. Governing the school using Council as a tool helps us model the adult behaviors we wish to encourage in students.

In simple terms, what we have at VLGA in Council is a systemic, community- building practice, one that moves toward the State’s priorities for personalization and creating safe, caring environments. Council provides a structured dialogic practice that creates opportunities for the voices of all school stakeholders to be heard, considered, and acted upon: students, staff, parents, and community members. In classrooms, along with creating community by providing students opportunities to acknowledge their commonalities and celebrate differences, Council practice facilitates the development of social-emotional skills—such as self-expression, empathy, and cooperation—as it brings relevance, connection, and meaning to academic curriculum and standards.

At VLGA, Way of Council is supported by:

Continuous Training from Circle Ways

Experienced council mentors to all participating teachers

Monthly professional developments linking council to state learning standards in all academic disciplines and to Restorative Justice policies and practices

Monthly staff councils

Parent presentations and parent council facilitation

Yearly retreat in conjunction with all VCPS

After-School Programs and Clubs. Students who participate regularly in after-school clubs have been found to have a heightened sense of belonging and overall, were more engaged in school. Interestingly, clubs that have an academic focus were found to raise engagement, but athletic and social clubs had a negligible effect unless students participated in both simultaneously. Even then, the role of non- academic clubs did not show a big impact. This is not surprising given the correlation of academically intense activities to engagement found in the research.

VCPS have a long history with THINK Together a committed partner in supporting our students’ wellbeing. We have used THINK Together for our after-school programs to create academically supportive afterschool programs including tutoring and enrichment activities.

Uniforms. At VLGA, we believe that uniforms provide a unifying factor that increases identification with the school and with each other. Further, a uniform eliminates the outward appearance of economic disparities found in schools, thus removing one potential cause of bullying activities. Thus, students at VLGA are expected to wear school-approved uniforms.

PROMOTING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL STUDENT HEALTH & WELLNESS

Quality of student-teacher relationship. Researchers agree that the role of the teacher is key to student engagement. George Kuh situated the teacher at the center of all engagement, whereas

Furlong described the teachers as fundamental to a learning environment that promotes engagement. This assertion is significant in its direct application to environmental factors that are within the control of the teacher and school community. A warm and supportive approach is also linked to engagement and is demonstrated through listening to students' points of view, believing in their abilities, showing respect, holding the class to high standards of behaviors, and helping students when they do not understand something. Not surprisingly, the role of teacher engagement seems to have a contagious effect: students who perceive their teachers as engaged in the subject and excited about teaching also feel cared about, a view that raises student engagement and forms a deep sense of belonging.

At VLGA, we strive to transform the student experience and hire teaching and support personnel that embody a deep sense of excitement and passion for children and their learning.

Student-centered classrooms emphasize supportive relationships between students and teachers in academic environments that are challenging, relevant, collaborative, student-directed, and connected to real-life situations. Students are assessed on their mastery of knowledge and skills and have multiple opportunities to demonstrate that mastery. Educators are supported in creating a student-centered learning environment through opportunities for reflection, collaboration, and leadership. Research has shown that such settings are necessary for students to develop the skills to succeed in college, career, and life.

Student-centered practices are more often found in schools that serve affluent and middle-class students than those located in low-income communities. Creating student-centered learning environments is one way to effectively address the opportunity gap for these students.

VLGA firmly believes that students learn best by doing and not in passive lecture style settings. The student-centered classroom provides targeted instruction based on personalized learning goals with ample time for practice.

Our current educational system is based on the antiquated notion that children should sit quietly and still for six hours each day, while their teacher is the holder of knowledge and conveys that knowledge through lectures. However, we learn a language by speaking it, to read and write by reading and writing, and we develop 21st century skills and attributes by regularly using them in our daily lives. The VLGA experience puts students at the center of learning through a workshop model of instruction in which teachers act as a coach and facilitate a more personalized learning experience. This shift from vertical to horizontal classrooms is based on a constructivist view wherein, optimally, the classroom provides a series of experiences that prompt students to actively construct their own knowledge and learning.

Student belonging. The research on engagement makes clear that a sense of belonging is a crucial factor in engagement. Emotional engagement has been deemed fundamental to human motivation and is described as a sense of belonging, relatedness, and identification with school. This state of belonging requires "frequent, affectively pleasant or positive interactions with the same individuals, and they need these interactions to occur in a framework of long-term, stable caring, and concern." According to the research, emotional engagement plays a role in academic and cognitive engagement, which has a direct link to learning. In one study, students who

reported high levels of belonging outperformed their peers, while those who reported low levels of belonging often displayed negative and anti-social behaviors, including cheating, drug and alcohol use on school grounds, and even suicidal feelings. It has also been shown that identification with school develops over time and is affected, positively or negatively, by a lifetime of academic successes or failures.

While VLGA carefully attends to the interpersonal relationships and factors of engagement that fall within the locus of control of students and teachers, it also recognizes the school-controlled factors that affect student identification with their school and the value of overall satisfaction within the students' daily routines. Most research makes evident that school-controlled factors play a role. One study found a strong connection between school engagement and school climate, and identified two distinct elements: Physical environment, which it described in terms of size and racial/ethnic populations, and regulatory environment, which consists of school discipline policies.

Family Engagement. Research has long been clear about the important role that families play in their children's academic success. At VLGA, parents, guardians, and extended family are integral parts of the school community. Teachers and administrators are committed to welcoming and working with all families to engage them in their child's education. Communicating with families is crucial to this relationship, and there is frequent communication between the school and families. At VLGA, we are committed to using a variety of means to communicate with our families. Our families have access to a state-of-the-art learning management system, an up-to-date website, emails, and hard-copy newsletters. However, we know that many of our families do not have access to the internet and don't use email regularly. Based on parent surveys and parent focus groups conducted by Dr. Wilson, we understand that most of our families have texting capability and prefer to be communicated with by text. At VLGA, we use our learning management system to ensure that families receive communication in their preferred format. Teachers send home regular reports of student progress, and follow-up as needed in person and via phone to ensure that families are fully equipped to support their student's learning at home. Finally, VLGA hosts a variety of social and educational events to promote community-building and family involvement.

These may include back-to-school events, parent educational seminars, exhibitions of student work, student performances, and our special awards night, Noche de Estrellas. Families accompany their child to student-led conferences bi-annually to stay informed of their child's progress, and to ensure parents know how to support their student's learning and personal growth at home.

Our three areas of family support revolve around helping parents be an integral part of their child's academic life:

Home – School Relationships: VLGA fosters youth's developmental needs, parents' attitudes and practices, and schools' expectations and support of family involvement by maintaining a strong relationship between home and school.

Responsibility for Learning: VLGA parents are involved in their child's learning plan. Their responsibility in the plan is to support their child's goals.

Parenting: VLGA assists, when necessary, parents in developing the attitudes, values, and practices of parents in raising adolescent youth.

These three areas strengthen VLGA students' abilities to develop in their academic, personal and long-term goals, through the creation of a "full circle" of expectations and communication among the student, family and school. To ensure success in maintaining the "full circle," parents who need additional assistance are provided with, or directed to, additional resources within the school and community in order to fulfill areas of need (e.g., ESL classes, parenting classes, counseling services, job centers, etc.). The Digital Portfolios enhance parent involvement, as they have components in which the parents are a part of their child's development of college awareness, personal aspirations and planning for the future.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION – MIDDLE SCHOOL

The curriculum for VLGA is based on the California Content Standards, including the Common Core Standards, the Next Generation Science Standards, ELD Standards, and the California Curriculum Frameworks. VLGA will implement the 2019 California Arts Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve (Arts Standards), 2019 California World Languages Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve (when published) and 2019 Health Education Curriculum Framework for California Public Schools, Transitional Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve (Health Education Framework).

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (CORE)

The ELA curriculum is based on California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, along with the California English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking. At VLGA we believe in a Balanced Literacy approach. This approach is a curricular methodology that integrates various modalities of literacy instruction, aimed at guiding students towards proficient and lifelong reading. The balanced literacy approach is characterized by explicit skill instruction and the use of authentic texts. To this end, we create a learning environment in which our students see themselves as readers and writers, thinkers, listeners, and speakers. This research-based program emphasizes phonemic awareness and phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and writing.

The main components of a balanced literacy program and Readers and Writers Workshop approach are the following:

Reading Aloud: Reading aloud is the foundation of the literacy framework. This is an interactive experience in which readers are engaged in discussing a text throughout the reading. Read-Alouds develop high-level thinking and discourse and are an opportunity to deepen comprehension through discourse and active thinking. Teachers use cognitive resources, such as Depth of Knowledge (DOK) and Bloom's levels that motivate students to think critically about the text, increasing rigor and raising the caliber of conversation. By being immersed in a variety of well-chosen texts, students not only learn to love stories and reading but they also learn about written language.

Word Study: Word study refers to the deliberate investigation of words and includes: sight words, phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary development. Word study takes place in settings where the teacher directs children's categorization and understanding of how words work through routines, direct instruction, and word sorts. Teachers provide whole group, small group and center instruction throughout literacy instructional time. Teachers work toward automaticity and flexibility by referring frequently to meaningful texts. Students are often prompted to use new knowledge in reading and writing settings.

Mini-Lessons: Reading and writing mini lessons are approximately 10 minutes in length and provide daily direct and explicit instruction. The mini-lesson uses a clear and consistent structure that incorporates connections, teaching, active engagement, and a link to real-life application. The mini-lesson is always drawn from a unit of study or responding to a class need, and refers to a text for instructional clarity such as a read-aloud or shared reading.

Conferring: This is an opportunity for teachers to meet with students to discuss and document the specific needs and progress of the individual reader. The teacher may review a skill or strategy from a previous conference or may set a new goal with the student. Conferences with students are based on formal (pre-and post- assessments) and informal (observations and Reader's Response Journal) data. Questions during a conference are focused on data collected or used as a means to decide areas of growth and set goals for the student's reading level.

COMPONENTS OF BALANCED LITERACY MODEL

Read Aloud	Comprehension, vocabulary, fluency	I do (model)
Guided Reading	Comprehension, vocabulary	We do (guided)
Shared Reading	Fluency, comprehension	We do (shared)
Independent Reading	Comprehension	You do
Word Study	Decoding, fluency	(all)

Shared reading: Designed to include the whole class or a small group, this activity involves students reading a common text with teacher support. It provides many opportunities for incidental learning about the way written language works. The text is re-read over the course of several days with various teaching points in mind. Fluency is a key goal of this component and ultimately leads to higher levels of comprehension. This is supportive of readers as they begin to attend to the details of print while still focusing on meaning and enjoyment. In shared reading, emerging readers get a chance to behave like readers and learn to appreciate and enjoy the process.

Guided reading: Guided Reading places the child in a more formal instructional situation and is the foundation of the literacy curriculum. The teacher works with a small group of students who

have similar reading processes. The teacher selects and introduces new books and supports the children in reading the whole text to themselves. Teachers offer constructive guidance, giving the child the opportunity to problem-solve while reading for meaning.

Independent reading: Students have extended time to read a “Just Right” book of their choice and practice reading strategies taught in the mini-lesson. “Just Right” books are at the current reading level of the student or just slightly above. Classroom readers and books are clearly labeled with reading levels in accordance with the Fountas and Pinnell Reading Assessments and other normed leveled libraries, like Scholastic.

Across the middle school grades, the Readers Workshop model continuously builds on students’ capacity to read independently and make the critical shift from learning to read to reading to learn.

READERS WORKSHOP UNIT TITLES

Grade Level	Unit Summaries
6th Grade	A Deep Study of Character Tapping the Power of Nonfiction Social Issues Book Clubs
7th Grade	Investigating Characterization: Author Studies Essential Research Skills for Teens (coming in fall 2019) Historical Fiction Book Clubs
8th Grade	Dystopian Book Clubs Literary Nonfiction Contemporary Classics: Reading Award-Winning American Literature (coming in early 2020)

Similarly, in Writers Workshop, teachers in every grade guide students through this process so that students become independent writers who can write on demand for a variety of audiences and purposes, namely opinion/argument pieces, informative/ explanatory texts, and narratives. Students write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

WRITERS WORKSHOP UNIT TITLES

Grade Level	Unit Summaries

6th Grade	UNIT 1 Personal Narrative: Crafting Powerful Life Stories: This unit helps students draw on their lives, learning strategies to generate meaningful story ideas, manage pace, elaborate on important scenes, and deepen insights. This unit especially emphasizes the importance of setting goals, practicing strategically, and aiming for high productivity. UNIT 2 The Literary Essay: From Character to Compare/Contrast: In this unit, sixth graders learn ways essayists generate ideas based on close readings of a text, learning strategies essayists use to gather, analyze, and explain evidence from the text to support their claims. UNIT 3 Research-Based Information Writing: Books, Websites, and Presentations: This unit calls students to explore the broad topic of teen activism in order to teach their readers about a topic, asking them to use increasingly sophisticated ways to draw on and structure information to explain a position or make a call to action.
7th Grade	UNIT 1 Writing Realistic Fiction: Symbolism, Syntax, and Truth: In this unit, students compose engaging short fiction. They lift the sophistication of their writing through attention to individual scenes, symbols, and writing techniques they've discovered from close readings of powerful short fiction. UNIT 2 Writing About Reading: From Reader's Notebooks to Companion Books: This unit teaches students to analyze the craft and structure of the authors they admire and to write for real audiences about why that craft matters. UNIT 3 The Art of Argument: Research-Based Essays: This unit instructs students in writing essays that build convincing, nuanced arguments, balancing evidence and analysis to persuade readers to shift their beliefs or take action.
8th Grade	UNIT 1 Investigative Journalism: In this unit, students learn to use sharp observations of life to write news and investigative articles about meaningful topics, crafting vivid narratives and elaborating multiple perspectives. They'll write to shine a light on issues in their community and to actively stir their readers to take action. UNIT 2 The Literary Essay: Analyzing Craft and Theme: This unit returns students to literary essays, writing arguments and counterarguments about themes in texts, supporting their positions with details of plot, character, and author's craft. UNIT 3 Position Papers: Research and Argument: This unit encourages students to compose principled arguments by drawing on evidence, contextualizing their positions, and addressing multiple perspectives.

Shared and interactive writing: Interactive or shared writing provides an authentic setting in which the teacher can explicitly demonstrate how written language works. First, the teacher and students work together to discover a reason for writing. Once purpose is established, the teacher helps students gain control over the conventions of print that writers need to communicate their messages in written language.

Writers Workshop: Guided writing, or Writers Workshop, is another way for teachers to help children learn to write; children construct their individual pieces of writing with teacher and peer guidance, assistance, and feedback. The teacher may have individual conferences with children or lead a mini lesson on an aspect of writing from topic selection to composition to punctuation to letter formation.

Finally, VLGA addresses important speaking and listening standards to help students develop vocabulary and critical communication skills. Teachers provide students with multiple opportunities to explore oral communication in the classroom through class and small group discussions. Structured speaking and listening activities 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. Students are taught active, effective listening habits, including 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. Across grades 6-8, through speaking and listening instruction, students participate effectively with their peers both in learning and evaluating information they receive and in expressing themselves in myriad ways.

ENGLISH 6

English 6 is designed to develop a students' ability to comprehend, appreciate, and respond to different types of texts in written form for a variety of audiences and social contexts along with acquiring academic language literacy. Oral and literary strategies integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing at increasing levels of accuracy and fluency. This course emphasizes reading comprehension, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary, and analytical skills necessary for college success.

English 6 focuses on the processes, skills, and strategies for effective communication in all its forms. This course is designed to increase students' abilities as skilled readers of literary text and poetry in a variety of genres. Students critically read literature selections and write analytically about what they have read. Students write narrative, expository, and argumentative papers. At all stages of the writing process students work in teams to research, plan, draft, edit, review and revise their documents. Students produce a variety of compositions using technology to revise, edit, and publish their work. The course emphasizes on non-fiction reading and writing and is a good companion with our Ancient Civilization course. A series of exercises and application activities follow each unit in explanatory material to reinforce the concepts presented in each unit.

ENGLISH 7

In English 7, students work on more refined standards such as tracing the development of an author's argument, use the formal research process; deliver persuasive presentations that employ evidence, and analyze characterization. The emphasized strands are as follows: Word Analysis,

Vocabulary Development, Reading Comprehension; Literary Response, Writing Strategies, Writing Applications, Written and Oral Conventions, Listening and Speaking Strategies and Speaking Applications.

English 7 is designed to help students excel and improve in reading, writing, researching, grammar, academic language, and verbal skills. Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose. Students write clear, coherent, and focused essays. They write narrative, expository, argumentative, and descriptive texts. Students read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance their studies of history and social science.

ENGLISH 8

In English 8, students continue work in strands and sub-strands emphasized in English 7, in preparation for the high school years. The course provides students curriculum activities that culminate their learning from grades 4 – 8. In particular, there is additional work in the areas of informational materials for reading comprehension; transitions, parallelism and points of view for writing strategies; and sentence structure for written and oral language conventions.

This class is designed to help students excel and improve in reading, writing, researching, grammar, academic language, and verbal skills. The teacher provides differentiated instruction in which students become readers and writers, who are able to comprehend, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate a variety of text. Students engage in small group activities such as Literature Circles and Project Based Learning groups to become insightful, collaborative, and respectful learners. These activities help students develop the 21st century skills necessary to succeed in high school and higher education. Also, students develop verbal skills through Socratic Seminars, Literature Circles, and Poetry Slams. Students are required to bring class materials every day and follow classroom and school rules.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT (CORE SUBJECT)

As detailed more fully in the section on English Learners, below, the ELD program implements both the California ELD Standards and the new English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework for California Public Schools (ELA/ELD Framework). The school's ELD goals are directly aligned with the goals detailed in the ELD Standards and Framework to "ensure that ELs are fully supported as they:

Read, analyze, interpret, and create a variety of literary and informational text types;

Develop an understanding of how language is a complex, dynamic, and social resource for making meaning;

Develop an understanding of how content is organized in different text types across disciplines using text organization and structure, language features, and vocabulary depending on purpose and audience;

Become aware that different languages and varieties of English exist;

Recognize their home languages and cultures as resources to value in their own right and to draw upon in order to build proficiency in English;

Contribute actively to class and group discussions by asking questions, responding appropriately, and providing useful feedback;
Demonstrate knowledge of content through oral presentations, writing, collaborative conversations, and multimedia; and
Develop proficiency in shifting registers based on task, purpose, audience, and text type”
(ELA/ELD Framework p. 9-10).

EL students, like their English-fluent counterparts, are expected to gain progress in each of the ELA strands -- Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. As detailed more fully below, through both integrated and designated ELD instruction, including use of the Lexia curricular program, EL students are supported in developing EL proficiency and reclassification as they master content standards. The Principal or designee monitors EL progress through formal and informal assessments including grades, standardized test scores, and ongoing communications with classroom teachers and the student’s parents/guardians. (See below, for more details about support/ELD instruction, assessment, reclassification and monitoring of ELs.)

Students will participate in ELD Advisory/Global Hours for their designated ELD instruction using programs such as the iLit 20 curriculum. The iLit 20 accelerates student learning and provides foundational skills support. This program provides word study, fluency and adaptive phonics instruction for students who need to develop grade-level proficiency. Students select readers from their independent reading library which includes nonfiction text and text support such as translation, a visual glossary and note-taking tools. The adaptive nonfiction readers build students' abilities to understand and respond to increasingly complex texts. Individualized plans provide instruction in spelling, grammar, vocabulary and word study.

Upon completion of the norm-referenced diagnostic GRADE, included in the iLit 20 curriculum, students are placed into appropriate levels of nonfiction interactive readers. The GRADE provides a snapshot of student growth each at the beginning, middle and end of each school year.

PROCESS AND SPECIFIC CRITERIA FOR RECLASSIFICATION

Once a student is identified as an English Language Learner (ELL), the student will continue to take the ELPAC, on an annual basis until the student is Reclassified as Fluent English Proficient (RFEP). The test will be administered within the time constraints that are mandated by the CDE. ELLs are reclassified to fluent English proficient based on the following multiple criteria identified in the California Education Code and recommended by the State Board of Education (SBE).

Our EL Master Plan outlines the criteria for reclassification. The administrator/designee at each school site is responsible for ensuring that ELLs who meet the eligibility criteria are reclassified in a timely manner. This process begins when the official results of the ELPAC are released, as well as at the end of each reporting period. Students who have met the reclassification criteria are identified and parents are informed of their proficiency in writing.

PROCESS FOR MONITORING PROGRESS OF ELS AND RECLASSIFIED (RFEP) STUDENTS

All RFEP students are monitored at the end of each reporting period. If a student is not making satisfactory progress after reclassification, the administrator/designee will meet with the classroom teacher(s) to develop an intervention instructional plan with specialized support. Appropriate intervention measures may include, but are not limited to, any of the following:

- Specialized reading, writing, and/or math instruction
- After school and/or before school academic support
- Intervention classes
- Summer school

English Language Learners with disabilities will follow the same methods for identification and reclassification while adhering to appropriate testing accommodations listed in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

MATHEMATICS (CORE)

As a STEAM-focused school, mathematics and quantitative reasoning skills are central to the curriculum at VLGA. At all grade levels, students participate in engaging, hands-on math activities that require critical thinking, problem-solving, and conceptual understanding. VLGA holds high expectations for all students in math development and provides ample support for students to reach these expectations. California's Common Core Content and Practice Standards and the Mathematics Framework for California Public Schools, A Look At Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve in California Public Schools, provides a foundation for work in math.

A cohesive math curriculum promotes math fluency and accuracy as well as conceptual understanding of important mathematical ideas and mathematical reasoning. Hands-on activities and materials in the classroom, as well ties to Project-Based Learning (PBL), helps students to recognize the connections between math concepts and the world around them. To facilitate this, VLGA uses Ready Math, as well as their online platform and resources, iReady, to further enhance numeracy and mathematical reasoning.

Ready Math connects math to the real world while helping students achieve true understanding lesson by lesson and year after year. The team of teachers and mathematicians who wrote Ready Math took great care to present mathematics in a logical progression from PK through Grade 8. They believe that mathematical knowledge is conveyed most effectively when it is taught in a sequence that follows the "story" of mathematics itself. The sequencing has been joined with methods of instruction that have been proven to work. This coherent approach is designed to ensure teachers know what incoming students already have learned and that students are prepared for what comes next, helping to dramatically reduce gaps in student learning, instill persistence in problem solving, and prepare students to understand advanced math. These methods drive student understanding beyond process, to deep mastery of mathematical concepts. The goal of Ready Math is to produce students who are not merely literate, but fluent, in mathematics.

Components to a Math Lesson
Guiding question/puzzlement (Sprints)

Review of skills from the previous lesson
 Concept development (vocabulary & language acquisition)
 Creation/demonstration of concept
 Manipulation of concept (hands on)
 Introducing concept using numbers
 Focus on dual concept approach, which allows students to immediately demonstrate their learning by problem set with pictures and words
 Student debriefing/discussion of their learning experience
 Quiz/Assessments daily (Exit Tickets)

Ready Math has several key mathematical tools that are used throughout a student's middle school years. Sprints are high-energy classroom activities in which students complete as many math facts as they are able in a set amount of time. Care is taken during a sprint to make sure that all students are working as hard as they can to recall facts, notice patterns within the sprint page, and do their personal best. To this end, sprints are designed to come in pairs, so that students can try the first sprint (Sprint A), assess their correct and incorrect answers, and then try to improve their score on Sprint B, given immediately after assessing Sprint A. Sprints are one of the primary ways in Ready Math in which students gain fluency and competency with math facts, a key building block skill for computation and comprehension throughout middle school.

The Concept Development is the primary lesson component and comprises approximately 20 minutes of Math lesson time. New learning is introduced during the Concept Development and generally moves from the concrete (using hands on materials) to the pictorial (using diagrams, pictures, etc.) to the abstract (equations). Following this Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract structure allows students supports in learning increasingly complex mathematics. The Concept Development portion of the lesson concludes with the completion of the Problem Set.

During the debrief, teacher and student review vocabulary terms and make connections using the problem set. The teacher's manual provides higher order thinking and rigorous questions for this ending piece of the lesson.

	6th	7th	8th
Number and Operations	Add and subtract fractions and decimals Factors and multiples Compare numbers Multiply and divide whole numbers, fractions and decimals	Add and subtract fractions and decimals Represent and solve problems involving the four operations Multiply and divide with fractions and decimals	

Algebra and Algebraic Thinking	Ratios Write and solve equations and inequalities Rates and unit rates Write and evaluate numerical expressions, including equivalent expressions Ordered pairs, coordinate graphs, and the coordinate plane Functions	Ratios Write and solve equations and inequalities Scaling, scale drawings, and scale factors Proportional relationships Write and evaluate numerical expressions, including equivalent expressions	Proportional relationships Ordered pairs, coordinate graphs, and the coordinate plane Functions Linear Functions Linear equations and models Systems of equations Exponents and scientific notation Pythagorean Theorem
Measurement and Data	Represent, interpret, and display data Understand statistical questions and samples Understand, measure, and solve problems with area, surface area and volume	Represent, interpret, and display data Understand statistical questions and samples Understand, measure, and solve problems with area, surface area, perimeter and volume Probability	Represent, interpret, and display data Understand, measure, and solve problems with volume
Geometry		Angles, angle measures, and angle relationships Draw lines, angles or triangles	Angles, angle measures, and angle relationships Transformations and Similarity

At the conclusion of the debrief, students complete an exit ticket which allows the teacher to have a quick check into student understanding of the day's lesson.

Teachers provide direct instruction in new skills and present hands-on activities, while also allowing time in and out of class to practice grade level computational skills. Teachers differentiate instruction throughout the week using online intervention programs, such as Khan Academy, focusing on the needs of struggling students and those requiring more advanced work beyond the grade level curriculum. Each math period begins with a warm-up activity requiring the application of skills learned previously to solve a problem.

Because not all students have mastered the prerequisite mathematical skills for success in the math curriculum, new VLGA students are assessed at the beginning of each year and receive interventions that address areas of deficit. Students not meeting standards participate in additional math intervention.

MATH 6

In Math 6, students become mathematicians as they develop their problem solving and critical thinking skills. Throughout the course of the year, students learn the content needed to develop a foundation for more challenging middle school math courses. Math 6 is divided into the following four critical areas:

- Connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division, and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems

- Completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers

- Writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations

- Developing understanding of statistical thinking.

MATH 7

Math 7 continues building upon concepts presented in Math 6. Instruction focuses on four critical areas:

- Developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships

- Developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations

- Solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume

- Drawing inferences about populations based on samples.

MATH 8

Math 8 continues building upon concepts presented in Math 7, including three critical areas:

- Formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations

- Grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships

- Analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem

INTEGRATED MATH I

This year-long course is for 8th grade students who exceeded expectations in their 7th grade Math class. Integrated Math I will accelerate students through an entire year of high school-level math, which allows them to take Integrated Math II in 9th grade. Topics covered include:

Foundations for Algebra – variables and expressions, operations with real numbers, functions

Equations – solving equations, proportion and percent

Inequalities – solving simple and compound inequalities

Functions – function concepts, applying functions

Linear functions – characteristics of linear functions, using a variety of forms of linear functions

Systems of Equations and Inequalities – solving systems by graphing, substitution, and elimination

Exponents and Polynomials

Factoring Polynomials

Quadratic Functions and Equations

Data Analysis and Probability

Exponential and Radical Functions

Rational Functions and Equations

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING (CORE)

The science program at VLGA emphasizes inquiry, curiosity, collaboration, scientific literacy, and especially, relevance and application to real-world problems. VLGA uses the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which emphasize and align to our goals through inquiry-oriented investigations, real-life application, and interdisciplinary thinking about scientific concepts (www.nextgenscience.org). VLGA uses the 6-8 Project Lead the Way curriculum and Amplify programs, which are aligned with NGSS standards and VLGA's guiding principles and goals. Students have many opportunities to explore their own science and engineering ideas in labs, on field trips, and in an on-campus maker-space.

The implementation of our standards-based Science curriculum is driven by the constructivist belief that students learn best in an inquiry-based, hands-on, investigative environment that builds upon the knowledge of previous learning. Our students work in cooperative groups to advance through the stages of the scientific process. It is through these cooperative groups that our students learn how to work together to solve a problem.

The VLGA project-based/constructivist-driven science instructional program encourages students to learn content at higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, as students have opportunities to apply their knowledge as well as analyze, synthesize, evaluate and create information. While NGSS set the learning foundation, the actual project is the framework through which all of the teaching and experiential learning take place. Students learn concepts via active engagement in the project. Projects may be problem-, inquiry-, experiment-, or design- focused ultimately making the learning more authentic and student-centered. Projects also focus on "real-life", current, possibly community- based problems (i.e. understanding, responding to, and designing a

solution for the water drought). Students are responsible for presenting their project outcomes in front of their peers and sometimes the larger school community.

Students follow the eight practices of science and engineering that the NGSS Framework identifies as essential for all students:

- Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
- Developing and using models
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Using mathematics and computational thinking
- Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
- Engaging in argument from evidence
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Two primary curricular resources support our students' science learning: Project Lead the Way's Gateway program and Amplify Science.

PLTW Gateway PLTW Gateway is aligned to Next Generation Science Standards, Common Core State Standards for Math and English Language Arts, and other national and state standards for grades 6-8. The program's 10-hour modules are flexible and customizable: They can be implemented independently or in tandem with one another, at the grade level, at any time. Both formative and summative assessments are embedded in the program. Assessments for learning and of learning play a critical role by providing meaningful feedback to students, teachers, and administrators.

PLTW Gateway units include:

DESIGN AND MODELING

Students discover the design process and develop an understanding of the influence of creativity and innovation in their lives. They are then challenged and empowered to use and apply what they've learned throughout the unit to design a therapeutic toy for a child who has cerebral palsy.

AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS

Students learn about the history and impact of automation and robotics as they explore mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Using the VEX Robotics® platform, students apply what they know to design and program traffic lights, robotic arms, and more.

APP CREATORS

This unit will expose students to computer science as a means of computationally analyzing and developing solutions to authentic problems through mobile app development, and will convey the positive impact of the application of computer science to other disciplines and to society.

COMPUTER SCIENCE FOR INNOVATORS AND MAKERS

Throughout the unit, students will learn about programming for the physical world by blending hardware design and software development, allowing students to discover computer science concepts and skills by creating personally relevant, tangible, and shareable projects.

ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Students are challenged to think big and toward the future as they explore sustainable solutions to our energy needs and investigate the impact of energy on our lives and the world. They use what they've learned to design and model alternative energy sources, as well as evaluate options for reducing energy consumption.

FLIGHT AND SPACE

The exciting world of aerospace comes alive through Flight and Space. Students explore the science behind aeronautics and use their knowledge to design, build, and test an airfoil.

SCIENCE OF TECHNOLOGY

Science impacts the technology of yesterday, today, and the future. In this unit, students apply the concepts of physics, chemistry, and nanotechnology to activities and projects, including making ice cream, cleaning up an oil spill, and discovering the properties of nano-materials.

MAGIC OF ELECTRONS

In this unit, students examine the behavior and parts of atoms as well as the impact of electricity on the world around them. They learn skills in basic circuitry design and use what they know to propose designs such as a burglar alarm for an art museum.

GREEN ARCHITECTURE

In this unit, students learn how to apply green concepts to the fields of architecture and construction. They explore dimensioning, measuring, and architectural sustainability and apply what they have learned to design affordable housing units using Autodesk's® 3D architectural design software.

MEDICAL DETECTIVES

Students play the role of real-life medical detectives as they collect and analyze medical data to diagnose disease. They solve medical mysteries through hands-on projects and labs, measure and interpret vital signs, examine nervous system structure and function, investigate disease outbreaks, and explore how a breakdown within the human body can lead to dysfunction. (<https://www.pltw.org/our-programs/pltw-gateway>)

PLTW Gateway provides comprehensive professional development for teachers as part of the program, including ongoing training opportunities throughout the school year, robust instructional support, on-demand resources, and a community of collaborative educators to connect and interact with through an online platform. PLTW Lead Teacher(s) engage in a hands-on, comprehensive two-and-a-half day training that introduces them to the pedagogy that is the cornerstone of PLTW programs. The Lead Teacher(s) then train other teachers.

VLGA will also implement the Amplify science curriculum, developed by the UC Berkeley Lawrence Hall of Science. Amplify Science blends digital experiences with hands-on lessons

that inspire students to think like scientists and engineers to solve real-world problems. Each full-year course was designed to address 100 percent of the NGSS, and comprises Life Science, Earth and Space Science, Physical Science and Engineering Design. Each unit of Amplify Science California engages students in a relevant, real-world problem where they investigate scientific phenomena, engage in collaboration and discussion, and develop models or explanations in order to arrive at solutions. Amplify Science California is rooted in the Lawrence Hall of Science's Do, Talk, Read, Write, Visualize model of learning. This research-based approach presents students with multiple modalities through which to explore the curriculum. Amplify Science California includes hands-on activities, print materials, and powerful digital tools to support online and offline teaching and learning. Highly adaptable and user-friendly, the program gives schools and individual teachers flexibility based on their technology resources and preferences.

Amplify Science is organized around units where students are introduced to compelling phenomena and real-world problems, develop and strengthen claims by collecting evidence and testing assumptions, and apply their learning in new contexts.

INTEGRATED SCIENCE 6

Students engage in scientific investigation through the following units:

Microbiome: There is evidence to suggest that the approximately 100 trillion bacteria living on and in the human body may correlate to many different health conditions. Further, altering one's microbiome can result in altering one's health for better or worse. Most notably, a treatment known as a fecal transplant—a transplant that involves using microorganisms from one person's healthy gut microbiome to cure another person who is suffering from a potentially deadly infection—has been under review. Students take on the role of student researchers to figure out why a fecal transplant cured a patient suffering from a *C. difficile* infection.

Metabolism: Through inhabiting the role of medical students in a hospital, students are able to draw connections between the large-scale, macro-level experiences of the body and the micro-level processes that make the body function as they first diagnose a patient and then analyze the metabolism of world-class athletes. They uncover how body systems work together to bring molecules from food and air to the trillions of cells in the human body.

Metabolism: Engineering Internship: Students act as food engineering interns to design a health bar to feed people involved in natural disasters, with a particular emphasis on two populations who have health needs beyond what can be provided by emergency meals: patients and rescue workers. These plans must meet three design criteria: 1) addressing the metabolic needs of a target population; 2) tasting as good as possible; and 3) minimizing costs while serving as many people as possible. Students focus on the practice of considering trade-offs while designing solutions to deepen their understanding of metabolism. They also consider questions of scale, proportion, and quantity as different proportions of types of molecules affect a body's health and metabolism.

Traits and Reproduction: Scientists and engineers are investigating possible ways spider silk can be used for medical purposes, such as for artificial tendons. Students act as student geneticists to investigate what causes variation in spider silk traits. Specifically, they explain why parent spiders have offspring with widely varied silk flexibility traits. They uncover the roles of proteins and genes and the way that genes are inherited.

Thermal Energy: In their role as student thermal scientists, students work with the principal of the fictional Riverdale School to help the school choose a new heating system. They compare a system that heats a small amount of water with one that uses a larger amount of cooler groundwater. Students discover that observed temperature changes can be explained by the movement of molecules, which facilitates the transfer of kinetic energy from one place to another. As they analyze the two heating system options, students learn to distinguish between temperature and energy, and to explain how energy transfers from a warmer object to a colder object until the temperature of the two objects reaches equilibrium.

Ocean, Atmosphere, and Climate: Students act as student climatologists helping a group of farmers near Christchurch figure out the cause of significantly colder air temperatures during the El Niño climate event. To solve the puzzle, students investigate what causes regional climates. They learn about energy from the sun and energy transfer between Earth's surface and atmosphere, ocean currents, and prevailing winds.

Weather Patterns: Weather is a complex system that affects our daily lives. Understanding how weather events, such as severe rainstorms, take place is important for students to conceptualize weather events in their own community. Students play the role of student forensic meteorologists as they discover how water vapor, temperature, energy transfer, and wind influence local weather patterns in a fictional town called Galetown. They use what they have learned to explain what may have caused rainstorms in Galetown to be unusually severe in recent years.

Earth's Changing Climate: In the role of student climatologists, students investigate what is causing ice on Earth's surface to melt in order to help the fictional World Climate Institute educate the public about the processes involved. Students consider claims about changes to energy from the sun, to the atmosphere, to Earth's surface, or in human activities as contributing to climate change.

Earth's Changing Climate: Engineering Internship: Students act as civil engineering interns to design a plan to modify a city's roofs in order to reduce the city's impact on climate change. These plans must meet three design criteria: 1) reducing impact on the climate; 2) preserving the city's historic character; and 3) minimizing costs. Students focus on the practice of isolating variables in planning and conducting tests to deepen their understanding of climate change. They also learn about the cause-and-effect mechanisms involved as changes to albedo and combustion of fossil fuels affect climate.

(<https://www.amplify.com/programs/amplify-science/whats-included/>)

INTEGRATED SCIENCE 7

Students in grade 7 engage in the following units:

Geology on Mars: Evidence that water was once present on a planet is evidence that the planet may once have had living organisms. In their role as student planetary geologists working to investigate the planet Mars, students investigate whether a particular channel on Mars was caused by flowing water or flowing lava. Along the way, students engage in the practices and ways of thinking particular to planetary geologists, and learn to consider a planet as a system of interacting subsystems.

Plate Motion: Students play the role of geologists working for the fictional Museum of West Namibia to investigate Mesosaurus fossils found both in southern Africa and in South America. They learn that the surface of the Earth has changed dramatically over the Earth's history, with continents and ocean basins changing shape and arrangement due to the motion of tectonic plates. They also learn that as the Earth's surface changes, fossils that formed together may be split apart.

Plate Motion: Engineering Internship: Students act as mechanical engineering interns to design a tsunami warning system for the Indian Ocean region. These warning systems must meet three design criteria: 1) giving people as much warning time as possible to move to safety; 2) causing as few false alarms as possible; and 3) minimizing costs as much as possible. Students communicate like engineers and scientists do as they use their understanding of plate motion and patterns in data to create and justify their designs.

Rock Transformations: Taking on the role of student geologists, students investigate a geologic puzzle: Two rock samples, one from the Great Plains and one from the Rocky Mountains, look very different but are composed of a surprisingly similar mix of minerals. Did the rocks form together and somehow get split apart? Or did one rock form first, and then the other rock form from the materials of the first rock? To solve the mystery, students learn about how rock forms and transforms, driven by different energy sources.

Phase Change: Taking on the role of student chemists working for the fictional Universal Space Agency, students investigate the mystery of a disappearing methane lake on Titan. One team of scientists at the Universal Space Agency claims that the lake evaporated, while the other team of scientists claims that the lake froze. The students' assignment is to determine what happened to the lake. They discover what causes phase changes, including the role of energy transfer and attraction between molecules.

Phase Change: Engineering Internship: Students act as chemical engineering interns to design an incubator for low-birthweight babies. Phase change materials (PCMs) are substances that store and release large amounts of energy during the phase changes of melting and freezing. Since they can easily be reused, PCMs are useful for everyday situations that require temperature control. Students select a combination of PCMs and an insulating lining material, applying concepts about phase change and energy transfer.

Chemical Reactions: In the role of student chemists, students explore how new substances are formed as they investigate a problem with the water supply in the fictional town of Westfield.

They analyze a brown substance that is in the water, the iron that the town's pipes are made of, and a substance from fertilizer found to have contaminated the wells that are the source of the town's water. Students use their findings to explain the source of the contaminating substance.

Populations and Resources: Glacier Sea has seen an alarming increase in the moon jelly population. In the role of student ecologists, students investigate reproduction, predation, food webs, and indirect effects to discover the cause. Jellyfish population blooms have become common in recent years and offer an intriguing context to learn about populations and resources.

Matter and Energy in Ecosystems: Students examine the case of a failed biodome, an enclosed ecosystem that was meant to be self-sustaining but ran into problems. In the role of ecologists, students discover how all the organisms in an ecosystem get the resources they need to release energy. Carbon cycles through an ecosystem due to organisms' production and use of energy storage molecules. Students build an understanding of this cycling—including the role of photosynthesis—as they solve the mystery of the biodome collapse.

(<https://www.amplify.com/programs/amplify-science/whats-included/>)

INTEGRATED SCIENCE 8

Students in grade 8 engage in the following units:

Harnessing Human Energy: Energy-harvesting backpacks, rocking chairs, and knee braces are just a few of the devices that have been created to capture human energy and use it to power electrical devices. Students assume the role of student energy scientists in order to help a team of rescue workers find a way to get energy to the batteries in their equipment during rescue missions. To do so, students learn about potential and kinetic energy, energy conversions, and energy transformations.

Force and Motion: In the role of student physicists, students help solve a physics mystery from outer space. A pod returning with asteroid samples should have stopped and docked at the space station. Instead, it is now moving back away from the station, and the video feed showing what happened in the seconds during which it reversed direction has been lost. Did the pod reverse before it got to the space station, or did it hit the station and bounced off? Students explore principles of force, motion, mass, and collisions as they solve this mystery.

Force and Motion: Engineering Internship: Students act as mechanical engineering interns to design delivery pods—pods of emergency supplies that are dropped in areas experiencing a natural disaster. These delivery pods must meet three design criteria: 1) limiting the amount of damage to the cargo during the drop; 2) reusing the pod's shell as much as possible (for example, as emergency shelter); and 3) minimizing the cost of the pod as much as possible. Students focus on the practice of analyzing data to deepen their understanding of force and motion. They also learn about how structure and function are interrelated to determine the integrity and, therefore, success of their pods.

Magnetic Fields: As student physicists consulting for the fictional Universal Space Agency, students work to understand the function of a magnetic spacecraft launcher (a simplified version of real technology currently under development). In particular, they seek to explain why a particular test launched the spacecraft much faster than expected. To do this, they investigate how magnets move some objects at a distance, the source of the energy for that movement, and what causes differences in the energy and forces involved.

Light Waves: Australia has one of the highest skin cancer rates in the world: More than half of the people who live there will be diagnosed with skin cancer in their lifetime. In their role as student spectroscopists, students gain a deeper understanding of how light interacts with materials, and how these interactions affect our world—from the colors we see, to changes caused by light from the sun such as warmth, growth, and damage. Students use what they learn about light to explain the causes of Australia's skin cancer problem.

Earth, Moon, and Sun: Students take on the role of student astronomers, advising an astrophotographer who needs to take photographs of the moon. In order to provide this advice, students investigate where the moon's light comes from, what causes the characteristic changes in the appearance of the Moon that we observe, and what conditions are required to view phenomena such as particular moon phases and lunar eclipses.

Natural Selection: According to local legend around Oregon State Park, three unfortunate campers were found dead at their campsite and investigators found only one clue—a rough-skinned newt inside the coffeepot that the campers used to make their morning coffee. Student biologists investigate what caused the rough-skinned newts of Oregon State Park to become so poisonous by uncovering mechanisms of natural selection—investigating variation in populations, survival and reproduction, and mutation.

Natural Selection: Engineering Internship: Students act as biomedical engineering interns to design a malaria treatment plan. These treatment plans must reduce the population of malaria plasmodia while meeting three design criteria: 1) limiting the amount of the drug-resistance trait that develops in the population; 2) minimizing the side effects caused by the treatment; and 3) minimizing the treatment costs while treating as many patients as possible. Students focus on the practice of analyzing data to deepen their understanding of natural selection. They also learn about the cause-and-effect mechanisms involved when rates of death and reproduction can lead to increased drug resistance in the plasmodia population.

Evolutionary History: Students act as student paleontologists to discover the evolutionary history of a mystery fossil. Is this species more closely related to wolves or whales, and how did all three species change over time? Students learn how to interpret similarities and differences among fossils, investigate how natural selection can lead to one population becoming two different species, and investigate evolution over vast periods of time.

(<https://www.amplify.com/programs/amplify-science/whats-included/>)

Literature also is infused into the science curriculum to reinforce content literacy skills and boost comprehension in all grade levels. Students engage and read about science through both fiction

and non-fiction texts. Content-rich and high interest trade books are used to support the development of science concepts and associated academic language across all grade levels. Technology also is incorporated into science activities where appropriate. Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote) and/or Google Apps facilitates 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.

SOCIAL STUDIES (CORE)

The Social Studies curriculum is globally focused and build students' understanding of themselves and the world around them. Using investigation, thematic units, and essential questions, the Social Studies curriculum naturally builds upon students' prior knowledge and experience, honor and celebrate their diverse backgrounds and cultures, and deepen their self-awareness and sense of place in an ever-increasingly global society.

The California Common Core State Standards and the recently adopted California State Framework for Social Studies and History (2016) provides a foundation for students' learning, and is supplemented by teacher-created lessons to ensure that history and social sciences reflect students' cultures and identities. The curriculum includes four main social science disciplines, including: (1) History, (2) Geography, (3) Civics, and (4) Economics. Students learn to distinguish fact from opinion, connect cause and effect, and examine history through a variety of lenses and perspectives.

Social studies is presented in four interconnected formats:

Within the reading program through informational texts
Through personal and informational writing and research in the writing program
Via integrated, thematic units of instruction
Through interdisciplinary project-based learning

VLGA's history and social sciences curriculum is rooted in the curriculum standards specified in the History-Social Sciences Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve, CCSS for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy), and 2014 ELA/ELD Framework; we will adopt new history/social studies standards as they are released. Our curriculum shares the same three goals as the Framework: Knowledge and Cultural Understanding, Democratic Understanding and Civic Values, and Skills Attainment and Social Participation. Students gain an understanding of human history as well as how our society and the world work. The curriculum not only supports student acquisition of core knowledge of the world's eras and civilizations, but also develops the critical thinking skills that historians and social scientists employ to distinguish the important from the unimportant, to recognize vital connections between the present and the past, and to appreciate universal historical themes and dilemmas.

VLGA uses the Asia Society Social Studies Framework, which is well suited to our globally-oriented, project-based learning emphasis. Learning activities engage students in an inclusive

classroom setting in reading rich literature and original source documents; students also experience daily opportunities to develop listening, speaking, research, and writing skills.

The Asia Society Social Studies Framework provides standards-based, spiraled curricular resources in which students work in cooperative groups to learn progressively more difficult concepts through a process of step-by-step discovery with age-appropriate themes for each grade level:

6th Grade	The Image of Issues If the World Were 100 People A Web of Global Issues We Know and We Want to Know Sources of Information Summarize and Reflect Observe, Analyze, Interpret Image Combination with Multiple Interpretations Collaborative Poster Project Presentations The Language of Observation, Analysis, and Interpretation
7th Grade	Focus on Geography: Critical Issues Around the World Cultural Mapping in the Classroom Five Themes of Geography Identifying Credible Sources Physical Characteristics of Place Human Characteristics of Place Human-Environment Interaction (Positive Effects) Human-Environment Interaction (Negative Effects) Collaborative Project Project Presentations
8th Grade	Focus on People: Targeted Populations and Activist Communities Victims, Perpetrators, Bystanders and Allies Character Profile of Targeted Individual or Family The Issue in Everyday Life Allies as Activists Ideal Scenarios Interview Skills Collaborative Project Project Presentations Dramatizations and Interviews

This series is well-aligned to our emphasis on engaging, curiosity-inspiring curriculum with real world relevance for students. VLGA extends reading and writing instruction in social studies by examining primary sources, reading historic literature, conducting research, writing and presenting findings. In all Social Science coursework, there is an emphasis on developing intellectual reasoning, reflection and research skills.

SOCIAL STUDIES 6

Students in grade six expand their understanding of history by studying the people and events that ushered in the dawn of the major Western and non-Western ancient civilizations. Geography is of special significance in the development of the human story. Continued emphasis is placed on the everyday lives, problems, and accomplishments of people, their role in developing social, economic, and political structures, as well as in establishing and spreading ideas that helped transform the world forever. Students develop higher levels of critical thinking by considering why civilizations developed where and when they did, why they became dominant, and why they declined. Students analyze the interactions among the various cultures, emphasizing their enduring contributions and the link, despite time, between the contemporary and ancient worlds.

SOCIAL STUDIES 7

Students in grade seven study the social, cultural, and technological changes that occurred in Europe, Africa, and Asia in the years A.D. 500–1789. After reviewing the ancient world and the ways in which archaeologists and historians uncover the past, students study the history and geography of great civilizations that were developing concurrently throughout the world during medieval and early modern times.

Students examine the growing economic interaction among civilizations as well as the exchange of ideas, beliefs, technologies, and commodities. They learn about the resulting growth of Enlightenment philosophy and the new examination of the concepts of reason and authority, the natural rights of human beings and the divine right of kings, experimentalism in science, and the dogma of belief. Finally, students assess the political forces let loose by the Enlightenment, particularly the rise of democratic ideas, and they learn about the continuing influence of these ideas in the world today.

SOCIAL STUDIES 8

Students in grade eight United States History study the ideas, issues, and events from the framing of the Constitution up to World War I, with an emphasis on America's role in the war. After reviewing the development of America's democratic institutions founded on the Judeo-Christian heritage and English parliamentary traditions, particularly the shaping of the Constitution, students trace the development of American politics, society, culture, and economy and relate them to the emergence of major regional differences. Students learn about the challenges facing the new nation, with an emphasis on the causes, course, and consequences of the Civil War. They make connections between the rise of industrialization and contemporary social and economic conditions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (NON-CORE)

Physical Education (PE) is critical for student learning and for maintaining personal well-being. The physical education program at VLGA is an integral part of our mission to address the needs of the whole child and to develop life-long habits of fitness and wellness. Students are exposed to a variety of physical movement activities that suit diverse learning styles and skills, based on

the Physical Education Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve.

Physical Education in grades 6-8 is performed through non-traditional physical activities, teambuilding activities, and journaling of progress following the California Standards for Physical Education. Students learn the skills and mechanics necessary to participate in physical activity for the rest of their lives, while independently tracking their progress, and developing positive lifelong healthy habits. There are 5 critical areas Physical Education addresses:

- Demonstrate motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of activities
- Demonstrate knowledge of movement concepts, principles, and strategies as they apply to learning and performance of physical activities

- Assess and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance

- Demonstrate knowledge of physical fitness concepts, principles, and strategies to improve health and performance.

- Demonstrate and utilize knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts, principles, and strategies as applied to learning and performance of physical activity.

Students in 6th, 7th and 8th grade also learn and understand concepts of health, nutrition and the importance of staying healthy through a variety of academic course settings.

With the addition of experiential education philosophies and activities, along with language development that supports Emotional Intelligence and Literacy, VLGA integrates social/emotional training with physical activity. PE activities contribute to an integrated social-emotional program as students practice and demonstrate greater capacity with communication skills, cooperation, empathy, purposeful inclusion, fairness, teamwork, increased confidence, and growth in resilience and self-efficacy.

WORLD LANGUAGES (NON-CORE)

Mandarin 1

This course is designed for beginners of the language. The course aims for acquisition of the usual basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Included in the course is the presentation of basic grammar and an introduction to Chinese culture. Pinyin (the most widely used Chinese phonetic system) will be taught as a tool to learn the spoken language. Students will also learn Chinese characters in order to be able to communicate in Mandarin on a limited range of topics related to everyday situations. Students practice listening and speaking in real-life situations, learn to read and write Chinese characters, and examine how culture and language interact in China. In-class activities and course assignments aim to assist students as they develop the oral proficiency and confidence necessary to initiate simple conversations.

Mandarin 2

This course is for students who, having successfully developed strong basic skills, are ready to increase proficiency in oral comprehension and in the speaking, reading and writing skills of Mandarin Chinese. Readings are real-life dialogues emphasizing proper use of Mandarin with the goal of developing vocabulary and fluency. Written and oral precision will be emphasized.

Authentic materials will be studied. Culture content is incorporated into instruction. Students can write short articles by either hand writing or typing Chinese characters.

Spanish 1

Spanish 1 is a first-year class designed to teach students the fundamental vocabulary and grammar necessary to begin communicating and understanding in the Spanish language. Students develop the basic communication skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing Spanish.

Students who take Spanish 1 are able to speak, read, write, and comprehend Spanish on a basic level at the culmination of the course. These skills are developed through active class participation. Students in Spanish 1 interact with five standards for world language:

Communication

Culture

Connections

Comparison

Communities

Spanish 2

Spanish 2 is a second-year class designed to teach students the fundamental of verb conjugations, phonetics, and syntax. Students also develop the basic communication skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing Spanish. Students also take a closer look at various Hispanic/Latino cultural aspects.

Students taking Spanish 2 have a better understanding of Spanish by practicing speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are developed through active class participation, pair group, group presentation, and individual activities. Students in Spanish 2 interact with five standards for world language:

Communication

Culture

Connections

Comparison

Communities

MISSION-DRIVEN ARTS EDUCATION (NON-CORE)

From the earliest renderings found in the caves of Lascaux, France, to the installations of Rauschenberg, human beings have been using artistic expression to find meaning, express self, communicate messages and seek answers. All cultures and peoples have participated in the arts, conveying significant meaning through their artifacts and artistic traditions in music, dance, visual arts, literature, and drama. Art is a universal language that provides all students with connections to other civilizations. It provides factual, interpretive, and emotive contexts for historical events. Art is more than an act or artifact; it is a bridge that integrates the various, and often disparate, compartments of our lives. It develops sensitivity to one's surroundings and the intricacies that enable self-discovery and understanding of the human condition.

At VLGA, we do not view art only as an independent activity with a subset of standards and skills, but rather as a humanistic strand that runs throughout our curriculum. Incorporating “Art” into STEM learning is deliberate and important. This allows us to reach across the cultural, financial, and digital divides that separate our students from the “wider class.” Through the arts, we develop a sense of self in our students and a respect for the many cultures from which they come, while providing valuable links to new cultures. The arts also allow us to make academic connections across the curriculum and provide cohesiveness to thematic planning that gives our second language learners one of the major scaffolds to gaining content and academic understanding.

VLGA strives to provide our students with the tools they need to produce meaning within artistic endeavors. These skills are embedded throughout the day and placed in the context of meaningful experiences. For instance, while exploring the theme of If the World Were 100 People (sixth grade social studies standards) or learning to write autobiographies in Workshop, our students might learn about proportion, symmetry, observation and various media, such as drawing, painting, collage, and installation, to produce self- or family portraits. Dramatic play is used extensively to enhance understanding through in-depth, cross-curricular and thematic studies, the building blocks of theatric expression is developed as a means, not an end.

At VLGA, we are committed to music education and its cross-curricular implications, providing a systematic approach to the skills it requires. As our enrollment increases, we have a full-time music teacher who delivers instruction to our students on a weekly basis. This opportunity is extremely important, as many of our students do not have access to these skills outside of the school setting. Through our music program, our students acquire basic knowledge of musical history, composers, theory, reading musical notation and the skills and mechanics of singing. These skills are advanced with a school-wide choral program.

Instrumental music programs are sequential instrument method courses for beginner, intermediate, and advanced instrumental music students. Students learn beginning to advanced music theory (rhythms, note names, expressions), music history, performance techniques, and cultural diversity through music. Students develop a basic structure to learn required music performing skills needed to rehearse and perform concert sheet music. Sheet music is chosen based on its difficulty level relative to the performance level of the student musicians.

Drama

In this class, students are introduced to the basic concepts of theater arts. Students use various creative drama techniques to build confidence and trust, stimulate imagination, movement and role-play. Through theater games and activities students learn to trust themselves as well as others in their groups. Students learn to use drama and theater vocabulary in class discussions and the activities specifically address the promotion and reinforcement of students’ literacy skills. Students exhibit and reinforce their skills through individual and group presentations, performances, and script and journal writing.

Music

This class offers instruction in guitar and piano with a focus on the skills necessary for long-term student success and an appreciation of music. Fundamentals stressed include proper posture and playing position, development of characteristic tone quality and training in music literacy. Students practice their instrument in order to perform bi-annual concerts that Vista holds in the Winter and Spring.

Art and Design

In this class, students experiment with many two- and three- dimensional art forms, such as drawing, painting, perspective, and three-dimensional art. Emphasis is placed on the art elements and principles of design throughout the course.

Advisory/Global Hour (Non-Core)

6th – 8th grade students at Vista participate in an advisory period four times a week called Global Hour. Many narrative accounts attest to advisory’s positive impact. Generally, studies have shown that students who do not feel an attachment to school staff are likely to have poorer attendance and to drop out more than students who feel that they are part of a supportive school environment. In addition, healthy relationships between teachers and students appear to facilitate academic achievement.

At VLGA, there are three main goals of the advisory program:

Social Emotional: Students are in an environment that fosters bonding within an advisory group so that they feel accepted and valued by their teacher and peers.

College Ready Skills: Students build non-cognitive skills that include a range of behaviors that reflect greater student self-awareness, self-monitoring, self-control, study skills, work habits, time management, help-seeking behavior, and social problem solving skills. They begin to develop the behaviors, problem solving, and coping skills that allow students to successfully manage new environments and the new academic and social demands of high school and college.

College Knowledge: Students begin to gather the information and skills that allow them to successfully navigate the complex college admissions and financial aid processes, as well as begins to develop an understanding of college norms and culture.

It is in Advisory/Global Hour that class Council is regularly held. Council is a practice that cultivates heartfelt and meaningful communication skills, encourages mutual understanding and respect, and enhances community cohesion. Inspired and informed by the commonalities inherent in worldwide cultural and organizational dialogue practices, Council elements include the use of circular seating, defined intentions, focusing tools (such as a “talking piece”), clear beginnings and endings, and “witnessing,” a process of summarizing and acting upon what is shared in the session. Participation in Council engenders receptivity, authentic expression, and creative spontaneity as it builds positive relationships in classrooms and the Vista communities.

ELECTIVES (NON-CORE)

Speech and Debate

Speech and Debate is an introductory course that covers a variety of styles of public speaking and formal debate. Through research and practice students will become familiar with these styles through instruction, research, and practice. Each unit will culminate in performance assignments that require students to demonstrate their abilities within the classroom setting. Opportunities to take their knowledge to competition at the local and state level may be made available to students as well through extracurricular programs. Students will prepare and deliver speeches and participate in several in- class debates and forums on current topics. Techniques will be taught to control speech anxiety, and structure and organize information to present to a variety of audiences. As such, the fundamentals of physical and vocal delivery skills, use of language and gesturing, as well as listening skills will be learned.

Leadership

The purpose of this course is to help students develop leadership skills necessary for success in business careers through effective communications, problem-solving techniques, and managing resources and meetings. The students will develop an understanding of the need for community service as part of their overall civic and professional responsibilities. This leadership class will require students to plan, implement and evaluate projects. In doing so, students will be using both problem-solving and leadership skills. They will be challenged to understand their role in leadership and to identify ways in which they interact with others in order to improve conditions or to implement innovative ideas. Students also have the option of participating in a Council Leadership program where they become council leaders and help facilitate council circles, further developing their leadership skills.

Psychology

The course is designed to be an introduction to the science and profession of psychology. The course will assist the student in the development of a foundation of basic knowledge in order to pursue further studies in specific areas of psychology. The course will survey introductory topics such as learning, memory, sensation and perception, personality, lifespan development, physiological basis of behavior, stress and health, psychological disorders, social psychology, and research methods. The topics of states of consciousness and psychotherapy will also be covered.

Entrepreneurship

This course is about more than lectures and textbooks. Entrepreneurship focuses on applications of ideas that students can own. The Youth Entrepreneurs curriculum brings business studies to life through experiential learning, executed in real, market-based scenarios. Entrepreneurship introduces economic thinking and striving to instill the moral character necessary for students to lead lives as thriving, productive citizens.

Technology (Non-Core)

As detailed above, mastery of Technological skills is a core component of our STEAM emphasis, and critical for 21st century success. Through PLTW Gateway, Amplify, and direct tech-based learning (keyboarding, presentation preparation, online research skills, etc.) students receive direct and integrated tech-based learning throughout the curriculum. VLGA also provides Technology elective courses:

3D Animation

Emphasis on the production of three-dimensional (3D) animation as final digital outputting using modeling, rendering and animation software. This is a beginning level 3D computer animation course focused on introducing 3D animation software and practicing each student's existing motion skills.

IT Essentials

Cisco's IT Essentials: PC Hardware and Software curriculum introduces the skills needed to help meet growing demand for entry-level information and communication technology (ICT) professionals. It covers the fundamentals of PC technology, networking, and security, and also introduces advanced concepts.

Robotics

Robotics is a lab-based course that uses a hands-on approach to introduce the basic concepts of robotics, focusing on the construction and programming of autonomous mobile robots. Course information will be tied to lab experiments; students will work in groups to build and test increasingly more complex mobile robots. This will be achieved utilizing VEX Robotic devices, platform, and curriculum.

Advanced Tech

Students learn the foundational skills in various forms of technologies. Ranging from programming with Spheros and Scratch, to creating unique digital content with 360 cameras and virtual reality devices. Students also learn how these technologies lead to potential careers in modern day industry.

Innovative Curricular Components of The Educational Program

As detailed throughout the previous sections, VLGA is distinguished by its collaboration and partnership with Community Catalyst Partners' International Studies Schools Network (ISSN), with the goal of becoming an ISSN-certified school by the end of the first five years, along with our emphasis on STEAM. Our focus on the varying elements of student engagement, personalized and differentiated learning, active learning strategies and more are all based on research about how learning best occurs. Our program is carefully designed, based on our years of experience in this community working with students in middle grades, to prepare students to succeed in high school, post-secondary school and beyond.

Intervention and Enrichment Programs

As detailed more fully below, in all VCPS, we implement California's Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Framework and approach to quickly identify academic and behavioral needs of all students and to intervene early and strategically. At Vista Lago, all students at risk of low achievement, including students with disabilities, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and English language learners, will receive focused attention to their needs and strengths as teachers implement individualized instruction based on data-driven assessments. Teachers will meet regularly to compare their student data, discuss student performance and concerns, and discuss instructional strategies, interventions, and enrichment.

Vista Lago will assist in meeting the individual needs of all our students through:

1. Direct, effective instruction that incorporates re-teaching and remediation as needed;
2. Ample instructional planning time during the school week (such as when students are engaged in specials) so that teachers can modify and create lessons and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students;
3. A culture among teachers of openness and collaboration, including weekly team collaboration time and professional development activities, allowing teachers to learn from each other's varying expertise in handling learning differences;
4. Ongoing communication between teachers and families and a commitment to work together for the education of their children;
5. Various forms of assessment that are used to guide instruction;
6. Learning goals that are clearly articulated; and
7. High expectations for all students.

The MTSS process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners may participate in interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. Eagle Hour is built into the daily schedule to facilitate student time on intervention programs such as Lexia, Fountas & Pinnell, Khan Academy and more, with small group targeted instruction. These services may be offered by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual student response to instruction. MTSS is designed for making decisions in both general education and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by child outcome data.

Enrichments are broad and engaging, including physical education, the arts, technology and opportunities outside of the classroom including field trips, as detailed above.

CURRICULAR AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The following table outlines the initial textbook adoptions planned for grades 6-8 in the core content areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Science and Science.

English Language Arts	Lucy Calkins' Writers and Readers Workshop, Leveled Readers/novels from state-approved list
ELD	iLit, Fountas & Pinnell Intervention
Mathematics	Ready Math
Science	Amplify Science, PLTW Gateway
Social Science/History	TCI, Asia Society Social Studies Framework
World Languages	San Diego Office of Ed open-source curriculum: https://mandarin.sdcoc.net/cd3.html
Visual and Performing Arts	Teacher-created
P.E./Health	Teacher-created
Advisory/Character Ed	Way of Council

Comprehensive Course List

Subject Area	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
History / Social Science	Social Studies 6	Social Studies 7	Social Studies 8
English Language Arts	English 6	English 7	English 8
Math	Math 6	Math 7	Math 8 Integrated Math I
Science	Integrated Science 6	Integrated Science 7	Integrated Science 8
Visual and Performing Arts	Drama Music	Music	Art and Design Music
World Languages	Mandarin 1 Spanish 1	Mandarin 1 or 2 Spanish 1 or 2	Mandarin 1 or 2 Spanish 1 or 2
Electives	Entrepreneurship Robotics IT Essentials	Advanced Tech Psychology 3D Animation	Leadership Speech & Debate
Other Required Courses	PE Advisory/Global Hour Eagle Hour (Intervention)	PE Advisory/Global Hour Eagle Hour (Intervention)	PE Advisory/Global Hour Eagle Hour (Intervention)

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND STRATEGIES

At VLGA, we use the Framework for Engagement as the lens through which all instructional programs and practices are implemented. Communication and relationships that extend beyond the classroom and incorporate a widening circle of adult influence and interaction necessitate a

major shift from the current instructional practice of “stand and deliver” that dominates classrooms across America. Studies conducted by Csikszentmihalyi, the creator of Flow Theory and his team, found that students spent approximately 86% in passive lecture style or independent activities.⁸⁵

This framework necessitates that a shift in instructional practice is required to ensure the personalized learning experience is created to develop globally competent students. This shift in practice is commonly referred to as a move away from the “sage on the stage” model, in which the teacher directly delivers instruction through lecturing, to the “guide on the side,” in which teachers act as a coach and facilitate a more personalized learning experience and is based on a constructivist view in which, optimally, the classroom provides a series of experiences that prompt students to actively construct their own knowledge and learning (Taylor & Parsons, 2011; Vygotsky, 1987; Zepke & Leach, 2010). At VLGA we use this as an important lens through which all programs, processes, and practices are chosen and developed. Professional development extends to core instructional models that are critical to the success of the educational program. The following processes and procedures are integral to the VLGA learning experience:

The Workshop Model. At VLGA, all subjects are taught based on pedagogy found in the Lucy Calkins Reading and Writing Workshop model. This method structures each lesson with 10 to 15 minutes of teacher-led instruction followed by ample time for student-centered, hands-on learning. A typical lesson across all subject matter starts with student-friendly objectives connected to the California Content Standards with real-life application, followed by a 10- to 15-minute lesson that offers clear modeling and guided group practice. The remainder of the time is for independent practice and ranges from 30 to 50 minutes. While students work independently and/or cooperatively in small groups, the teacher and TA are free to work with small groups and one-on-one instruction. During this time, the teacher and assistant also use formative assessments to guide instructional support and future lessons. This model honors teacher and student autonomy and provides ample choice in alignment with a Constructivist Learning Environment. All of our curricular choices reflect this framework. Teachers are fully trained in Reading and Writing Workshop with the expectation of transferring the basic pedagogical skills to all subjects.

Problem-based pedagogy. This model is described as “an atmosphere where there is a dialectic tension and conflict that can promote a learning environment through a process of inquiry and understanding (that) includes concrete experiences, opportunities for reflection, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.” VLGA strategically uses this approach with a global and STEAM curriculum that focuses on relevant application by applying learning to solving both local and global issues our students are facing today. This also provides students the opportunity for active exploration of issues based on real life scenarios and problems.

⁸⁵ Shernoff, E. S., Kratochwill, T. R., & Stoiber, K. C. (2003). Training in Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs): What are school psychology programs teaching?. *Journal of School Psychology*, 41(6), 467-483.

Project-based learning (PBL). Project-based learning strives to increase relevance by applying real-life problems and issues to a final project outcome that function as an authentic assessment of student learning. Elucidating the relevance of a project has been linked to deeper engagement. Providing students opportunities to explore issues that are meaningful in their circumstances and lives motivates them to learn and show more willingness to work through difficult ideas and learning.

Because we choose to focus on solid implementation of our core curriculum in the first two years (literacy, math, science, and social studies), VLGA teachers receive training on PBL through our partnership with the International Schools Study Network (ISSN). The ISSN, in partnership with the Buck Institute, provides on-going professional development and coaching for project-based learning. The eventual expectation is for all grade levels to have one major PBL project their second year, and two projects (one each semester) by our third year and beyond. Although teachers are required to facilitate two projects each year, they are encouraged to create multiple, interdisciplinary projects beyond the requirements.

Kagan Cooperative learning and strategies. One key component of experiential or problem-based learning that repeatedly stands out in the literature, as a factor in engagement is the use of cooperative learning strategies. Although some research has indicated that teacher-student relationships are possibly the most important factor in increased student engagement, another study that examined the difference in impact of student-teacher relationships, quality of student effort, and peer- to-peer interaction found that “peer interaction had the strongest predictive capacity for engagement and outcomes.” The Vista development team has recognized the importance of both teacher-student and peer-to-peer interactions in designing the school’s instructional approach. Clearly, both are important and are constantly considered when designing Vista’s pedagogy. Student interaction and collaborative learning promotes dialectic practices that support student viewpoints and interests. Cooperative learning has also been found to increase motivation, positive classroom behaviors, social networks, and academic improvements.

At VLGA, all teachers receive Kagan Cooperative Learning training. Already, embedded into all VLGA schools, Kagan Cooperative Learning strategies are designed for implementation across all content and curriculum. Kagan structures involve cooperative interaction, and are designed to efficiently produce engagement, positive social interactions, and achievement because they incorporate four basic principles, the PIES principles:

- **Positive Interdependence:** We are positively interdependent when a gain for one is a gain for another. This dynamic produces a sense of belonging to the same team. In a traditional setting, students are set against each other in competition to answer questions. With Kagan structures, students work together and learn global attributes of sharing, caring, helping, and empathy.
- **Individual Accountability:** All students are held accountable for learning-- not just the student who raises her hand.
- **Equal Participation:** Because the structures involve every student, each student participates equally throughout the day.
- **Simultaneous Interaction:** All students have an opportunity to verbalize answers and thinking-- as opposed to a traditional class where only one or two students answer any given question.

Kagan Structures are bridges that allow teachers to pass easily from principles to practices, implementing basic principles and visions as part of any lesson, at any grade level, with any curriculum. At VLGA, teachers learn to use a Kagan structure every time they ask the class a question, thus ensuring equal engagement for all.

Cooperative Learning follows our principles of engagement, is brain compatible, learner centered, and has real-life transfer because they enforce our belief that you learn by doing.

Mastery learning. Mastery experiences develop self-efficacy by allowing students to reflect on where their skill level is at any given time and by using success, partial success, and even failure to point the way toward mastery of a subject or skill. Currently, most classrooms see failure as an end in itself-- which results in a failing grade. By allowing students to fail on a task and then reflect on that experience as a stepping-stone to a learning goal fosters a growth mindset, increases resilience, and promotes life-long learning. At VLGA teachers receive professional development on the latest developments and research on Master Learning. One site that is used by VLGA staff to understand and implement Mastery Grading is <http://www.gradingforlearning.wordpress.com>. Developed by Dr. Derrick Chau, he and his team have created a system in tandem with the website to help teachers and schools make the emotional and pedagogical shifts needed to honor child centered and developmentally appropriate.

Relevance. A recent study on student learning and engagement conducted at four out-performing urban schools in Southern California with a majority of at-risk students indicated that the relevance of instruction was continually and clearly drawn to the students' immediate and future lives. The study showed that student engagement occurred when students took ownership, invested in learning, and internalized curricula to incorporate—and purposefully use—it in their lives. When they recognized the purpose of what they were learning, the students were motivated to persevere through difficult and rigorous lessons and projects.

VCPS believe that when students have a clear understanding of the value, purpose, and procedures for learning activities and the logic by which teachers arrived at their design, they are more likely to see the value of what they are being asked to learn and consequently participate more eagerly in their learning with greater achievement levels.

We take an approach to education based on the idea that students work harder and dream bigger if their education is relevant to them. Every teacher and every parent has heard a student or child ask, “Why do I have to learn or do this?” When students don’t see the connection between the content and activities of the classroom and their future lives, they question what’s happening and what we ask them to do. Research has confirmed that perceived relevance is a critical factor in maintaining student interest and motivation.

To ensure VLGA relevancy for VLGA students, every lesson at VLGA starts by answering the What? Why? and How? before instruction begins
What? What is our learning objective for this lesson? What are we doing in class today? What questions will we try to answer? What concepts will we address? What activities will we do?

Why? Why are we studying this? How are today's content and activities tied to the learning outcomes? What should I know or be able to do after today's class? How can the information and skills be used in everyday life?

How? How are we going to address the content? What are the discrete steps we will need to take to reach our learning objective? What activities, discussions, and projects will we be using? How will I know that I have mastered the learning objective?

At VLGA, teachers are expected to answer those questions for all learning. They do so through clear objectives connected to real-world application, clear instruction through the workshop model, student-driven rubrics, and multiple opportunities and ways to demonstrate mastery of learning. At VLGA, we believe that when students have a clear understanding of the value, purpose, and procedures for learning activities and the logic by which teachers arrived at their design, they are more likely to see the value of what they are being asked to learn and consequently participate more eagerly in their learning with greater achievement levels.

Digital Portfolios. Because students develop and grow in their desire for autonomy and independence, but at the same time, continue to rely on guidance from parents and other adults, VLGA students develop Digital Portfolios upon enrollment starting from kindergarten. They have opportunities to reflect on their learning, make appropriate choices, and receive assistance with their learning plan in their pursuit of academic, personal, and career goals. Guidance from VLGA staff occurs on a frequent basis as they regularly conference and meet with students throughout the week in our workshop model.

Students develop clarity of purpose by creating a Digital Portfolio that considers their current level of progress and long-term goals. VLGA faculty and parents assist students as they map out their learning needs. The learning management system, weekly student/teacher conferences during workshop time, and regularly scheduled parent/teacher conferences provide a structured time during which students and families are able to monitor their own progress, review academic decisions, present problems or conflict, and revise goals as they learn and achieve. At VLGA, we are preparing our students to be fully participatory in their own educational journey, which extends beyond the fifth grade.

The Digital Portfolio is a key tool for helping students' development of metacognition. This is built by giving students ownership over their learning and allowing them to think about how they learn. As students reflect on their plan, progress, achievements, and continued areas of work, they can take that understanding and apply it to learning in the classroom. Digital Portfolios also review assessments results in order to best prepare students for the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).

Another area that supports Digital Portfolios and student metacognition are student-led conferences. As parents, faculty, and students meet regarding a student's academic, personal, and career goals, the student presents his/her understandings about his/her development, challenges, strengths, and joys. As discoveries are made, steps on how parents and faculty can support further development are articulated.

Differentiated Instruction. VLGA staff utilizes its knowledge of the whole child in order to effectively implement differentiation of instruction. Evidence has suggested that students are more successful in school and find it more satisfying if they are taught in ways that are responsive to their readiness levels.

To effectively implement differentiation, students have multiple routes to demonstrate their understandings; use a variety of materials that address learning at their level of instruction and with their learning modality; work in small, flexible learning groups for instruction that are based on a variety of learning needs; work within a flexible pacing structures, which allows for learner variance; engage in lessons that are knowledge- centered and structured around essential learning; and have work that considers their learner traits so that students can learn successfully.

Individualized work is at an appropriate level of challenge; tasks and questions link to students' interests, and address the students' learning profiles (e.g., learning modality, culture, language). Hence, by giving them choices regarding topics of study, ways of learning, and presenting information, students are able to determine the best access points for their own learning and build upon areas strength. In a VLGA classroom, differentiation provides students emotional safety, as similarities and differences, strengths and weaknesses, cooperation and respect are all valued. Selection of programs at VLGA are based, in part, on their ability to meet these criteria. Readers and Writers Workshop, ISTE, Project Lead the Way, Amplify Science and other similar programs have mastery learning as a core value and are considered for implementation at VLGA.

Data-Driven instruction. The instructional path is paved through the CCSS and the use of Curriculum Maps. Throughout the week, teachers use a variety of formative assessments to understand where their students are successful and where they need more support. A full explanation of our assessments is provided later in this document. The results of these assessments drives follow-up instruction, support, and/or intervention. Grade-level staff groups create assessment calendars in conjunction with their curriculum. All students are assessed regularly to ensure clear progress. Teachers review their students' scores, meet with grade-level teams and administration to review the results, and together determine what the next steps of action may be. Similarly, quarterly assessments are reviewed in order to determine learning directions. The Quarterly Assessment have more weight, as it will cover nine weeks of instruction. The Quarterly assessments are aligned to the SBAC. Possible outcomes may include a need for an SST and a review of any other types of interventions that would help the student; an online assessment tool and learning management system is the tool utilized to assess students and to create the assessments. Also, teachers have regular opportunities in the workshop model to discuss "data" and learning growth with students so that students are aware of their achievement level/mastery and what they need to do to grow.

Online assessment and learning management systems allow teachers and administrators the opportunity to gather and organize data that guides next steps. Edulastic, PowerSchool, and Google Classroom are examples of online assessment programs that are utilized by teachers to create assessments, and also for administration to support in writing of quarterly assessments. Currently, VCPS has recently adopted a Learning Management System, Google Classroom. VLGA uses the same online assessment and learning management system as all schools in VCPS system.

Homework. At VLGA, our approach to homework is research-based and in alignment with our core values of honoring the development of the whole child. The most comprehensive research on homework comes from a 2006 meta-analysis by Duke University psychology professor Harris Cooper, who found a positive achievement correlation for homework starting in the seventh grade, but a weak relationship for those in younger grades.

At VLGA, we believe that limited, but thoughtfully scheduled homework can teach important learner skills such as study habits, self-discipline, inquisitiveness, and independent problem solving skills. The Charter School's homework policy espouses general guidelines that allow for teacher flexibility and individualized student learning plans:

Homework is an extension of classroom learning and not a replacement for teacher direct instruction. Students might be asked to explore ideas, stories, and additional information related to a classroom theme, writing project, or science inquiry.

Teachers must ensure that students understand basic concepts before assigning extended work. We do not want students creating life-long bad habits from the repetition of incorrect concepts. Students should be able to complete the work primarily on their own without the need for extensive parental guidance.

Homework completion is not included as part of a student achievement grade. Our purpose is to create self-motivated learners that love exploration.

Homework should be developmentally appropriate and not create a burden on family time or resources.

Cooperative and shared learning projects may be assigned from time to time and needs to be completed from home with the help of a parent. For example, writing a narrative about one's family may necessitate interviewing family members, and the parent is expected to support and facilitate this activity outside of school.⁸⁶

HOW THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM WILL SUPPORT STUDENT DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY-RELATED SKILLS AND STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology is an important global strand that runs throughout our curriculum. It allows us to reach across the cultural, financial, and digital divides that currently separate our students from gaining full access to the American dream. Most of our students do not have full Internet and computer access in their homes. To level the playing field, VLGA students are provided a Chrome Book or similar device. All classrooms will have a class set of Chromebooks for students to check in and out each period for academic use. Students are also allowed to take devices home for select projects with increasing opportunities for home use in preparation for our middle school experience which will allow all students greater flexibility for daily use.

VLGA extensively utilizes Google Classroom and Google Apps for Education for students and teachers. These Google services are provided free of charge to the school. Students and families will also have access to the school's Learning Management System and online portfolio. In

⁸⁶ Cooper, H., Robinson, J. C., & Patall, E. A. (2006). Does homework improve academic achievement? A synthesis of research, 1987–2003. *Review of educational research*, 76(1), 1-62.

addition to investing in Chromebooks for the students, the school provide WIFI access in all areas of the campus and implement Internet security software that complies with the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

In addition to integrated technical skills, VLGA is committed to digital safety. Students receive instruction in developing digital literacy skills, including self-regulation, curiosity, and responsibility in an extraordinarily connected world. Cyber-bullying and cyber-safety are addressed yearly for all VLGA students. VLGA ensures that students understand and exercise good judgment as they navigate the infinite amount of information that exists online. This approach is in line with our focus on social- emotional skills, as students must learn how, when, and why the Internet can support their personal and academic growth.

A TYPICAL DAY – MIDDLE SCHOOL

The following provides an example of what a day in the life at Vista Lago Global Academy might look and feel like for a student. Schools are dynamic, human-centered organizations and, while schedules and basic routines will have consistency, no two days will look exactly alike. The following description strives to highlight unique features of a VHGA day, but is solely demonstrative. Times and the actual bell schedule has been manipulated to showcase innovative programs, approaches, and signature practices.

Miguel, a sixth-grade student, arrives with his mother and little sister at the front of the school. They walk to the front of the school where his mom drops him off and she continues on to drop off his little sister at Vista Lago elementary. Although he knows he is now in middle school and expected to be more independent, he is secretly happy to be immediately greeted by Dr. Felch, the principal.

“Good morning, Dr. Felch,” he shyly says to him and in return receives a big, “Miguel! Good Morning! It’s great to see you. How are you enjoying the year so far?” Miguel tells him that it’s been really good and quickly walks through the front doors and into the main entrance, where he gets greeting again my Ms. Limon, as he passes her at the front desk.

Miguel loves the days when the kids from the middle school get to go to the elementary school and be a reading buddy with them. Last year he got to have a reading buddy, but this year he gets to be the buddy. Miguel wants to make his teacher and parents proud and transform the world one day. That thought reminds him that they are working on a project in his science class where they are learning about a little girl with muscular dystrophy and that today they are going to use the computers to design a boot to help her walk better. Miguel is excited really likes the design team he is working with and excited about the project.

Miguel has barely gotten through the door yet, but he is excited and beaming with pride to be at Vista Lago Global Academy.

Miguel is surprised when he sees his mother again and a bit embarrassed when she leans down and kisses him on the forehead. “Mijo,” she says, “Today, I get to have coffee with the principal and other parents this morning. Your principal is going to tell us all about the great things your school is doing and then we have committee meetings. But I will see you later, today I get to volunteer in your class.”

Miguel quickly kisses his mom again, but is happy to leave her and go have breakfast with his friends before the first class starts. Pretty soon, Miguel hears the bell and heads to his first class.

Language Arts

Ms. Huff is standing at the door greeting each student as they come into the room. Miguel shakes his teacher’s hand and says, “Good morning, Ms. Huff, It’s a great day for learning!” Ms. Huff laughs because Miguel beat her to her own daily greeting. He knows the routine, but she directs all the students to the front of the room to find their place next to their literacy partners. She reminds them to have their writing journal with them and ready to go, but that they will start with a Kagan Community builder.

Miguel walks into his advisory class and puts his backpack away. He gets his Chrome book off the cart and sits at his desk next to the other three students on his class team. He looks at his team table cards and remembers to greet his shoulder and face partner with a warm welcome and a compliment. No sooner do they finish their greetings than Ms. Huff starts the class off with a Kagan community building activity. They have been learning about writing a personal narrative and the last few weeks they have focused on their family genealogy, heritage, and stories, and it doesn’t surprise Miguel that the activity involves sharing things he loves about his family. The computer-generated Kagan spinner on the screen in front of the class stops on two. Miguel feels disappointed he doesn’t get to start, but congratulates his shoulder partner. Each one of his team members gets to share, and they remember to complement each other after they share. “I love the story about your abuela and how she got to our country, Miguel,” his partner tells him, and Miguel beams with pride—not for the first time this morning, and it’s not even 8:30 yet.

After the community builder Miguel grabs his writer’s journal and heads to the mini lesson area. He never thought of himself as a good writer before, but he now thinks that he might want to be an author when he grows up. He can’t wait to see what his teacher is going to do today in Writer’s Workshop.

Ms. Huff gets right to the point, “Writers, remember yesterday when we talked about making our writing more exciting for the reader? Today I want to show you one way to do that. One thing that great writers do to engage their readers is to surprise them by making inanimate objects or non-human characters—remember inanimate is something that is not living like a rock or a mountain, and non-human characters are something that is not human, like a dog or animal—act like a human.

When an author does this, we call it personification. Today, I'm going to show you how to use personification to make the stories you are working on more exciting for your readers."
Ms. Huff knows how important modeling is and has planned for it and says, "Let me show you some examples of how published authors have done it."

Ms. Huff pulls out three books, and says, "Let's see how some of our favorite published authors use personification in their writing to engage us as readers. The first one is The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein, and Miguel remembers when his teacher read that to them during their unit on Poetry. She picks out a small passage and reads it to the class and shows how the author gives the tree human attributes and feelings. She says, "This makes me love the tree so much." She explains how personification helps the reader feel sad and happy for the tree by the end of the story. She shares two more examples. This only takes a few minutes, and then she clearly repeats the day's objective, "So, remember authors...Great writers sometimes use personification to engage and excite their readers. Watch me now, as I try to use personification in the story I am writing."

Ms. Huff sits before her story, which she has projected onto the interactive touch screen, and starts to read, "The little boy was racing all around the woods chasing butterflies until he got so tired he had to sit on an old tree stump."

"Hmmm," Ms. Huff thinks out loud to herself, I wonder what would happen if the tree stump could talk." She starts to write, "As the winded boy sat..." She crosses out "sat" and says, "He's tired from running around, so he is really going to plop down." She writes instead, "plunked down hard on the stump." She continues, "The little boy heard someone scream "Ouch, that hurt!" The little boy looked around the woods, but didn't see anybody. "Oh my gosh, you are so heavy. At least you could have asked for my permission." This time the boy heard the voice come from under him, down by his feet and he jumped so high, he nearly hit his head on the branch of a nearby tree."

The whole class laughs, and so does Ms. Huff. But, she quickly turns back to the lesson, "Do you see how I gave the tree stump a voice and made it react like a human? I used personification when I did that. I think it's time for you to give personification a try. Take out your stories and, for the next 60 seconds, I want you to look for inanimate objects in your stories where you might use personification to excite and engage your reader."

Right away, Miguel and his partner open their journals and search for inanimate objects in their stories. Miguel found two and can't wait to share. Another bell goes off and the teacher asks if anyone needs more time. She tells them to use one finger for a little more time, two for a lot, or just raise their whole hand if they are ready. Everyone is ready.

A bell the goes off. "Ok, you and your partner will use the Kagan Rally Robin structure to share all of your ideas. Don't forget, you share one idea and then your partner shares one until you don't have any more ideas left or the timer goes off. If you finish before the timer, please use the rest of the time to ask your partner probing questions.

She spins the partner button and says, "Partner A begins."

The class is suddenly abuzz with conversation and sharing. Miguel and his partner share all their ideas, but the bell hasn't gone off. Miguel says to his partner, "I really like your idea of using personification with your family car! What do you think your car might say or do to make it seem like a person?" The partners are deep in conversation when the buzzer goes off, and they look up at Ms. Huff. Ms. Huff had been going from pair to pair during the time, and says, "I really love how so many of you found great places to use personification in your writing!" She goes on to share a few examples that she heard.

"Please turn to your partners and thank them for sharing their thoughts and ideas with you." Once this lesson concludes, Ms. Huff says, "So remember, authors, great writers can use personification in their stories to engage the reader and make their writing exciting and interesting. How many of you will try to use personification in your stories today?" Hands fly up. It has been 12 minutes since the lesson began, and the class is ready for to get to work.

"Let's go back to our desks and work on your stories. I'm going to set the timer for 30 minutes today. You are really building up you writer's stamina, and I'm so proud of all of your efforts."

While the students work on their stories, Ms. Huff calls a small group to work with her. She had read the writing journals over the weekend and noticed a small group was still struggling with keeping a narrative focused. She has a small lesson to help them along. Later, she calls Miguel up for a one-on-one conference and works with him on breaking his story into paragraphs by using good transitional sentences at the end and beginning of each paragraph to keep the reader focused and the narrative sharp, but soon the five-minute transition bell rings.

It is time to end Writers Workshop and move on to Readers Workshop. The students have been working for an extended time and Ms. Huff gathers the class for a quick community builder. She picks a Kagan strategy that gets the kids moving a bit, as they have been sitting and reading for 30 minutes straight. After the two-minute activity, she tells them it is time for Readers Workshop to begin.

Ms. Huff doesn't spend a lot of time at the front of the class. She is usually walking around or working with small groups or one to one with a student, but she always starts workshop at her teaching station for a mini lesson. She tells the class to grab the book they are reading and come to the carpet. Miguel loves Readers Workshop. It is just like Writers Workshop, but he gets lots of time to read his new favorite book. The last unit was on non-fiction, but they are working on fiction to go along with their unit on narrative writing. Ms. Huff teaches a mini lesson about inference and uses lots of examples from her own book. Soon, the class has practiced, and they get to read. While the class reads their books silently, Miguel is asked to join the T.A. at her teaching station. She says that she thinks he has made so much progress and that he might need to re-think his current level. She has him read a passage from the Fountas and Pinnell leveled reading inventory and then another. He is so excited to learn that he has jumped three levels from Q to T. The T.A.

points out that he is almost at a high school reading level asks him if he would like to pick out a T level book. He does, but he wants to finish the book he is reading. She quickly replies, “Oh, of course, I can never leave a book when I love it. Sometimes, I’m even sad when I finish it, because I love the characters so much. Has that ever happened to you?” “Oh yes, after reading the last Harry Potter book, I was so sad that I wanted to start from the first book all over again!” Miguel goes to the leveled library to pick a book, but he is excited to go onto his Chromebook and see all the other T level books he might choose from, too.

Again the bell rings sooner than Miguel could imagine. He loves the block schedule and is always surprised that two hours can fly by that fast.

Recess/Nutrition

The T.A. walks the class out to the yard. Miguel is excited because he has been playing soccer with his friends, but no sooner do they start than his friend says something mean and they start to argue. Soon, a crowd is starting to gather, but quickly Coach G is there and gently asks Miguel and the other boy to come over to the Way of Council bench. He reminds them about their peace pledge and asks them to use the Peace Talk Protocol. When they are ready, they can go back and play. Miguel and his partner look up at the plaque. Coach G helps them to read it together:

Sit face to face

Share: This is what happened, this is what I wanted to happen, this is how I can make things better

Speak and listen from the heart

Use a talking piece

The boys go through the protocol, and within a few minutes are laughing. There is still time to play soccer, and they race off together. Soon the bell rings and Miguel heads off with his friends to math.

Math

Miguel knows the routines of Math class like the back of his hand. Upon being greeted by his teacher Ms. Sotero, he joins the other students at his assigned table, as they all retrieve their assigned Chrome books and log in to Google classroom. There he finds his Math Goals Tracker form. On this form he reviews the work he accomplished during the last class. He reminds himself that he was in the middle of practicing translating the information included in word problems into an appropriate equation that Ms. Sotero had taught him and his group at the teacher’s table.

Miguel understands that he still needs to practice this skill today, because on Monday he did not reach his goal: I will select the best equation to solve a problem, based on the information contained in the word problem in at least 4 out of 5 tries. Shaking his head, Miguel remembers how he struggled on Monday. He reassures himself by recalling what Ms. Sotero said to him then, when she saw his scrunched up face. “Remember, Miguel, what I always say. Fail early and fail often. As long as you keep your Growth Mindset, you

will get better. Don't give up on yourself. I'm here when you need my help." Smiling with confidence, Miguel decides he will continue to work on the same goal. He is not going to give up on himself.

"What's your daily goal, Miguel?" asks Anahi, his elbow partner.

"I'm still going to practice word problems," he responds. He glances at Anahi's tracker and sees that she has a completely different goal. Anahi will be using Khan Academy for independent practice on inequalities. Miguel practiced his inequalities last week, and feels the pride that comes from accomplishing a goal one sets for oneself. He submits his daily goal tracker online, and opens the application Edulastic (an online assessment platform) and finds the Word Problem practice that Ms. Sotero has uploaded.

Just as he is about to begin, Ms. Sotero calls the class to attention. "By now, you all should have submitted your daily goals...Anahi, it looks like I still don't have yours." Miguel notices Anahi quickly hit a button on her keyboard. Soon after Ms. Sotero says, "Ahh, there we go. Thank you Anahi, my friend."

"I noticed on Monday that a few of you still had some questions about how to pick the proper equation for word problems. So today I will start by meeting with you at the Teacher's Table. So can I see Eduardo, Miguel, Daniella, Hector and Estrella up here with me. In the second rotation I would like to see Angel, Ashley, Raymond, and Sissi at the teacher's table, and we will review ratios, okay? Raise your hand if you would like to begin with Independent Practice." Miguel sees the hands of seven classmates go up in the air. "Great. You all start the rotation at the back tables. Who is ready for an assessment?" Only two hands go up. "Okay, Jesse and Maribel, do you know what standards you are assessing?" They nod in the affirmative. "Okay, all the assessments are already in Edulastic listed by standards. Take your time. I suppose the rest of you are looking to begin with peer study partners?" Many head nods. "Ok then, get to it."

The classroom explodes with movement as students pack and stack their belongings and move to the appropriate table. The students in the back at the independent practice table pop earbuds in and begin intently watching the Kahn Academy videos their teacher had linked to their accounts. Other students paired off, and began to hold quiet "six inch voice" conversations about their Math assignments. Jesse and Maribel transitioned to the assessment corner. Miguel was impressed as he looked at Jesse, who had an eager and determined look on his face. Miguel could remember a time where Jesse hated Math class, and would spend most of his time misbehaving or checking his cell phone. However, ever since joining Ms. Sotero's class, with her way of teaching Jesse has changed completely. It seems to Miguel that Jesse actually enjoys Math class.

Miguel knows why. In the past, the entire class had to sit quietly while the teacher would speed through practice problems on the board, assign the same practice problems for homework, and give the same exam to everyone on Friday. Now, in Ms. Sotero's class, students are given the choice to work on the things that they want and need to work on. No longer is the Math lesson one-size-fits-all. Ms. Sotero meets every day with small groups of

students and teaches them the standards they still have to Master. Miguel finds it much more exciting and fun because every day, he knows he is learning exactly what he needs to know, and he is ready to learn it, and eager to demonstrate when he masters a new idea.

Ms. Sotero's lesson reminds him of lessons he has learned all through elementary school, except now he only learns what HE needs to learn and he learns it small groups. Ms. Sotero is easily able to understand exactly what confuses him, and provides him with instruction that is best for him. He loves it. The quiet energy in the room shows!

Lunch

Miguel loves his classroom, but maybe not as much as lunch. The cafeteria always has such great food, and he is proud that his school serves a "homemade" meal every day that is healthy and good! After they eat, they all go to the auditorium and play. There are no problems today, and that is good, because the last few days some kids in his class were pretty harsh to each other and one girl even cried. Miguel's advisory teacher said they were going to have a council about some of the events this week. Miguel thought that was a good idea too. Too soon, the bell rings, and it is time for his science class.

Science and Technology

Miguel never thought about being a scientist before, but Mr. Baily makes learning so exciting that he now thinks he will study science in college. Today is really special, too, because his mom is a special science helper. She does this every Tuesday, which helps the teacher with all the set up needed for the Project Lead The Way units. Miguel can tell how much his teacher likes his mom, and this makes him love his teacher even more.

Miguel's class is learning about the effects that Muscular Dystrophy can have on a person's life. They started the unit learning about a girl with the disease and then spent time learning all about it. One of the things they learned is that the disease can affect fine motor skills and even how a person walks because of the damage to the muscles. The little girl they learned about was affected in that way and walks on the balls of her feet. The teacher has tasked them with designing a boot that can help her rehabilitate her muscles and train her to walk normally again.

Miguel and his team introduce the design problem when faced with the challenge of her rehabilitation. Even though the girl they are working for is fictional, Miguel remembers how his teacher showed them real life examples when they went on a field trip to Children's Hospital and got to talk to real doctors and researchers. Mr. Baily always reminds the class that one of Vista's main global outcomes is for students to take action in the world with their learning. Miguel loves that the project might actually help someone with this problem.

They start the period by presenting their ideas and Miguel thinks his team's drawings and ideas were some of the best solutions in the class, but he also likes a lot of the other ideas. Soon, they build their prototypes and test them. The tests are fun, but Miguel has to think really hard as his teacher pushes his team to consider failure points of data to identify aspects of the design solution that can be improved. He knows this part of science is

important, and he wants to help his team, because next week they are going to present their solutions and suggestions for improvement to their classmates and then to their sister school classmates via Zoom at the American School in Guatemala City. Their sister school friends told them that one of their classmates uses crutches because of the disease and that makes their designs have even more relevance and meaning. Miguel hopes that their solutions can help their friends in Guatemala. Even though presenting is hard, Miguel likes getting feedback, because, as a global citizen, he knows that understanding different perspectives is important. He also loves science because it helps him design real solutions for real- world problems.

Advisory

Miguel can't believe the day is almost over and that they are already at their advisory class. When Miguel gets to the class, the furniture has been rearranged. The desks are against the wall, and the chairs are in a circle. In the middle of the circle is the council table. It is covered in a beautiful tablecloth. It is the one his mother brought back from Guatemala. Miguel beams with pride that his teacher loved her gift. The low table is covered with a few flowers in a vase, the dedication bowl, and talking pieces the class has brought in to share.

Everyone sits quietly in the circle, and Ms. Mackie asks if anyone would like to make a dedication. A few students make dedications by walking up and dropping a stone into the bowl; as they do, they dedicate the Council to their moms. Miguel is a little nervous, but remembers how much he misses his family dog that recently passed. He quietly walks up, drops a stone into the dedication bowl, and says, "I dedicate this to my dog that died this year." As Miguel walks back to his seat, the students and Ms. Mackie raise their hands and wiggle their fingers in silent support.

Ms. Mackie reminds them that in Council they are to speak from the heart, listen from the heart, be spontaneous and not worry about how good their story might be, and to be lean so everyone in the circle can say what is in their heart.

Ms. Mackie starts by talking about what happened this week during lunch and recess breaks. She says that being mean to each other is sometimes bullying or can lead to bullying if we don't think about how our actions can affect others.

She then tells the class about a time when she was bullied when she was in middle school and how it made her feel. After her framing story, she says to the circle, "So today, fellow global citizens, tell the circle a story of a time when you were bullied and how it made you feel. But, maybe, if you are feeling brave, you can tell a story of a time when you treated someone else not very nicely or bullied someone and how that made you feel."

For the next 30 minutes the talking piece is passed. Miguel remembers what happened at recess and shares that story. Some kids are brave and tell how about when they were a bully, and how it made them feel bad inside. Council winds down with a witness round, in which students can witness something that touched them during the circle and then a closing. Sometimes Councils are fun, but today it was serious. Miguel decides he is going to try really hard not to be a bully, as he realized that his classmates feel the same thing he

does when he gets bullied. The Council is over and Ms. Mackie has the class help put the furniture back and ready for the next day.

End of the day

Miguel can't believe how fast the day went. It seems like he was just eating breakfast. In fact, he thinks he might have been in FLOW today. His teacher always tells him that FLOW is the best part of learning and that you know you are in flow when you are thinking hard, having fun, and forget about everything else except what you are doing. Miguel is sure he was in FLOW today during Writers Workshop and science. He tells Ms. Mackie that he was in FLOW a lot today and thanks her for being his favorite teacher ever. Ms. Mackie thanks Miguel for taking his learning so seriously and thanks his mom for her help. She asks his mom if she is able to use the Learning Management System and lets her know there will be another parent-training coming up soon.

Normally, Miguel would go to the after-school program, but since his mom volunteers on Monday's she takes him home with her. Miguel walks across the parking lot with his mom, and takes one last look at the school and reflects on how his day was all about bringing the heart and the mind together to make the world a better place for himself, his family, and even his friends in Guatemala. He is, once again, beaming with pride to be a Vista Lago student.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN – HIGH SCHOOL

CURRICULAR AND INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: KEY EDUCATIONAL THEORIES AND RESEARCH

At VLGA we are committed to transforming the school experience. Teachers who push students academically and demand high standards not only increase engagement, but also cultivate students' sense of being cared for and, ultimately, raise student achievement.⁸⁷ At VLGA, our pedagogical practices and programmatic choices will form the conditions for rigorous academics and warm supportive mentoring in symbiotic relation. The VLGA approach is one in which our adolescent students will learn by doing under the guidance of a strong mentor/teacher. We are dedicated to hiring successful teachers who balance high standards and academically rigorous expectations with constant availability for help and academic guidance.

As students move through each high school grade, they will experience a well-rounded, holistic, and global curriculum with a STEAM focus. Mastery of basic academic standards is important and necessary, but in and of itself is an insufficient goal for our students. Low-income students of color, perhaps more than any other group of young people, benefit from an intellectually engaging, rigorous curriculum designed to cultivate flexible thinking and broad knowledge of the world on a global scale. Our students must break barriers of discrimination that too often define who we are. VLGA will adhere to the guiding principles of the traditional Japanese holistic approach “Chi-Toku-Tai” which espouses: academic prowess, moral, physical, and mental health. When the needs of the “whole child” are addressed, a zest and love for life and all its

⁸⁷ Zepke, N., & Leach, L. (2010). Improving student engagement: Ten proposals for action. *Active learning in higher education*, 11(3), 167-177.

possibilities is the outcome.

At VLGA, we will create social-emotional and educational conditions and structures that are strictly aligned with the research on engagement (see above). Research on the positive correlation of strong student engagement with higher student achievement is clear and drives our instructional design. While engagement is “easily understood by practitioners as being essential to learning,”⁸⁸ the bridge from theory to application is often difficult. At VLGA our instructional foci are based on our deep research on engagement and represent a unique combination of global competence and STEAM preparedness. We see these two areas not as separate foci, but rather as a nested symbiotic grouping that works together to address the needs of the 21st century learner.

GLOBAL COMPETENCY

VLGA will be distinguished by its collaboration and partnership with Community Catalyst Partners’ International Studies Schools Network (ISSN), with the goal of becoming an ISSN-certified school by the end of the first five years. The ISSN currently includes a variety of different grade levels and types of schools serving approximately 16,000 students in eight states. In keeping with the Community Catalyst Partners’ original mission to serve traditionally underserved populations, the majority (63%) of ISSN students are low-income, and 73% are students of color. Four-year graduation rates and student performance rates exceed those in comparable schools. In 2011, ISSN schools had an average four-year graduation rate of 89%. In addition, evaluators found that ISSN schools outperformed their peers on 71 of 107 total measures (66.4%).⁸⁹

The Community Catalyst Partners does not promote a single, prescriptive school design. The starting point for all of its schools is a shared definition of a college-ready, globally competent graduate. The ISSN Graduate Profile describes a student who has mastered the knowledge and skills required for college, has expertise in core content areas from a global perspective, is a proficient thinker and problem solver, can view and analyze issues and events from varying perspectives, can communicate in more than one language and collaborate across cultural boundaries, and fulfills the responsibilities of global citizenship.

VLGA will work with ISSN to develop globally competent students. To help facilitate this effort, the Community Catalyst Partners has developed a flexible ISSN School Design Matrix, adaptable to a range of school conditions. The matrix is clearly aligned with the VLGA vision and mission and sets a trajectory for our school’s development across six domains:

⁸⁸ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

⁸⁹ Asia Society. Center for Global Education International Studies Schools Network. *A GPS for Success: Updated and Improved*. Accessed from: <https://asiasociety.org/international-studies-schools-network/gps-success-updated-and-improved>

Vision, Mission, Culture	This domain addresses the school’s vision, mission and culture of the school as well as the schools' expectations for all students to be ready for college and postsecondary school success.
Student Outcomes	This domain examines the progress being made by all students toward achieving the characteristics defined in the ISSN Graduate Profile.
Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment	This domain describes a consistent global focus throughout the curriculum and across all academic activities. It examines teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students. It also highlights ongoing, performance-based measures of student learning.
School Organization and Governance	This domain considers the degree to which the school is structured to support teaching and learning.
Professional Learning Community	This domain focuses on the systems of collaborative communication and professional development established to improve teaching and learning.
Family and Community Partnerships	This domain explores the family engagement in the school’s educational mission and the connections established with local organizations and institutions.

The detailed matrix includes quality criteria for each domain, with benchmarks that describe beginning, emerging, proficient, and exemplary implementation. Many of the quality criteria describe practices that are common to the small schools movement in general— for example, implementing a student advisory/homeroom program—or that are good practice in any setting—for example, establishing a clear and consistent grading policy. Other criteria, while not necessarily exclusive to the ISSN, exemplify the international studies approach:

Global content, skills, and perspectives are embedded in the core content areas. Students explore global topics in all of their classes. Curriculum units are often organized around global themes, supporting students to make connections across disciplines.

World languages are part of the experience. Students are highly proficient in English, have opportunities to strengthen home languages, and are introduced to new languages.

Curriculum is student-centered, authentic, globally significant, and connected to real audiences. Students engage in solving real-world, internationally important problems and present their solutions to experts. They are empowered to make decisions about what and how they learn.

Global learning extends beyond the classroom. Students participate in service learning that immerses them in local and global issues, exposes them to professional opportunities, and prepares them as global citizens.

Service Learning at VLGA will be linked to the Global Performance Outcomes (GPO's) described in the section above regarding ISSN. Service learning directly addresses two of the GPO's: "Recognizing Different Perspectives" and "Taking Action." The curriculum is designed to allow students to apply learning to solving real world and local problems with an emphasis relevant global issues outlined in the United Nations Goals for Sustainability and other school identified world problems. Some examples of this might be students applying principles and learning from STEAM in project-based learning to address the issues of water scarcity, climate change, overuse of plastics, sustainable agriculture, etc. Model UN is another example of how students participate in Service Learning. Additionally, classrooms are equipped with the technology (Smart Board type technology and 1:1 Chromebook program) for online learning and exchanges with other students and classrooms around the world to collaboratively take action on relevant global issues.

Opportunities for field trips are an integral part of the Vista experience and are planned according to grade level content and age appropriateness for length of time.

VLGA will work with the Community Catalyst Partners ISSN to further develop or revise (as needed) its curriculum according to the “SAGE” framework and VLGA guiding principles.

- **Student choice:** Students have a say in what they learn and how they learn it.
- **Authentic tasks:** Students perform tasks and investigate questions that adults would perform or study in the real world.
- **Global significance:** Students study topics, issues, and phenomena of global importance, and gain deep knowledge of countries and cultures other than their own.
- **Exhibition to a real-world audience:** Students share their work—and receive feedback—from audiences with relevant expertise, in person and on the web.⁹⁰

VLGA students can show how their learning experiences helped them achieve global competency in four domains, as detailed more fully above in the section on An Educated Person in the 21st Century:

1. Investigate the world beyond their immediate environment, framing significant problems and conducting well-crafted, age-appropriate research.
2. Recognize perspectives, including one's own and those of others, explaining the nature and origin of these perspectives thoughtfully and respectfully.
3. Communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences, bridging geographic, linguistic, ideological, and cultural barriers.

⁹⁰ Asia Society. Center for Global Education. SAGE Advice. Accessed from: <https://asiasociety.org/education/sage-advice>.

4. Take action to improve conditions, viewing themselves as players in the world and participating reflectively.

The ISSN framework does not tell teachers what to teach or when to teach it; rather, it provides both teachers and students with the frameworks and the tools to make good choices. The primary purpose of the curriculum is to enhance teachers' capacity to develop and transform their own curriculum, a key component of teacher autonomy and job satisfaction. VLGA will integrate four quality components, in alignment with our vision and mission, into our curricular design:

1. **Clear expectations:** Tasks are linked to specific Global Performance Standards outcomes, Common Core State Standards, and/or other standards like ISTE. These targets provide teachers and students with a shared understanding of what proficient work looks like.
2. **Authentic learning experiences:** Students explore topics and issues that represent the work of real-world professionals.
3. **Student-centered learning:** Teachers and students share ownership for learning. With feedback from frequent formative assessments, students understand where they are going and how to get there. They also make decisions about what they're learning and how they're learning it.
4. **Multiple opportunities to reach mastery:** With multiple assessments embedded in each unit and leading to graduation, students have many opportunities.⁹¹

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ARTS, MATHEMATICS (STEAM)

VLGA will incorporate STEAM instruction into the ISSN framework to build globally competent, 21st century learners. STEAM is an acronym that represents how all topics in subject areas relate to each other and to the real world: science and technology, interpreted through engineering & the arts, all based in mathematical elements. STEAM education naturally aligns with VLGA's framework for teaching that is based on natural ways of learning and is customizable for all types of students and programs. Significantly, it adds relevancy to learning, and increased engagement for students.

A STEAM education aligns with the VLGA guiding principles in which projects have clear expectations, provide authentic learning experiences, are hands-on and student-centered, and provide myriad authentic ways to demonstrate mastery. Globally, schools are having success with STEAM, teaching academic and life skills in standards-backed, reality-based, personally relevant exploratory learning environments.⁹²

⁹¹ Asia Society. Center for Global Education International Studies Schools Network. Accessed from <https://asiasociety.org/international-studies-schools-network>.

⁹² STEAM Education. STEAM FAQ for Educators. Accessed from: <https://steamedu.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/STEAM-FAQ-Educators-11Nov15.pdf>

VLGA teachers will use the ISSN rubrics to create STEAM projects that address the four domains of global competence in line with the California Common Core Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. STEAM is not a separate effort, but a naturally integrated focus that clearly addresses 21st learning in a global context. *STEAM provides the skills, while the global outcomes provide the context, through the structure of rubric-based portfolios and process work.* Our teachers can better match their learning objectives and goals to the variety of learners they encounter. Embedded within the larger guiding principles of the Framework for Engagement, STEAM at VLGA supports well-balanced and deeply cooperative teams among educators and students based on a variety of characteristics. STEAM provides another way for both teachers and students to use their skills for leading in some areas, while other areas are strengthened through observing and assisting. VLGA educators instruct within their specialty with co-planned thematic units to which everyone contributes, in projects related to the required benchmark concepts and skills.

Project Lead the Way. At VLGA, in addition to teacher-created projects and lessons, STEAM will be taught through the acclaimed Project Lead the Way 9-12 program.⁹³ PLTW is aligned to Next Generation Science Standards and the California Common Core State Standards for math and English Language Arts. PLTW provides students opportunities to learn through exploration and discovery. Through PLTW, students become hands-on problem solvers and learn to collaborate with their fellow students. PLTW will form the introductory backbones of the school's Health Science pathway. Teachers and students begin each module with an engaging e-book story that introduces the challenge students will collaborate on to solve. Then, in a series of activities that build upon each other, students are challenged to become confident in trying new things, to learn from mistakes, and to apply what they do know to find solutions. Instructional staff will receive training in PLTW during the summer.

Student Use of Technology. VLGA believes that, to be a globally educated, 21st century student and citizen, students must have technology infused throughout the curriculum. Thirty-five years ago, education responded to *A Nation at Risk*,⁹⁴ which argued that knowledge of the New Basics is the foundation of success after graduation. The world has dramatically changed, and our low-income and at-risk students now face a Digital Divide that, if not addressed, will widen the achievement gap. Technological literacy is now an essential element in our students' futures. Our students must be able to use technology as an integrated life skill, not as a separate subject or in isolation.

While technology offers extraordinary potential for learning and bringing global awareness, research has clearly indicated that technology is not, and cannot be, treated as the be-all-end-all, but rather becomes a powerful tool when used to support learning through collaborative projects and other authentic learning experiences.⁹⁵ This is why, at VLGA, we will work to find the most

⁹³ Project Lead the Way. PLTW Gateway (9-12) <https://www.pltw.org/our-programs/pltw-gateway>

⁹⁴ Gardner, D. P., Larsen, Y. W., Baker, W., Campbell, A., & Crosby, E. A. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform* (p. 65). Washington, DC: United States Department of Education.

⁹⁵ See, e.g., Ahmed Kahn, T., How Technology Can (And Does) Improve Education, TrustRadius, March 28, 2019 <https://www.trustradius.com/buyer-blog/how-technology-improves-education>; Towns, S. Technology is Not Cure-All for Education's Problems, Governing, March 2011 <https://www.governing.com/columns/tech-talk/col-technology-not-cure-all-solution-to-educations-problems.html>

effective ways to harness the potential of technology as a comprehensible, yet powerful, tool for students.

At VLGA, technology integration will be based upon the International Society for Technology in Education's National Educational Technology Standards for Students.⁹⁶ The ISTE Standards are *the* benchmarks for learning, teaching, and leading in the digital age, and are widely recognized and adopted worldwide. They work in concert to transform education with a uniquely global perspective. The standards are designed around age band articulation that is in alignment with the VLGA developmental and student-centered approach. Students will utilize a variety of technology tools to access, manipulate, exchange and create information, and demonstrate learning. Tools such as the Internet, word processors, databases, spreadsheets, publishing software, and media editors are integrated into the curriculum. Students are required to utilize technology as an outcome in their coursework. They will also be equipped to determine in their Digital Portfolio, what tools they are interested in learning and incorporating into their class projects. Through online learning and benchmark assessments, students will be prepared to take computer-based CAASPP and other assessments.

At VCPS, Google Classroom (LMS) has been adopted to create a safe cyber environment where these important modern relationships can happen without fear of abuse. Through Google Classroom, teachers safely communicate with students and parents through a platform that is monitored for abuse and is private to the school community. Parents and school administrators monitor daily activity and keep abreast of their students' progress and important issues that might arise. Further, through this system, the school can easily check for any cyber-abuse or bullying that may occur.

Moreover, Google Classroom can serve as a powerful tool in the event of a community emergency precipitating school closure such as, for example, the 2020 statewide closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As a platform, Google Classroom is ideally configured to enable high school teachers to pivot quickly to online instruction if necessitated.

Finally, Google Classroom mirrors, in many ways, the learning management systems that our graduates will utilize at the college level to access their course materials and assignments and to engage with their professors. Building our high school students' familiarity with and propensity to fully engage with a comprehensive LMS will therefore prepare them for their next chapter at the post-secondary level.

COLLEGE AND CAREER PATHWAYS

Each student at VLGA will be expected to complete one of three Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways consisting of a minimum of three year-long courses, with the option to pursue and complete an Associate's Degree from one of our college partners by the time they graduate from high school through our dual enrollment program. Pathway options include:

- **Health Science:** a Project Lead the Way pathway that will be offered in partnership with Mount San Jacinto College, which offers the disciplines of Registered

⁹⁶ International Society for Technology in Education. ISTE Standards. Accessed from: <https://www.iste.org/standards>.

Nursing, Kinesiology & Health, Health Occupations and the Sciences of Anatomy, Physiology, Biology and Microbiology.

- **Business:** also in partnership with Mount San Jacinto College, this pathway offers career-technical education in a variety of programs leading to entry-level positions or on-the-job promotions in the dynamic world of business. Programs include accounting, management/supervision, small business entrepreneurship, retail management, marketing and public relations, and real estate (including all of the coursework required to sit for the California Bureau of Real Estate Salesperson License and most of the coursework required for the California Bureau of Real Estate Broker's License).
- **Sustainability Leadership:** in partnership with University of California, Irvine, Vista has received a grant to collaboratively develop this crucial new pathway.

During the 10th grade Advisory/Global Hour, students will begin to participate in their chosen pathway and explore different college majors and careers applicable to the that pathway. Primary pathway courses will be taught on VLGA's campus to ensure access among all of our students, with additional dual enrollment courses available off-site at Mount San Jacinto College (MSJC).⁹⁷ VLGA's College Counselor and students' Advisory teachers and other teachers will support students' success in these dual enrollment courses by helping to develop students' study skills and time-management skills.

During 11th grade Advisory/Global Hour, students will devote significant time to preparing for work-based learning experiences, including resume development, interview skills, job seeking skills and more. Where feasible, VLGA will off job shadowing, internship and other opportunities for students both during the summer between 11th and 12th grades and during the school year, including on Fridays (early release) during 12th grade for students who have sufficient credits to graduate on time.

During 12th grade Advisory/Global Hour, seniors will work intensively with VLGA's College Counselor to navigate the college admissions, financial aid and match process. Our College Counselor will oversee 11th grade students' development of target college lists, then in 12th grade, their crafting of application essays and short answer responses, and their timely submission of all application materials. The College Counselor will also work hand-in-hand with students through the Advisory/Global Hour curriculum to develop their financial acumen, helping them – and their families – complete the FAFSA, interpret financial aid letters in the spring, and reach informed, financially sensible decisions regarding where to matriculate.

SCHOOL STRUCTURE TO PROMOTE A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

At VLGA, the key to teacher and student happiness is promoting a culture of joyous learning. It is not confined to the classroom, but concerns the entire physical environment, the social system, the atmosphere, and norms and values.⁹⁸ Research on emotional engagement suggests school

⁹⁷ The first dual enrollment courses will not be offered until Y2; VLGA staff will work closely with MSJC and other potential partners to ensure registration/administrative and academic supports are in place for students prior to the first dual enrollment course offerings.

⁹⁸ Creemers, B. & Reezigt, G. (1996). School level conditions affecting the effectiveness of instruction. School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 7, 197–228

climate is of paramount importance to a student's academic achievement.⁹⁹ The research conducted on outperforming urban schools has demonstrated that they have been successful at creating a sense of connectedness and belonging that is pervasive throughout the school's organizational culture. These caring relationships exist not only among teachers and students, but among the faculty members of the school and are often included as part of the school's mission statement. Teachers at such schools are perceived by students to have a caring personality, and in turn, this motivates students to work harder for them. At VLGA, a school-wide focus on connectedness and cultural relevance will be sustained through the teacher-student interactions in classrooms both in instruction and in management as well as school-wide discipline policies and practices.¹⁰⁰ Innovative features of our school design are enumerated below.

Small and Safe Learning Communities. Extensive research has looked at the implications of school size.¹⁰¹ Research suggests that small to medium-size schools provide greater opportunities for deeper interpersonal relationships between students and teachers and among peers, for enhanced student participation, and for increased attendance. All of these are leading factors in student engagement.¹⁰² Smaller schools promote conditions for higher levels of student engagement. This model is ideal in sustaining a small community, and is an economically sound ratio allowing the school financial flexibility and strength to accomplish its extensive goals. The physical design of the school prioritizes flexibility and creates multifaceted spaces that allow students to drive their own learning, exhibit agency and choice, and feel safe and welcome at school each and every day.

Central to the teacher-student relationship is the teacher's commitment to creating a safe atmosphere that allows students to take academic risks and reach beyond their current ability.¹⁰³ A supportive environment that pushes students not only fosters motivation, but also helps

⁹⁹ See, e.g., *Jonathan Cohen on School Climate: Engaging the Whole Village, Teaching the Whole Child*, The Challenge: A Publication of the U.S. Dept. of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, https://www.schoolclimate.org/themes/schoolclimate/assets/pdf/cohen_onschoolclimate_iv1%20copy.pdf ("Over the last 30 years a growing body of empirical research has shown that a positive and sustained school climate is associated with and may be predictive of positive youth development, effective risk prevention and health promotion efforts, student learning and academic achievement, increased student graduation rates, and teacher retention.")

¹⁰⁰ Fenning, P., & Rose, J. (2007). Overrepresentation of African American students in exclusionary discipline the role of school policy. *Urban Education*, 42(6), 536-559. Coleman, J. C. (2014). A study of a professional development initiative to increase cultural competency.

¹⁰¹ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA. Furlong, M. J., Whipple, A. D., Jean, G. S., Simental, J., Soliz, A., & Punthuna, S. (2003). Multiple contexts of school engagement: Moving toward a unifying framework for educational research and practice. *The California School Psychologist*, 8(1), 99-113. Marks, H., Louis, K. S., & Printy, S. (2000). The capacity for organizational learning: Implications for pedagogical quality and student achievement. *Understanding schools as intelligent systems*, 239-266.

¹⁰² Darling-Hammond, L., & Plank, D. N. (2015). Supporting Continuous Improvement in California's Education System. *Policy Analysis for California Education, PACE*. Finn, J. D. (1989). Withdrawing from school. *Review of educational research*, 59(2), 117-142. Furlong, M. J., & Christenson, S. L. (2008). Engaging students at school and with learning: A relevant construct for all students. *Psychology in the Schools*, 45(5), 365-368.

¹⁰³ Samson, P. L. (2015). Fostering student engagement: Creative problem-solving in small group facilitations. *Collected Essays on Learning and Teaching*, 8, 153-164.

students feel competent, take ownership of their learning, and serves as a positive predictor of interest in classes and even pursuing academic goals.¹⁰⁴

School discipline and safety. While school culture and discipline have a strong regulatory role in facilitating engagement, they can also play an environmental role in student behaviors such as disrespect, poor attendance, fighting, and other disruptive and problem behaviors. Attentive and constructive culture and discipline facilitates engagement by focusing on services, interventions, and program development, and identifying at-risk students who would benefit from those programs.

Significantly, even the perceptions of unsafe school environments can lead to student dissatisfaction and disengagement.¹⁰⁵ Marks notes that “a positive school environment is favorable to learning by being normed for respect, fairness, safety, and positive communications.”¹⁰⁶ In another study, strong school discipline was found to have a significant impact on school engagement, but that arbitrary or overly strict policies like our current trend towards zero tolerance actually have a negative overall effect on engagement and achievement.¹⁰⁷ These policies are perceived as unfair and can lead to even higher dropout rates.

At VLGA, creating a safe environment with structured discipline policies is essential. Too many at-risk students start down the school-to-prison pipeline precisely because of overly punitive policies that undermine student self-worth and are not aligned with the stages of child development.¹⁰⁸ We will use Way of Council to foster conditions of empathy, respect, kindness, and love in the classroom and the school itself. VLGA will also use principles of Restorative Justice to teach students how to grow and learn from a mistake. The humanity and dignity of every student is paramount and the discipline and safety policies will always be reflective of this deeply held belief.

Way of Council. The Way of Council encourages deep and honest communication. Based on indigenous, worldwide “cultural dialogical” practices including Native American traditions observed and recorded by Benjamin Franklin, as well as contemporary organizational management practices, Council is a formal, structured process of sitting in a circle and passing a talking piece in response to a prompt from the facilitator. At VLGA, we will teach students the “four intentions” of council – to speak from the heart, to listen from the heart without judgment, to speak spontaneously without planning, and to keep it lean so everyone has time with the

¹⁰⁴ Furlong, M. J., Whipple, A. D., Jean, G. S., Simental, J., Soliz, A., & Punthuna, S. (2003). Multiple contexts of school engagement: Moving toward a unifying framework for educational research and practice. *The California School Psychologist*, 8(1), 99-113. Shernoff, E. S., Kratochwill, T. R., & Stoiber, K. C. (2003). Training in Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs): What are school psychology programs teaching?. *Journal of School Psychology*, 41(6), 467-483.

¹⁰⁵ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

¹⁰⁶ Marks, H., Louis, K. S., & Printy, S. (2000). The capacity for organizational learning: Implications for pedagogical quality and student achievement. *Understanding schools as intelligent systems*, 239-266.

¹⁰⁷ Furlong, M. J., Whipple, A. D., Jean, G. S., Simental, J., Soliz, A., & Punthuna, S. (2003). Multiple contexts of school engagement: Moving toward a unifying framework for educational research and practice. *The California School Psychologist*, 8(1), 99-113.

¹⁰⁸ Salole, A. T., & Abdulle, Z. (2015). Quick to punish: An examination of the school to prison pipeline for marginalized youth. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, (72/73), 124.

talking piece. Council is a non-hierarchical forum for discussion. Instead of standing at the board delivering instruction, teachers sit with students in the circle. This allows participants to hear each other in a way that is sorely lacking in the traditional school and classroom culture.

Council is the best tool we have found to help students appreciate the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and opinions of their classmates. Regular use of council promotes a classroom culture where students learn to connect meaningfully with their peers and with adults. Being “in council” helps students develop attention, concentration, and listening skills; to express themselves fully and appropriately; and to “suspend” preconceptions.

Importantly, at VLGA, Council will be contained to the classroom, but is used as a tradition and protocol for increasing teacher, parent, and community buy-in and engagement. Participating in council has the same benefits for adults in a school community – at staff, committee, teacher/parent, or community meetings. Governing the school using Council as a tool helps us model the adult behaviors we wish to encourage in students.

In simple terms, what we have at VLGA in Council will be a systemic, community- building practice, one that moves toward the State’s priorities for personalization and creating safe, caring environments. Council provides a structured dialogic practice that creates opportunities for the voices of all school stakeholders to be heard, considered, and acted upon: students, staff, parents, and community members. In classrooms, along with creating community by providing students opportunities to acknowledge their commonalities and celebrate differences, Council practice facilitates the development of social-emotional skills—such as self-expression, empathy, and cooperation—as it brings relevance, connection, and meaning to academic curriculum and standards.

At VLGA, Way of Council will be supported by:

- Continuous Training from Circle Ways
- Experienced council mentors to all participating teachers
- Monthly professional developments linking council to state learning standards in all academic disciplines and to Restorative Justice policies and practices
- Monthly staff councils
- Parent presentations and parent council facilitation
- Yearly retreat in conjunction with all VCPS

Student Clubs and Enrichment. Students who participate regularly in enriching, engaging student clubs have been found to have a heightened sense of belonging and overall, were more engaged in school. Interestingly, clubs that have an academic focus were found to raise engagement, but athletic and social clubs had a negligible effect unless students participated in both simultaneously.¹⁰⁹ Even then, the role of non- academic clubs did not show a big impact.

¹⁰⁹ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

This is not surprising given the correlation of academically intense activities to engagement found in the research.¹¹⁰

Faculty-advised student clubs will meet in the mornings before school starts, or after-school. Clubs will be formed based on student interest and faculty expertise, and may include such things as performance groups (bands, choirs, drama club, dance groups), sports clubs, arts activities, support groups (LGBTQ, etc.) and more. As enrollment grows, VLGA will consider CIF participation for competitive sports activities.

Uniforms. At VLGA, we believe that uniforms provide a unifying factor that increases identification with the school and with each other. Further, a uniform eliminates the outward appearance of economic disparities found in schools, thus removing one potential cause of bullying activities. Thus, students at VLGA will be expected to wear school-approved uniforms.

PROMOTING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL STUDENT HEALTH & WELLNESS

Quality of student-teacher relationship. Researchers agree that the role of the teacher is key to student engagement.¹¹¹ George Kuh situated the teacher at the center of all engagement,¹¹² whereas Furlong described the teachers as fundamental to a learning environment that promotes engagement.¹¹³ This assertion is significant in its direct application to environmental factors that are within the control of the teacher and school community. A warm and supportive approach is also linked to engagement and is demonstrated through listening to students' points of view, believing in their abilities, showing respect, holding the class to high standards of behaviors, and helping students when they do not understand something.¹¹⁴ Not surprisingly, the role of teacher engagement seems to have a contagious effect: students who perceive their teachers as engaged in the subject and excited about teaching also feel cared about, a view that raises student engagement and forms a deep sense of belonging.¹¹⁵

At VLGA, we will strive to transform the student experience and hire teaching and support personnel that embody a deep sense of excitement and passion for students and their learning.

Student-centered classrooms emphasize supportive relationships between students and teachers in academic environments that are challenging, relevant, collaborative, student-directed, and connected to real-life situations. Students are assessed on their mastery of knowledge and skills

¹¹⁰ Shernoff, E. S., Kratochwill, T. R., & Stoiber, K. C. (2003). Training in Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs): What are school psychology programs teaching?. *Journal of School Psychology, 41*(6), 467-483.

¹¹¹ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

¹¹² Kuh, G. D. (2001). Assessing what really matters to student learning inside the national survey of student engagement. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, 33*(3), 10-17.

¹¹³ Furlong, M. J., Whipple, A. D., Jean, G. S., Simental, J., Soliz, A., & Punthuna, S. (2003). Multiple contexts of school engagement: Moving toward a unifying framework for educational research and practice. *The California School Psychologist, 8*(1), 99-113.

¹¹⁴ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA. Fredricks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P., Friedel, J., & Paris, A. (2005). School engagement. In *What do children need to flourish?*(pp. 305-321). Springer, Boston, MA.

¹¹⁵ Shernoff, E. S., Kratochwill, T. R., & Stoiber, K. C. (2003). Training in Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs): What are school psychology programs teaching?. *Journal of School Psychology, 41*(6), 467-483.

and have multiple opportunities to demonstrate that mastery. Educators are supported in creating a student-centered learning environment through opportunities for reflection, collaboration, and leadership. Research has shown that such settings are necessary for students to develop the skills to succeed in college, career, and life.

Student-centered practices are more often found in schools that serve affluent and middle-class students than those located in low-income communities. Creating student-centered learning environments is one way to effectively address the opportunity gap for these students.

VLGA firmly believes that students learn best by doing and not in passive lecture style settings. The student-centered classroom will provide targeted instruction based on personalized learning goals with ample time for practice.

Our current educational system is based on the antiquated notion that students should sit quietly and still for six hours each day, while their teacher is the holder of knowledge and conveys that knowledge through lectures. However, we learn a language by speaking it, to read and write by reading and writing, and we develop 21st century skills and attributes by regularly using them in our daily lives. The VLGA experience will put students at the center of learning with teachers acting as a coach and facilitating a more personalized learning experience. This shift from vertical to horizontal classrooms is based on a constructivist view wherein, optimally, the classroom provides experiences that prompt students to actively construct their own knowledge and learning.¹¹⁶

Student belonging. The research on engagement makes clear that a sense of belonging is a crucial factor in engagement. Emotional engagement has been deemed fundamental to human motivation¹¹⁷ and is described as a sense of belonging, relatedness, and identification with school. This state of belonging requires “frequent, affectively pleasant or positive interactions with the same individuals, and they need these interactions to occur in a framework of long-term, stable caring, and concern.”¹¹⁸ According to the research, emotional engagement plays a role in academic and cognitive engagement, which has a direct link to learning.¹¹⁹ In one study, students who reported high levels of belonging outperformed their peers, while those who reported low levels of belonging often displayed negative and anti-social behaviors, including cheating, drug and alcohol use on school grounds, and even suicidal feelings.¹²⁰ It has also been shown that

¹¹⁶ Parsons, J., & Taylor, L. (2011). Improving student engagement. *Current issues in education*, 14(1). Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *Problems of general psychology*. Zepke, N., & Leach, L. (2010). Improving student engagement: Ten proposals for action. *Active learning in higher education*, 11(3), 167-177.

¹¹⁷ Appleton, J. J., Christenson, S. L., & Furlong, M. J. (2008). Student engagement with school: Critical conceptual and methodological issues of the construct. *Psychology in the Schools*, 45(5), 369-386.

¹¹⁸ Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological bulletin*, 117(3), 497.

¹¹⁹ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

¹²⁰ Christenson, S. L., Reschly, A. L., Appleton, J. J., Berman, S., Spanjers, D., & Varro, P. (2008). Best practices in fostering student engagement. In *Best practices in school psychology V* (pp. 1099-1120). National Association of School Psychologists. Resnick, M. D., Bearman, P. S., Blum, R. W., Bauman, K. E., Harris, K. M., Jones, J., ... & Ireland, M. (1997). Protecting adolescents from harm: findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health. *Jama*, 278(10), 823-832.

identification with school develops over time and is affected, positively or negatively, by a lifetime of academic successes or failures.¹²¹

While VLGA will carefully attend to the interpersonal relationships and factors of engagement that fall within the locus of control of students and teachers, it will also recognize the school-controlled factors that affect student identification with their school and the value of overall satisfaction within the students' daily routines. Most research makes evident that school-controlled factors play a role. One study found a strong connection between school engagement and school climate, and identified two distinct elements: *Physical environment*, which it described in terms of size and racial/ethnic populations, and *regulatory environment*, which consists of school discipline policies.¹²²

Family Engagement. Research has long been clear about the important role that families play in their children's academic success.¹²³ At VLGA, parents, guardians, and extended family are integral parts of the school community. Teachers and administrators will be committed to welcoming and working with all families to engage them in their child's education. Communicating with families is crucial to this relationship, and there will be frequent communication between the school and families. At VLGA, we are committed to using a variety of means to communicate with our families. Our families will have access to a state-of-the-art learning management system, an up-to-date website, emails, and hard-copy newsletters. However, we know that many of our families do not have access to the internet and don't use email regularly. Based on parent surveys and parent focus groups conducted by Dr. Wilson, we understand that most of our families have texting capability and prefer to be communicated with by text. At VLGA, we will use our learning management system to ensure that families receive communication in their preferred format. Teachers send home regular reports of student progress, and follow-up as needed in person and via phone to ensure that families are fully equipped to support their student's learning at home. Finally, VLGA will host a variety of social and educational events to promote community-building and family involvement.

These may include back-to-school events, parent educational seminars, exhibitions of student work, student performances, and our special awards night, Noche de Estrellas. Families accompany their son/daughter to student-led conferences bi-annually to stay informed of their child's progress, and to ensure parents know how to support their student's learning and personal growth at home.

Our three areas of family support revolve around helping parents be an integral part of their teenager's academic life:

- Home – School Relationships: VLGA will foster youth's developmental needs, parents'

¹²¹ Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

¹²² Furlong, M. J., & Christenson, S. L. (2008). Engaging students at school and with learning: A relevant construct for all students. *Psychology in the Schools*, 45(5), 365-368.

¹²³ NEA. Parent, Family, Community Involvement in Education. Accessed from: https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB11_ParentInvolvement08.pdf. Families and Schools Together. (2016). The Importance of Parent Engagement: A List of Research and Thought Partnership. Accessed from: <https://www.familiesandschools.org/blog/the-importance-of-parent-engagement/>

attitudes and practices, and schools' expectations and support of family involvement by maintaining a strong relationship between home and school.

- Responsibility for Learning: VLGA parents will be involved in their child's learning plan. Their responsibility in the plan will be to support their student's goals.
- Parenting: VLGA will assist, when necessary, parents in developing attitudes, values, and practices of parents in raising adolescents.

These three areas will strengthen VLGA students' abilities to develop in their academic, personal and long-term goals, through the creation of a "full circle" of expectations and communication among the student, family and school. To ensure success in maintaining the "full circle," parents who need additional assistance are provided with, or directed to, additional resources within the school and community in order to fulfill areas of need (e.g., ESL classes, parenting classes, counseling services, job centers, etc.). The Digital Portfolios enhance parent involvement, as they have components in which the parents are a part of their son/daughter's development of college awareness, personal aspirations and planning for the future.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION – HIGH SCHOOL

The curriculum for VLGA is based on the California Content Standards, including the Common Core Standards, the Next Generation Science Standards, ELD Standards, and the California Curriculum Frameworks. VLGA will implement the *2019 California Arts Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve* (Arts Standards), *2019 California World Languages Standards for Public Schools, Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve* (when published) and *2019 Health Education Curriculum Framework for California Public Schools, Transitional Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* (Health Education Framework).

Additionally, VLGA will make available, through its partnership with Mount San Jacinto Community College, a variety of dual enrollment course options in all content areas and in certificate programs that will meet both high school, Intersegmental General Education Transfer Certificate, and professional certificate programs.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The ELA curriculum is based on California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, along with the California English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.¹²⁴ VLGA will use *myPerspectives* English Language Arts materials and guidelines to provide students cohesive support and practice as they grow their skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language. Students will encounter authors' perspectives through whole-group learning and small-group learning as they read literature from across time periods and cultures. Students will listen to the perspectives of their peers through conversations and collaborative activities.

In each unit, students will read classic and contemporary fiction and nonfiction texts, and view/listen to media selections, all related to an Essential Question. Students will use technology

¹²⁴ <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/cf/elaeldfrmwrksbeadopted.asp>

to interact with texts and activities to promote student ownership of their learning through goal setting, student choice, and reflection; encourage social collaboration; link together knowledge, skills and learning behaviors. *myPerspectives* is backwards designed from defined learning outcomes with learning activities, instruction and assessment, and provides opportunities to personalize for learning in response to student performance and need.

The materials include texts that reflect the appropriate demand and rigor required by the standards for the grade band. Students will develop meaning and language through close reading, text analysis that focuses on craft and structure, concept vocabulary and word study, and close inspection of the author's style. Each unit will end with a performance-based assessment.

English Language Arts 9 (College Prep)

ELA 9 will analyze literature and expository text and produce complex writing assignments. Students will apply the knowledge and skills acquired in middle grades with more refinement, depth, and sophistication with grade-appropriate material. Students will apply and refine their command of the writing process and writing conventions to produce original narrative, persuasive, expository and descriptive texts of at least 1,500 words each. A focus on persuasion, exposition, literary analysis will integrate skills of reading as students move through themed units aligned to other core content learning. Unit themes are: American Voices, "*What does it mean to be 'American'?*"; Survival, "*What does it take to survive?*"; The Literature of Civil Rights, "*How can words inspire change?*"; Star-Crossed Romances, "*Do we determine our own destinies?*"; Journey of Transformation, "*What can we learn from a journey?*", and World's End, "*Why do we try to imagine the future?*".

English Language Arts 10 (College Prep)

ELA 10 will emphasize analyzing literature in greater depth, analyzing expository text, and producing more complex writing assignments. Students will apply and refine their command of the writing process and writing conventions to produce original narrative, persuasive, expository and descriptive texts of at least 1500 words each. Students will use primary and secondary sources accurately, distinguish between information and the significance of the data, be aware of audience, anticipate misunderstandings, and use subject-specific terms accurately as they move through themed units aligned to other core content learning. Unit themes are: Inside the Nightmare, "*What is the allure of fear?*"; Outsiders and Outcasts, "*Do people need to belong?*"; Expanding Freedom's Reach, "*What is the relationship between power and freedom?*", All that Glitters, "*What do our possessions reveal about us?*"; Virtue and Vengeance, "*What motivates us to forgive?*"; Blindness and Sight, "*What does it mean to see?*"

English Language Arts 11 (College Prep)

ELA 11 is a reading and writing course that includes standards-based instruction centered on recurrent themes and genres in United States literature from the colonial period to the present and reflects on the diversity of American life. Students will read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance their studies of history and

social science. Students will analyze the philosophical arguments presented in literary works to determine whether the authors' positions have contributed to the quality of each work and the credibility of characters. As a means of developing the critical thinking and communication skills necessary for the demands of college and work, students will engage in discussion to prepare oral and written arguments that provide all relevant perspectives and consider the validity and reliability of sources as they move through themed units aligned to other core content learning. Unit themes are: Writing Freedom, "*What is the meaning of Freedom?*"; The Individual and Society, "*What role does individualism play in American society?*"; Power, Protest, and Change; "*In what ways does the struggle for freedom change with history?*"; Grit and Grandeur; "*What is the relationship between literature and place?*"; Facing our Fears; "*How do we respond when challenged by fear?*"; Ordinary Lives, Extraordinary Tales; What do stories reveal about the human condition?"

English Language Arts 12 (College Prep)

ELA 12 is an expository reading and writing course designed to develop advanced proficiency in rhetorical and analytical reading, writing, and thinking. Key principles of Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum ("ERWC") include the integration of interactive reading and writing processes; a rhetorical approach to texts that fosters critical thinking and engagement through a relentless focus on texts; materials and themes that engage student interest; classroom activities designed to model and foster successful practices of fluent readers and writers; research-based methodologies with a consistent relationship between theory and practice; built-in flexibility to allow teachers to respond to varied students' needs and instructional contexts; and alignment with the CA CCSS for ELA and Literacy.

The cornerstone of the course—the ERWC Assignment Template—presents a scaffolded process for helping students read, comprehend, and respond to nonfiction and literary texts. Modules also provide instruction in research methods and documentation conventions. Students will be expected to increase their awareness of the rhetorical strategies employed by authors and to apply those strategies to their own writing. They will read closely to examine the relationship between an author's argument or theme and his or her audience and purpose; to analyze the impact of structural and rhetorical strategies; and to examine the social, political, and philosophical assumptions that underlie the text. By the end of the course, students will be expected to use this process independently when reading unfamiliar texts and writing in response to them.

AP English Language and Composition (College Prep)

In **AP English Language and Composition**, students will cultivate their understanding of writing and rhetorical arguments through reading, analyzing, and writing texts as they explore topics like rhetorical situation, claims and evidence, reasoning and organization, and style. For each of the nine units that scaffold student development of the analysis and composition skills, the teacher will select a theme or topic and then a text -- typically short nonfiction pieces -- that will enable students to practice and develop the reading and writing skills for that unit.

Students will learn how to explain how writers' choices reflect the components of the rhetorical situation; make strategic choices in a text to address a rhetorical situation; identify and describe the claims and evidence of an argument; analyze and select evidence to develop and refine a claim; describe the reasoning, organization, and development of an argument; use organization and commentary to illuminate the line of reasoning in an argument; explain how writers' stylistic choices contribute to the purpose of an argument; and select words and use elements of composition to advance an argument.

AP English Literature and Composition (College Prep)

In *AP English Literature and Composition*, students will cultivate their understanding of literature through reading and analyzing texts as they explore concepts like character, setting, structure, perspective, figurative language, and literary analysis in the context of literary works. Through three genre-based, recurring units – short fiction, poetry, longer fiction or drama – this course will scaffold skills and knowledge to provide students the distinct skills they need to learn to read texts critically.

Students will learn how to explain the function of character; plot and structure; the narrator or speaker; word choice, imagery, and symbols; and comparison; and will learn how to develop textually substantiated arguments about interpretations of a part of all of a text.

Dual Enrollment English 101 College Composition

This course provides instruction in writing academic analytic essays. Students will learn to interpret and respond to sources analytically, conduct academic-level research, and incorporate those sources into research papers. This course satisfies graduation and transfer requirements.

Dual Enrollment English 103 Critical Thinking and Writing

This course provides continuing practice in the analytic writing begun in English 101. The course develops critical thinking, reading, and writing skills as they apply to the analysis of written texts (literature and/or non-fiction) from diverse cultural sources and perspectives. The techniques and principles of effective written argument as they apply to the written text will be emphasized. Some research is required.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

As detailed more fully in the section on English Learners, below, the ELD program implements both the California ELD Standards and the new English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework for California Public Schools (ELA/ELD Framework). The school's ELD goals are directly aligned with the goals detailed in the ELD Standards and Framework to "ensure that ELs are fully supported as they:

- Read, analyze, interpret, and create a variety of literary and informational text types;
- Develop an understanding of how language is a complex, dynamic, and social resource for making meaning;

- Develop an understanding of how content is organized in different text types across disciplines using text organization and structure, language features, and vocabulary depending on purpose and audience;
- Become aware that different languages and varieties of English exist;
- Recognize their home languages and cultures as resources to value in their own right and to draw upon in order to build proficiency in English;
- Contribute actively to class and group discussions by asking questions, responding appropriately, and providing useful feedback;
- Demonstrate knowledge of content through oral presentations, writing, collaborative conversations, and multimedia; and
- Develop proficiency in shifting registers based on task, purpose, audience, and text type” (ELA/ELD Framework p. 9-10).

EL students, like their English-fluent counterparts, are expected to gain progress in each of the ELA strands -- Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. As detailed more fully below, through both integrated and designated ELD instruction, including use of the Lexia curricular program, EL students are supported in developing EL proficiency and reclassification as they master content standards. The Principal or designee monitors EL progress through formal and informal assessments including grades, standardized test scores, and ongoing communications with classroom teachers and the student’s parents/guardians. (See below, for more details about support/ELD instruction, assessment, reclassification and monitoring of ELs.)

ELD 1-4 (College Prep)

In **ELD 1-4**, VLGA will use *myPerspectives ELD Companion*. Unit-by-unit, the ELD Companion texts build on the same theme, multi-genre approach and essential question as in *myPerspectives*. *ELD Companion* will focus on the same set of grade-level ELA standards that are being developed in the core program, including the writing instruction, aligned writing modes and essays. In each lesson, student objects are aligned to five ELA/ELD themes; the lesson overview narrative outlines the content of each lesson at a glance; and standards show the alignment to CCS. New vocabulary and expressions are introduced in context – typically both visual and conversation – before being directly taught. Phonics, spelling, grammar, and language skills are introduced in context and then directly taught. For every skill, there is instruction and practice. The practice will be done either as guided practice or as independent practice, depending on the language proficiency of the student.

Language Acquisitions, Vocabulary and Foundational Skills

- **Academic Vocabulary** lessons will focus on vocabulary for success in school.
- **Multi-faceted** instructional approach will combine direct instruction with oral language development and generative vocabulary.
- **Vocabulary** lessons will allow teachers to assess students’ word knowledge.
- **Direct Instruction** will be utilized to teach unfamiliar words.
- **Knowledge Checks** will help assess students’ mastery of language and vocabulary.
- **Phonics and Word Reading** lessons will provide support for English learners who need support on the sounds and spellings of English
- **Language Fluency** practice will be provided.

As students read familiar texts, skills will be taught directly and practiced in both isolation and in context. Students' fluency will be evaluated for rate, accuracy, and expression.

Language Production

- **Collaborative conversation** will be a regular feature
- **Conversation starters** will adjust to the level of language support required by students
- **Observation forms** will be available to use in evaluating students' language development and participation
- **Peer conversation** is a regular feature of the program.
- During **core instruction**, students have the opportunity to interact with classmates.

Language Use, *Reading Texts*

- Texts are tied to the *myPerspectives* unit **themes** and **essential questions**.
- Students will apply language, vocabulary, and reading skills and strategies in the context of text reading
- Text reading will **integrate** all aspects of language development
- Texts will focus on **skills development** including vocabulary, language, and general knowledge
- Texts and instruction will **integrate** reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- In **Time to Read**, students will read **independently** from self-selected texts.
- Reading and writing will be **integrated** as students respond in writing to prompts.
- Response prompts will provide scaffolded support of language structure and usage
- **Book clubs** will be available for small groups to engage in a shared reading and language development experience.
- **Book clubs** will be **student-directed** or **teacher-led**, and will include questions and prompts

Language Use, *Writing*

- Every level of *ELD Companion* will have students produce three essays
- Instruction and support will be provided in **Whole Group instruction**
- Students writing interface will provide instruction within the assignment to support students
- Students will receive feedback on the quality and correctness of their writing
- **Scaffolding** and support will be provided for students in all stages of writing
- Speaking, listening, and reading will all be **integrated** with writing.

MATHEMATICS

As a STEAM-focused school, mathematics and quantitative reasoning skills are central to the curriculum at VLGA. At all grade levels, students participate in engaging, hands-on math activities that require critical thinking, problem-solving, and conceptual understanding. VLGA holds high expectations for all students in math development and provides ample support for students to reach these expectations. California's Common Core Content and Practice Standards

and the Mathematics Framework for California Public Schools, A Look At Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve in California Public Schools, provides a foundation for work in math.

A cohesive math curriculum promotes math fluency and accuracy as well as conceptual understanding of important mathematical ideas and mathematical reasoning. Hands-on activities and materials in the classroom, as well ties to Project-Based Learning (PBL), helps students to recognize the connections between math concepts and the world around them.

VLGA will use Agile Mind, a program grounded in research on educational practices that produce meaningful learning gains for all students, as its integrated math curriculum. The Agile Mind curriculum connects abstract concepts with students' every day realities in ways and provides embedded teacher supports offer planning and teaching guidance. Agile Mind's comprehensive, standards-centered curriculum provides engaging, dynamic lessons, resources and tools for teachers, practice and application, assessment and reporting, supports for differentiation, and supports for English Language Learners.

Integrated Math I (College Prep)

In *Integrated Math I*, students will learn to use basic algebraic tools (graphs, tables, and symbols) to represent problem situations); develop a solid understanding of rate of change; formalize their understanding of the concept of a function; model and solve important problems with linear and exponential functions and related equations; represent and analyze univariate and bivariate data, including understanding the difference between correlation and causation; understand and apply the structure of – and relationships within – an axiomatic system; become adept with the tools central to the study of space and spatial relationships; develop spatial reasoning ability, including the capacity to represent and transform shapes and figures concretely, pictorially, algebraically, and through the use of coordinate systems; use geometric representations and symbols to solve problems and prove theorems; and strengthen their knowledge and the connections between algebra and geometry.

Integrated Math II (College Prep)

In *Integrated Math II*, students will learn to solve real-world problems using a variety of tools; model and solve important problems with absolute value and quadratic functions and related equations; extend their understanding of exponents to rational exponents; develop an understanding of inverse relations; use the classical methods of finding the area of two-dimensional shapes, including quadrilaterals and circles; learn basic geometry of three-dimensional shapes including methods of finding simple volumes and surface areas; investigate and solve problems involving the trigonometry of right triangles; explore relationships related to lines, segments, arc length, and sectors of circles; use geometric representations and symbols to solve problems and prove theorems; continue to strengthen their knowledge of the connections between algebra and geometry; and extend their understanding of probability as they investigate conditional probability and independence.

Integrated Math III (College Prep)

In ***Integrated Math III***, students will deepen their understanding of exponential functions and equations; develop the concept of a logarithmic function as the inverse of an exponential function; model and solve problems with exponential, logarithmic, relational, square root, and cube root functions and related equations; investigate key characteristics of trigonometric functions and use these functions to model real-world phenomena; model and solve problems with quadratic and square root inequalities; investigate key characteristics of polynomial functions, and model connections to linear and exponential functions; analyze connections between 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional representations; and model with geometry; investigate and model real world problems with conic sections.

Pre-Calculus (College Prep)

In ***Pre-Calculus***, students will use functions, equations, sequences, series, vectors, and limits as tools to express generalizations and to analyze and understand a variety of mathematical relationships and real-world phenomena; expand and develop their use of functions and their properties to choose appropriate models for real-world problem situations to answer meaningful questions; build on and expand their experiences with functions as they continue to explore the characteristics and behavior of functions (including rate of change and limits), and the most important families of functions that model real-world phenomena, especially transcendental functions; extend their work in functions, including polynomial, rational, radical, exponential, power, logarithmic, and trigonometric function; and continue to work with operations on functions, including composition of functions.

AP Calculus AB (College Prep)

In ***AP Calculus AB***, students will explore the concepts, methods, and applications of differential and integral calculus, working with the theoretical basis to solve problems by applying knowledge and skills. Students will learn how to determine expressions and values using mathematical procedures and rules; connect representations; justify reasoning and solutions; and use correct notation, language, and mathematical conventions to communicate results or solutions. Units include limits and continuity; differentiation - definition and fundamental properties; differentiation – composite, implicit, and inverse functions; contextual applications of differentiation; analytical applications of differentiation; integration and accumulation of change; differential equations; and applications of integration.

Dual Enrollment Math 140 Introduction to Statistics

This course is an introduction to the concepts, ideas and applications of probability and statistics. The course covers descriptive statistics, elementary probability and combinatorics, probability distributions, the central limit theorem, estimation of population parameters, correlation and linear regression, hypothesis testing including ANOVA. This course includes applications from the fields of business, economics, social sciences, life sciences, engineering, and physical sciences.

SCIENCE

The science program at VLGA will emphasize inquiry, curiosity, collaboration, scientific literacy, and especially, relevance and application to real-world problems. VLGA will use the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which emphasize and align to our goals through inquiry-oriented investigations, real-life application, and interdisciplinary thinking about scientific concepts (www.nextgenscience.org). VLGA will use the 9-12 Project Lead the Way curriculum and *Cengage* programs, which are aligned with NGSS standards and VLGA's guiding principles and goals. Students have many opportunities to explore their own science and engineering ideas in labs, on field trips, and in an on-campus maker-space.

The implementation of our standards-based Science curriculum is driven by the constructivist belief that students learn best in an inquiry-based, hands-on, investigative environment that builds upon the knowledge of previous learning. Our students will work in cooperative groups to advance through the stages of the scientific process. It is through these cooperative groups that our students will learn how to work together to solve a problem.

The VLGA project-based/constructivist-driven science instructional program will encourage students to learn content at higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, as students have opportunities to apply their knowledge as well as analyze, synthesize, evaluate and create information and ideas. While NGSS set the learning foundation, the actual project is the framework through which all of the teaching and experiential learning take place. Students learn concepts via active engagement in the project. Projects may be problem-, inquiry-, experiment-, or design- focused ultimately making the learning more authentic and student-centered. Projects also focus on "real-life", current, possibly community- based problems (i.e. understanding, responding to, and designing a solution for the water drought). Students are responsible for presenting their project outcomes in front of their peers and sometimes the larger school community.

Students follow the eight practices of science and engineering that the NGSS Framework identifies as essential for all students:

- Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
- Developing and using models
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Using mathematics and computational thinking
- Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
- Engaging in argument from evidence
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Two primary curricular resources support our students' science learning: Project Lead the Way's Gateway program and National Geographic's *Cengage*.

PLTW Gateway is aligned to Next Generation Science Standards, Common Core State Standards for Math and English Language Arts, and other national and state standards for grades 9-12. The program's 10-hour modules are flexible and customizable: They can be implemented independently or in tandem with one another, at the grade level, at any time. Both formative and summative assessments are embedded in the program. Assessments for learning and of learning

play a critical role by providing meaningful feedback to students, teachers, and administrators. PLTW is renowned for helping high schoolers develop as strong STEM thinkers and for its capacity to help high school graduates reach college with the skills and confidence to navigate college level science lab settings.

VLGA will also use National Geographic's *Cengage*, a dynamic, active and personalized science curriculum that better prepares students to evaluate scientific content and understand rapid changes and developments that occur in the field of science. Each chapter is explored in a series of concepts (including relevant research), with learning objectives associated with each concept that align with end-of-unit activities. Curriculum focuses on real world applications, including social issues arising from new research and developments – particularly the many ways in which human activities are continuing to alter the environment and threaten both human health and Earth's biodiversity. Each chapter ends with an *Application* section that explains a current topic in light of the chapter content, and also illustrates one of the core competencies listed above.

Biology (College Prep)

Whether or not students have studied biology, they have an intuitive understanding of life on Earth because they are a part of it. Every experience with the natural world – from the warmth of the sun on their skin to their love of pets – contributes to that understanding. In ***Biology***, students will learn about the scientific method, scientific research, and sampling error, bias and objectivity through the science of biology. Students will uncover the emergent properties, unity and diversity of life through *Principles of Cellular Life; Genetics; Principles of Evolution; Evolution and Biodiversity; How Plants Work; How Animals Work; and Principles of Ecology*.

Chemistry (College Prep)

In ***Chemistry***, students will understand how a knowledge of chemistry is useful to almost everyone because chemistry occurs all around us all of the time, and it lies at the heart of human effort to produce new materials that make our lives safe and easier, to produce new sources of energy that are nonpolluting, and to understand and control the many diseases that threaten our food supplies. Students will learn about chemistry through studying *Measurements and Calculations, Matter, Nomenclature, Reactions in Aqueous Solutions, Chemical Composition, Gases, Liquids, and Solids, and more*.

Physics (College Prep)

In ***Physics***, students will learn about the most fundamental physical science, concerned with the fundamental principles of the Universe. Physics is the foundation upon which the other sciences – astronomy, biology, chemistry, and geology – are based. It is also the basis of a large number of engineering applications. Students will study physics as it can be divided within six main areas: *classical mechanics, relativity, thermodynamics, electromagnetism, optics, and quantum mechanics*.

Dual Enrollment Anatomy 101 Human Anatomy & Physiology I

This course is the first in a two-part series covering the topics of the chemical, cellular, and tissue levels of organization. In addition this course provides a systematic study of the anatomy and physiology of the following systems: integumentary, reproductive, skeletal, muscular, digestive and metabolic.

Dual Enrollment Anthropology 101 Biological Anthropology

This is an introductory course from a scientific perspective about human evolution and human biological diversity. This course includes discussions of human genetics, natural selection, living primates, fossil evidence of human evolutionary change, and modern human variation. This course is designed to improve a student's understanding of modern human diversity and the processes involved in our species adaptation. A field trip may be required.

Dual Enrollment Anthropology 111 Biological Anthropology Lab

This course is an introductory laboratory course that investigates human evolution and human biological diversity from a scientific perspective. This includes human genetics, principles of natural selection, physical and behavioral characteristics of primates, fossil evidence of human evolutionary change, and modern human variation. A field trip may be required.

Dual Enrollment Chemistry 100 Introduction to Chemistry

This course is a survey of basic chemistry topics. The topics covered are: metric system and numbers, chemical view of matter, periodic table of elements, atomic theory, chemical bonds, chemical equations, stoichiometry, and solutions. This course is intended as preparation for major's chemistry, allied health, and general education.

Dual Enrollment Environmental Science 110 Natural Resources

This course focuses on sustainable management principles with application to the harvest and extraction of natural resources, particularly forest resources. Principles covered include human interactions with forest resources, forest ecology and management, renewable resources, market applications and current issues as they develop in the subject area. There is a requisite lab/field component to this course.

Dual Enrollment Water 500 Introduction to Water/Wastewater Operations

This course covers water utility operations plus the basic knowledge needed to advance in the industry. Regulations, industry certification, and the examination process will be discussed as a part of this course.

Dual Enrollment Water 504 Water Distribution I & II

The course covers the sources of water, principles of design, installation, operation and maintenance of pipes, pumps, valves, meters, and other related hydraulic units. Operation and maintenance safety considerations are emphasized. The course is designed to prepare the student to take the State of California Water Distribution Operator exam.

Dual Enrollment Water 509 Water Distribution III, IV, & V

This course exposes students to advanced principles in the operation and maintenance of a water distribution systems. State regulations, administrative duties, and basic supervision responsibilities will also be examined.

Dual Enrollment Water 530 Environmental Laws & Regulations

This course provides an overview of federal, state, and local laws pertaining to environmental protection and pollution prevention relating to water quality, air quality, solid waste, and cross media contamination.

Dual Enrollment Water 533 Introduction to Water Use Efficiency

This introductory water conservation course is designed for students interested in working as a water use efficiency practitioner. It includes the expected range of knowledge required for the American Water Works Association (AWWA) Water Use Efficiency Practitioner I Certificate.

Dual Enrollment Water 537 Introduction to Water Utility Management

This course is designed for students interested in managing water and/or wastewater utilities. Topics will include personnel management, organizational management, financial management, training, problem-solving/decision-making, regulatory compliance, health and safety programs, community relations, personal and professional skills.

Dual Enrollment Water 795 Wastewater Technology Math

This course prepares students for the quantitative and algebraic questions typically encountered on wastewater collections and wastewater treatment operations licensing examinations. Topics include, but are not limited to, unit conversion, volume, velocity, flow rates, chemical dosages, process control, and solids handling.

HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES

The Social Studies curriculum is globally focused and build students' understanding of themselves and the world around them. Using investigation, thematic units, and essential questions, the Social Studies curriculum naturally builds upon students' prior knowledge and experience, honor and celebrate their diverse backgrounds and cultures, and deepen their self-awareness and sense of place in an ever-increasingly global society.

The California Common Core State Standards and the recently adopted California State Framework for Social Studies and History (2016) provide a foundation for students' learning, and are supplemented by teacher-created lessons to ensure that history and social sciences reflect students' cultures and identities. The curriculum includes four main social science disciplines: (1) History, (2) Geography, (3) Civics, and (4) Economics. Students learn to distinguish fact

from opinion, connect cause and effect, and examine history through a variety of lenses and perspectives.

Social studies is presented in four interconnected formats:

- Within the reading program through informational texts
- Through personal and informational writing and research in the writing program
- Via integrated, thematic units of instruction
- Through interdisciplinary project-based learning

VLGA's history and social sciences curriculum is rooted in the curriculum standards specified in the History-Social Sciences Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve, CCSS for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy), and 2014 ELA/ELD Framework. We will adopt new history/social studies standards as they are released. Our curriculum shares the same three goals as the Framework: Knowledge and Cultural Understanding, Democratic Understanding and Civic Values, and Skills Attainment and Social Participation. Students will gain an understanding of human history and of how our society and the world work. The curriculum will not only support student acquisition of core knowledge of the world's eras and civilizations, but will also develop the critical thinking skills that historians and social scientists employ to distinguish the important from the unimportant, to recognize vital connections between the present and the past, and to appreciate universal historical themes and dilemmas.

World History (College Prep)

World History is a course concerning the nations and peoples of the world. Included with the history and geography are cultural development, political and economic systems and social structures. The student will be challenged to think critically about international relations, human commonalities and differences and their impact on the student's own life. This course begins with an introduction into history, geography, and anthropology to give students a framework for understanding the course as a whole. The course explores the four primary ancient civilizations and works its way through present day. This course encourages critical thinking about the development of history as it relates to our present- day cultures and situations.

U.S. History (College Prep)

U.S. History will focus on United States history from Reconstruction to the present day. Students will be exposed to the historical, geographic, political, economic, and sociological events which influenced the development of the United States and the resulting impact on world history. To clearly see the relationship between cause and effect in historical events, students will also review the fundamental ideas and events which occurred before the end of Reconstruction.

AP U.S. History (College Prep)

In ***AP U.S. History***, students will explore and analyze the economic, political, and social transformation of the United States since the time of the first European encounters. Students will

be asked to master not only the wide array of factual information necessary to do well on the AP exam, but also to practice skills of critical analysis of historical information and documents. Students will read primary and secondary source materials and analyze problems presented by historians to gain insight into challenges of interpretation and the ways in which historical events have shaped American society and culture.

United States Government (College Prep) – one semester

The *United States Government* course is a thought-provoking exploration of American government and politics. This course is designed to provide students with a basic knowledge of the purpose, structure, and operation of the national and state governmental systems. Students will study the Federal system and its underlying principles as they are related to national, state, and local levels. Topics will include the constitution, civil rights, interest groups, politics, voting, congress, the presidency, the judiciary, laws, public policies, state and local government, and current events.

Economics (College Prep) – one semester

In *Economics*, students will study the important relationship between economics and our social and political systems. The course emphasizes the philosophy, development, and operation of our American economic system and its important influence upon the individual and society, and provides an overview of business, finance, banking, investment, government's role in the economic system, labor-management relations, foreign trade, income inequality, and related fields. The knowledge and skills acquired will help the student make career decisions and make wise choices for further study at a college or vocational school. Students will gain insights into the advantages, disadvantages, and strategies of starting a business of one's own.

Introduction to Ethnic Studies

This Ethnic Studies course is designed for students to be politically, socially and economically conscious about their personal connections to local and global histories. By studying the histories of race, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, and culture, students will cultivate respect and empathy for individuals and solidarity with groups of people locally, nationally, and globally so as to foster active social engagement and community building. Particular focus will be given to the contributions, and struggles of different racial and ethnic groups for liberty, equality, and justice in the United States. Students will apply in-depth analysis to contemporary issues and collectively pose creative, self-affirming solutions in a variety of ways to promote agency through grassroots community advocacy and civic engagement. This course is intended to help build inter-ethnic understanding and socio-cultural bridges in an increasingly more multicultural and multiethnic nation, which is imperative to creating a just society

Dual Enrollment Communication 108 Intercultural Communication

This course is designed to empower students with effective strategies for making wise choices in three areas: personal, academic, and career pathways. The course focuses on a strong clear reason for staying in school, more ability to cope with the challenges of transitioning into a new

life, educational planning, learning styles, campus resources, and effective strategies for personal health and wellness.

Dual Enrollment Economics 202 Principles of Microeconomics

This course covers the basic theories concepts terminology and uses of microeconomics. Emphasis is on the interaction of consumers business and industry choices in a market economy. Topics covered include optimizing behavior of individual firms and consumers supply and demand elasticity consumer choice production and costs market structures antitrust and regulation factor markets income and poverty market failures and public choice. Issues such as environmental problems are also studied.

Dual Enrollment Ethnic Studies 103 Ethnic Politics in America

This course will examine the role of ethnic minorities in the political process and their relationship to and role in government and include a discussion of ethnic empowerment, major ethnic based political and community organizations, the philosophies of major ethnic group leaders, and current political issues and trends as they impact ethnic groups. The ethnic groups to be reviewed will include Black People, African Americans, Latinx, Asians, and Native Americans.

Dual Enrollment Philosophy 105 Introduction to Ethics

This course introduces the students to basic ethical writings from the ancients to the present. Studies include free will and determinism, good and evil, the concepts of right and wrong, relativism, and moral obligations to others. Contemporary moral issues will also be covered. Some of the philosophers studied are Plato, Immanuel Kant, David Hume, Friedrich Nietzsche, Jean Paul Sartre, Peter Singer, and James Rachels.

Dual Enrollment Political Science 101 Introduction to American Government & Politics

This course is an introduction to the politics, principles, theories and practices of the governments of the United States and California.

Dual Enrollment Psychology 101 Introduction to Psychology

This course is designed to introduce students to the themes of psychology - the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. Contemporary theories and research methods will be explored. Topics will include learning, memory, cognition, brain physiology, and psychopathology.

Dual Enrollment College Success & Career Readiness 100

This course is designed to empower students with effective strategies for making wise choices in three areas: personal, academic, and career pathways. The course focuses on a strong clear reason for staying in school, more ability to cope with the challenges of transitioning into a new

life, educational planning, learning styles, campus resources, and effective strategies for personal health and wellness.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education (PE) is considered critical for student learning and for maintaining personal well-being. The physical education program at VLGA is an integral part of our mission to address the needs of the “whole child” and to develop life- long habits of fitness and wellness. Students will be exposed to a variety of physical movement activities that suit diverse learning styles and skills, based on the *Physical Education Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve*.

Physical Education in grades 9-12 will be performed through non-traditional physical activities, teambuilding activities, and journaling of progress following the California Standards for Physical Education. Students learn the skills and mechanics necessary to participate in physical activity for the rest of their lives, while independently tracking their progress, and developing positive lifelong healthy habits. There are 5 critical areas Physical Education addresses:

- Demonstrate motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of activities
- Demonstrate knowledge of movement concepts, principles, and strategies as they apply to learning and performance of physical activities
- Assess and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance
- Demonstrate knowledge of physical fitness concepts, principles, and strategies to improve health and performance.
- Demonstrate and utilize knowledge of psychological and sociological concepts, principles, and strategies as applied to learning and performance of physical activity.
- Students also learn and understand concepts of health, nutrition and the importance of staying healthy through a variety of academic course settings.

With the addition of experiential education philosophies and activities, along with language development that supports Emotional Intelligence and Literacy, VLGA will integrate social/emotional training with physical activity. PE activities contribute to an integrated social-emotional program as students practice and demonstrate greater capacity with communication skills, cooperation, empathy, purposeful inclusion, fairness, teamwork, increased confidence, and growth in resilience and self-efficacy.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Spanish I (College Preparatory)

Spanish I is an introduction to Spanish emphasizing communicative-based competencies and Spanish language culture. Correlated to the curriculum are the broad Goals of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities), which define the essential skills and knowledge that all students need to acquire. Students actively practice and learn to greet others, tell date and time, express likes and dislikes, and ask and answer simple questions on a variety of topics. They

also learn to read, write, and conjugate verbs in different tenses in Spanish. This offers more time in their high school schedule to take other courses, electives, and even community college courses. Students also begin to read fiction and nonfiction literature in Spanish and present projects that demonstrate their language development.

Spanish II (College Preparatory)

Spanish II builds on the communicative-based competencies, grammar, and Spanish language culture learned in Spanish I. Correlated to the curriculum are the broad Goals of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities), which define the essential skills and knowledge that all students need to acquire. Students express themselves using the present, past, and future tenses on a variety of topics. Students also begin to read more sophisticated literature in Spanish and present projects that build language development.

Spanish III (College Preparatory)

Spanish III builds on the communicative-based competencies, grammar and the Spanish language culture learned in Spanish II. Correlated to the curriculum are the broad Goals of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) which define the essential skills and knowledge that all students need to acquire. Students at this level speak Spanish conversationally and/or fluently. They can express themselves using the present, past and future tenses on a variety of topics, but also they learn how to conjugate in the imperfect tense; differentiate between the use of the preterit and imperfect tenses; conjugate in the future/conditional tenses; employ prepositional pronouns; form commands using the formal you (usted); differentiate between the two verbs "to be" ser and estar; employ double object pronouns, etc. Students also read literature in Spanish and present projects on their novel of choice in Spanish. This course is instructed exclusively in Spanish. Students who have successfully fulfilled the course requirements for Spanish III will be on track to take AP Spanish Language & Culture the next academic year

Spanish I for Native Speakers (College Preparatory)

Spanish I for Native Speakers is an intensive and accelerated introduction to Spanish offered to best serve those students who Speak Spanish at home and/or have had significant native language exposure. Spanish I for Native Speakers emphasizes communicative-based competencies and Spanish language culture. Correlated to the curriculum are the broad Goals of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities), which define the essential skills and knowledge that all students need to acquire. Students actively practice and learn to greet others, tell date and time, express likes and dislikes, and ask and answer simple questions on a variety of topics. They also learn to read, write, and conjugate verbs in different tenses in Spanish. This offers more time in their high school schedule to take other courses, electives, and even community college courses. Students also begin to read fiction and nonfiction literature in Spanish and present projects that demonstrate their language development.

Spanish II for Native Speakers (College Preparatory)

Spanish II for Native Speakers builds on the communicative-based competencies, grammar, and Spanish language culture learned in Spanish I for Native Speakers. Correlated to the curriculum are the broad Goals of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities), which define the essential skills and knowledge that all students need to acquire. Students express themselves using the present, past, and future tenses on a variety of topics. Students also begin to read more sophisticated literature in Spanish and present projects that build language development. Students who have successfully fulfilled the course requirements for Spanish II for Native Speakers will be on track to take AP Spanish Language & Culture the next academic year.

AP Spanish Language & Culture (College Preparatory)

AP Spanish Language & Culture covers the equivalent of a fourth-year college course in advanced Spanish composition and conversation. Students may opt into this course and must have successfully completed Spanish III or Spanish II for Native Speakers or equivalent courses at other high schools. AP Spanish at Vista Lago encompasses aural/oral skills, reading comprehension, grammar, and composition. The course seeks to develop language skills that are useful in themselves and that can be applied to various activities and disciplines rather than to the mastery of any specific subject matter. Extensive training in the organization and writing of compositions must be an integral part of the AP Spanish Language course. Students who enroll should already have a basic knowledge of the language and culture of Spanish-speaking peoples and should have attained a reasonable proficiency in listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing.

Mandarin 1 (College Prep)

Mandarin 1 is designed for beginners of the language. The course aims for acquisition of the usual basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Included in the course is the presentation of basic grammar and an introduction to Chinese culture. Pinyin (the most widely used Chinese phonetic system) will be taught as a tool to learn the spoken language. Students will also learn Chinese characters in order to be able to communicate in Mandarin on a limited range of topics related to everyday situations. Students practice listening and speaking in real-life situations, learn to read and write Chinese characters, and examine how culture and language interact in China. In-class activities and course assignments aim to assist students as they develop the oral proficiency and confidence necessary to initiate simple conversations.

Students will be introduced to the Chinese language and culture through focused instructions in the areas of listening/speaking, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and writing characters. VLGA will use *Encounters* (Yale University Press) as its primary curricular materials.

Mandarin 2 (College Prep)

Mandarin 2 will be for students who, having successfully developed strong basic skills, are ready to increase proficiency in oral comprehension and in the speaking, reading and writing skills of Mandarin Chinese. Readings are real-life dialogues emphasizing proper use of Mandarin with the goal of developing vocabulary and fluency. Written and oral precision will be emphasized. Authentic materials will be studied. Culture content is incorporated into instruction. Students can write short articles by either hand writing or typing Chinese characters. Students will continue their progress and build on the proficiency they attained in Mandarin 1.

AP Chinese Language and Culture (College Prep)

Students will develop their Mandarin Chinese language skills and learn about Chinese culture. Students will practice communicating in Chinese and engage with real-life materials such as newspaper articles, films, music, and books. Students will learn to understand Chinese when they hear and read it; hold conversations in real-life situations; and write stories, letters, emails, essays, and other texts.

MISSION-DRIVEN ARTS EDUCATION

From the earliest renderings found in the caves of Lascaux, France, to the installations of Rauschenberg, human beings have been using artistic expression to find meaning, express self, communicate messages and seek answers. All cultures and peoples have participated in the arts, conveying significant meaning through their artifacts and artistic traditions in music, dance, visual arts, literature, and drama. Art is a universal language that provides all students with connections to other civilizations. It provides factual, interpretive, and emotive contexts for historical events. Art is more than an act or artifact; it is a bridge that integrates the various, and often disparate, compartments of our lives. It develops sensitivity to one's surroundings and the intricacies that enable self-discovery and understanding of the human condition.

At VLGA, we do not view art only as an independent activity with a subset of standards and skills, but rather as a humanistic strand that runs throughout our curriculum. Incorporating "Art" into STEM learning is deliberate and important. This will allow us to reach across the cultural, financial, and digital divides that separate our students from the "wider class." Through the arts, we develop a sense of self in our students and a respect for the many cultures from which they come, while providing valuable links to new cultures. The arts also allow us to make academic connections across the curriculum and provide cohesiveness to thematic planning that gives our second language learners one of the major scaffolds to gaining content and academic understanding.

VLGA strives to provide our students with the tools they need to produce meaning within artistic endeavors. These skills will be embedded throughout the day and placed in the context of meaningful experiences. For instance, while geometric concepts in Integrated Math II, our students might learn about proportion and symmetry in various art media, such as drawing, painting, collage, and installation. Likewise, students might create short video vignettes of scenes acted and performed to enhance understanding through in-depth, cross-curricular and thematic studies of literary works.

At VLGA, we are committed to music education and its cross-curricular implications, providing a systematic approach to the skills it requires. As our enrollment increases, we will have a full-time music teacher who delivers instruction to our students on a weekly basis. This opportunity is extremely important, as many of our students do not have access to these skills outside of the school setting. Through our music program, our students acquire basic knowledge of musical history, composers, theory, reading musical notation and the skills and mechanics of singing. These skills are advanced with a school-wide choral program.

Instrumental music programs are sequential instrument method courses for beginner, intermediate, and advanced instrumental music students. Students learn beginning to advanced music theory (rhythms, note names, expressions), music history, performance techniques, and cultural diversity through music. Students develop a basic structure to learn required music performing skills needed to rehearse and perform concert sheet music. Sheet music is chosen based on its difficulty level relative to the performance level of the student musicians.

Beginning Band (College Prep)

Beginning Band will offer the band experience at the beginning level. The instruments taught will include flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, tuba and percussion. No experience is necessary – only the will and desire to play an instrument. Musical topics will be introduced such as reading, music notation, analyzing and evaluating music, as well as composing and improvising simple melodies. The students present a Winter and Spring Concert.

Advanced Band (College Prep)

Advanced Band will cover advanced topics in ensemble performance and expands upon previously learned skills and concepts and explore different genres, periods and cultures. Through the use of a wide variety of music students will develop aesthetic judgment, independence and a greater musical understanding. Numerous concerts, contests and public performances are required throughout the year.

Beginning Choir (College Prep)

Beginning Choir will prepare each student to understand the fundamentals of singing as an ensemble. Students will improve their ability to cooperate with their peers, work as a team to achieve goals, and actively analyze and compose music. Students will develop, through an emphasis on musical fundamentals, into musicians who make good musical decisions.

Advanced Choir (College Prep)

Advanced Choir will provide students with a positive musical and educational experience through the process of singing fundamentals, rehearsals, and performances. Students will study and perform choral literature selected from a variety of periods in music history. Students will be introduced to advanced singing techniques and sight-reading skills. This group will perform in concert eight times per year.

Additional arts courses may be offered as VLGA reaches capacity, pending budgets and staffing, or students may be able to take additional arts courses as dual enrollment courses in partnership with Mt. San Jacinto College.

Dual Enrollment Art 104 World Art

This course is a survey class introduces students to the art and architecture of Asia, the Islamic world, Indigenous North America, Africa and Oceania. It covers a variety of art forms in the context of their cultural settings, iconography, purpose and style.

Dual Enrollment Music 106 History of Rock and Roll

This course focuses upon the evolutionary development of Rock & Roll music from the 1950s to today and is designed to assist students in developing historical understanding, appreciation, and respect for Rock & Roll and related musical styles. Basic musical concepts will be discussed as will the contributions of Rock's innovators and artists.

ASB Leadership (College Prep)

In *ASB Leadership*, students will learn what makes an effective leader and how to develop their own leadership style. Students will have a direct role in planning and operating student activities at VLGA, and learn and apply the skills needed for organizing and planning VLGA activities and problem-solving, both individually and in groups. Students will learn how to set and meet goals, how to communicate effectively, and how to critically self-evaluate their work in order to improve their leadership skills.

Journalism (College Prep)

In *Journalism*, students will be introduced to the historical importance of journalism in America. They will study the basic principles of print and online journalism as they examine the role of printed news media in our society. They will learn investigative skills, responsible reporting, and journalistic writing techniques as they read, respond to, and write their own news and feature articles. Students will conduct interviews, research, write, and design their own publications.

Speech and Debate (College Prep)

Speech and Debate will be an introductory course that covers a variety of styles of public speaking and formal debate through research, instruction and practice. Each unit will culminate in performance assignments that require students to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities within the classroom setting. This course will help students gain confidence and experience in public speaking, incorporate sources into speeches and conversations in order to support a position, increase their working knowledge of current events, and differentiate between fact, opinion, and fact-driven opinion.

ADVISORY/GLOBAL HOUR

All VLGA students will participate in an advisory period equivalent to an 8th period. Many narrative accounts attest to advisory's positive impact. Generally, studies have shown that students who do not feel an attachment to school staff are likely to have poorer attendance and to drop out more than students who feel that they are part of a supportive school environment. In addition, healthy relationships between teachers and students appear to facilitate academic achievement.

In Advisory/Global Hour, **study skills, college and career knowledge/readiness, life skills and social-emotional development** are key areas of focus for all students. Students will be guided through the information required to successfully navigate the complex information surrounding the college admissions and financial aid processes, workplace behavior and “adulting” while they build non-cognitive skills such as self-awareness, self-monitoring, self-control, study skills, work habits, time management, social problem-solving skills and help-seeking behavior. Focus topics will include:

Transition to High School (1st Semester 9th Grade)
Career/Pathways Exploration (2nd Semester 9th Grade)

Study Skills/Test Prep (1st semester 10th Grade)
Financial Literacy (2nd Semester 10th Grade)

Life Skills – resume/interview (1st semester 11th Grade)
Investigating Colleges - Understanding college app process, financial aid, etc. (2nd semester 11th Grade)

College Prep/Applications (1st semester 12th Grade)
Digital Portfolio Capstone (2nd semester 12th Grade)

Council also will be held during the Advisory/Global Hour. As detailed above, Council is a practice that cultivates heartfelt and meaningful communication skills, encourages mutual understanding and respect, and enhances community cohesion. Inspired and informed by the commonalities inherent in worldwide cultural and organizational dialogue practices, Council elements include the use of circular seating, defined intentions, focusing tools (such as a “talking piece”), clear beginnings and endings, and “witnessing,” a process of summarizing and acting upon what is shared in the session. Participation in Council engenders receptivity, authentic expression, and creative spontaneity as it builds positive relationships in classrooms and the Vista communities. In Advisory/Global Hour, students will form bonds with their advisory groups, feeling accepted and valued by their teachers and peers, as they prepare for life beyond VLGA.

PATHWAYS COURSES

During 9th grade Advisory, students will engage in exploration of different careers and applications of learning across the three pathways offered by VLGA: Health Science, Business and Sustainability Leadership. Starting in 10th grade, students will take a minimum of three courses in their chosen pathway. In most cases, these courses will be offered in partnership with

local colleges, including Mount San Jacinto College, enabling students to earn college credits while they are still in high school.¹²⁵ These foundational courses in each pathway will be offered on-site at VLGA. VLGA will also work with our college partners over the coming years for qualifying students to deepen their learning in their chosen pathway and pursue additional college courses at the partner college campus, potentially earning a full Associate's degree or professional certification by the time they graduate from VLGA.

IGETC Certificate Pathway

As part of a robust, 4-year transfer pathway, VLGA students will have the option to complete their general education requirements at Mount San Jacinto Community College. The courses, detailed in their content area above include:

- CSCR 100 College Success & Career Readiness
- Music 106 History of Rock and Roll
- Psychology 101 Introduction to Psychology
- Art 104 World Art
- Communication 108 Intercultural Communication
- Anthropology 101 Biological Anthropology
- Anthropology 111 Biological Anthropology Lab
- Environmental Science 110 Natural Resources
- Economics 202 Introduction to Microeconomics
- Math 140 Introduction to Statistics
- Philosophy 105 Introduction to Ethics
- Political Science 101 Introduction to American Government and Politics
- English 101 College Composition
- English 103 Critical Thinking and Writing

Health Science Pathway

PLTW: Principles of Biomedical Science (College Prep)

In *Principles of Biomedical Science*, the introductory course of the PLTW Biomedical Science program, students will explore concepts of biology and medicine to determine factors that led to the death of a fictional person. While investigating the case, students will examine autopsy reports, investigate medical history, and explore medical treatments that might have prolonged the person's life. The activities and projects will introduce students to human physiology, basic biology, medicine, and research processes while allowing them to design their own experiments to solve problems.

PLTW: Human Body Systems (College Prep)

In *Human Body Systems*, students will examine the interactions of human body systems as they explore identity, power, movement, protection, and homeostasis. Exploring science in action,

¹²⁵ With the Sustainability Leadership pathway still in development, courses may be offered in partnership with UCI or another local community college or CSU/UC.

students will build organs and tissues on a skeletal Maniken®; use data acquisition software to monitor body functions such as muscle movement, reflex and voluntary action, and respiration; and take on the roles of biomedical professionals to solve real-world medical cases.

PLTW: Medical Interventions (College Prep)

In ***Medical Interventions***, students will follow the life of a fictitious family as they investigate how to prevent, diagnose, and treat disease. Students will explore how to detect and fight infection; screen and evaluate the code in human DNA; evaluate cancer treatment options; and prevail when the organs of the body begin to fail. Through real-world cases, students will be exposed to a range of interventions related to immunology, surgery, genetics, pharmacology, medical devices, and diagnostics.

PLTW: Biomedical Innovation (College Prep)

In ***Biomedical Innovation***, the final course of the PLTW Biomedical Science sequence, students will build on the knowledge and skills gained from previous courses to design innovative solutions for the most pressing health challenges of the 21st century. Students will address topics ranging from public health and biomedical engineering to clinical medicine and physiology. Students will have the opportunity to work on an independent design project with a mentor or advisor from a university, medical facility, or research institution.

Students in the Health Science Pathway can also elect to complete a STEM-based IGETC certificate including above-mentioned dual enrollment courses and depicted in the following table:

IGETC STEM Pre-Bio	Area A: English Communication	Area 2: Mathematical Concepts & Quantitative Reasoning	Area 3 : Arts & Humanities	Area 4: Social & Behavioral Sciences	Area 5: Physical & Biological Sciences	Area 6A: LOTE	Other
CSU Breadth Requirements	CSU 3 courses, one from each group: (A) Composition, (B) Critical Thinking, (C) Oral Communication	1 course	3 Courses, minimum one from each group: Arts & Humanities	3 courses from minimum 2 disciplines	At least 2 courses, 1 from Physical and one from Biological sciences, minimum 1 course with a lab	Completion of 2 high school courses OR SAC LOTE courses 101-202	
UC Requirements	UC: 2 courses, one from each group A & B	1 course	Four transferable college courses chosen from at least two of the following subject areas: • Arts and Humanities • Social and Behavioral Sciences • Physical and Biological Sciences			N/A	
Summer							CSCR 100 College Success & Career Readiness
9 Fall			MUSIC 106				
9 Spring	COMM 108***						
Summer							High School Chemistry
10 Fall					CHEM 100*		
10 Spring			ART 104				
Summer			PHIL 105				
11 Fall					(ANTH 101 + ANTH 111)*		
11 Spring		MATH 140		ECON 202#			
Summer				PS 101#			
12 Fall	ENG 101*#			ANAT 101*			
12 Spring	ENG 103#			ETHS 103			
47	10	4	9	13	8	0	3
# MEETS HS GRAD REQUIREMENT							
* 4 UNIT CLASS							
***CSU REQUIREMENT ONLY							

BUSINESS PATHWAY

The VLGA Business Pathway consists of the 4 Mount San Jacinto Community College course requirements for the Business Information Analysis Employment Concentration (12 units)

Dual Enrollment Business Administration 103 Introduction to Business

This course is an introduction to business in a setting where U.S. companies operate in a constantly changing global business environment. Students completing the course should be capable of analyzing businesses of various sizes, organizations and ownership forms, understanding business ethics and social responsibility in global markets, analyzing the economic challenges facing businesses, understanding global competitive methodologies, and understanding domestic and international labor-management relations issues and the use of technology and information in business.

Dual Enrollment Business Administration 545 Business Computer Applications

This course explores computer technological tools used in a dynamic business environment. The course will introduce a wide range of information and communication applications used by professionals to support and enhance business processes and decision making. This is a project based course focused on using technologies to solve business problems and improve productivity.

Dual Enrollment Economics 202 Principles of Microeconomics

This course covers the basic theories concepts terminology and uses of microeconomics. Emphasis is on the interaction of consumers business and industry choices in a market economy. Topics covered include optimizing behavior of individual firms and consumers supply and demand elasticity consumer choice production and costs market structures antitrust and regulation factor markets income and poverty market failures and public choice. Issues such as environmental problems are also studied.

Dual Enrollment Math 140 Introduction to Statistics

This course is an introduction to the concepts, ideas and applications of probability and statistics. The course covers descriptive statistics, elementary probability and combinatorics, probability distributions, the central limit theorem, estimation of population parameters, correlation and linear regression, hypothesis testing including ANOVA. This course includes applications from the fields of business, economics, social sciences, life sciences, engineering, and physical sciences.

Students in the Business Pathway can also elect to complete an IGETC certificate and/or a Certificate program in Business Information Analysis including above-mentioned dual enrollment courses and depicted in the following table:

Business Information Analysis Employment Concentration	Area A: English Communication	Area 2: Mathematical Concepts & Quantitative Reasoning	Area 3 : Arts & Humanities	Area 4: Social & Behavioral Sciences	Area 5: Physical & Biological Sciences	Area 6A: LOTE	Business Information Analysis Employment Concentration
CSU Breadth Requirements	CSU 3 courses, one from each group: (A) Critical Thinking, (B) Oral Communication	1 course	3 Courses, minimum one from each group: Arts & Humanities	3 courses from minimum 2 disciplines	At least 2 courses, 1 from Physical and one from Biological sciences, minimum 1 course with a lab	Completion of 2 high school courses OR SAC LOTE courses 101-202	
UC Requirements	UC: 2 courses, one from each group A & B	1 course	Four transferable college courses chosen from at least two of the following subject areas: • Arts and Humanities • Social and Behavioral Sciences • Physical and Biological Sciences			N/A	
Summer							CSCR 100 College Success & Career Readiness
9 Fall			MUSIC 106				
9 Spring				PSYC 101			
Summer			ART 104 + college & art enrichment activities				
10 Fall	COMM 108***						
10 Spring					(ANTH 101 + ANTH 111)*		
Summer					ENVS 110 & environmental enrichment & field trip activities		
11 Fall				ECON 202#^			BADM 103^
11 Spring		MATH 140^	PHIL 105				
Summer							Internship
12 Fall	ENG 101*#			PS 101#			
12 Spring	ENG 103#						BADM 545^
47	10	3	9	9	7	0	9
# MEETS HS GRAD REQUIREMENT							
* 4 UNIT CLASS							
***CSU REQUIREMENT ONLY							
^ MEETS CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENT							

SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP PATHWAY

Vista Charter Public Schools is proud to be partnering with the University of California and California State University systems to create the first Sustainability Leadership Pathway in California with an emphasis on leadership. The partnership is under the direction of Dr. Richard Arum and in conjunction with ECCLP (Environmental and Climate Change Literacy Program, pronounced “Eclipse”). VCPS received a \$100,000 grant from the Croul Family Foundation for early planning and development of the program. The course work being developed will be in compliance with A-G requirements.

Introduction to Living Earth (College-Prep)

This course centers on the biosphere and examines how it interacts with each of the other Earth systems (i.e. Hydrosphere, Atmosphere, and Geosphere) across six instructional segments (IS). The example instructional sequence begins at the tangible, macroscopic scale of ecosystems in **IS1** (Ecosystem Interactions and Energy). Students will focus on specific exchanges of matter and energy within ecosystems in **IS2** (History of Earth’s Atmosphere: Photosynthesis and Respiration), and make a model that links photosynthesis and respiration in organisms to cycles of energy and matter in the Earth System. They will also gather evidence about the linked history of Earth’s biosphere and atmosphere, and develop models of how changes in the physical environment trigger evolutionary changes that are recorded in the fossil record in **IS3**. Students

will further develop macroscopic models of genetic inheritance in the second semester with **IS4** (Inheritance of traits). In **IS5** (Structure, Function, and Growth), students zoom into the detailed mechanisms that enable all the previous interactions to occur, and use models to create explanations of how cells use DNA to construct proteins, build biomass, reproduce, and create complex multicellular organisms. As a capstone in **IS6** (Ecosystem Stability and the Response to Climate Change), students return to the ecosystem scale and see how all these mechanisms interact in the face of Earth's changing climate.

Introduction to Chemistry in the Earth System (College-Prep)

In this course, fundamental principles in chemistry can be used and applied to understanding science phenomena on Earth to explain and/or improve our lived realities across six instructional segments (IS). The link between combustion and climate change is the theme that integrates the sciences in chemistry. The course begins with macroscopic observations of matter and chemical reactions in the natural world **IS1** (Combustion). Students refine their model of the nature of matter by focusing on the level of particles and discussing thermodynamic principles in **IS2** (Heat and Energy in the Earth System), and model the transfer of heat between microscopic particles and in macroscopic laboratory systems and then gather evidence that these same processes operate at the scale of the Earth system and drive plate motions. Students develop models of energy conservation within systems and the mechanisms of heat flow, concentrate on the internal structure of the atom, and use it to make sense of the periodic table and chemical bonds in **IS3** (Atoms, Elements, and Molecules). In **IS4** (Chemical Reactions), they refine their models to include chemical energy so that they can explain how foods and fossil fuels can combust to unleash the energy we use in our bodies and machines. In **IS5** (Chemistry of Climate Change), students explore the effects of combustion on the Earth system from the chemical perspective, treating Earth's climate as a thermodynamic system and examining how molecules with certain structures can disrupt the flow of energy in this system. In **IS6**, the course concludes with students exploring more about climate change impacts that disrupt the chemical equilibrium between the air, water, and carbonate shells of ocean creatures due to ocean acidification. They investigate the effects of fossil fuel combustion on ocean chemistry, and develop models of equilibrium in chemical reactions and design solutions that can shift the equilibrium. Students can conduct original research or engineer solutions to address ocean acidification related to anthropogenic causes.

Introduction to Physics of the Universe (College-Prep)

This course emphasizes the synergy between physical science and Earth and space sciences by focusing on electricity production across six instructional segments (IS). The first part of this course builds the conceptual understandings in physics that students need to understand how various power plants work, including fossil fuel, nuclear, wind, hydroelectric, and solar photovoltaic. Students then discuss the impacts that each technology has on different Earth systems and use other Earth and space sciences phenomena to motivate further study of physical science. **IS1** (Forces and Motion) begins with Newton's laws and an emphasis on collisions caused by plate motions. They investigate collisions in Earth's crust and engage in engineering challenges. Students further develop understanding of force in **IS2** (Forces at a Distance) when they perform calculations involving gravity and electromagnetism, and predict the motion of orbiting objects in the solar system. **IS3** (Renewable Energy) is the core of the course where students apply knowledge about energy conversion to understand electric power generation.

They track energy transfer and its conversion through different stages of power generation and engage in engineering various systems to test their own energy-conversion devices. In **IS4** (Nuclear Processes and Earth History), students develop a model of how the internal structure of the atom changes during nuclear processes, how these changes release energy, and how these processes are the timekeepers of geologic history to understand nuclear power and radiometric dating. Earthquakes are a tangible phenomenon that introduce the study of waves in **IS5** (Waves and Electromagnetic Radiation). They obtain and communicate information about other interactions between waves and matter with a particular focus on electromagnetic waves. Patterns in these spectra provide evidence about how stars work and the history of the universe in **IS6** (Stars and the Origins of the Universe). Students will apply their model of nuclear fusion to trace the flow of energy from the Sun's core to Earth.

Project Lead The Way Engineering: Environmental Sustainability

Environmental Sustainability (ES) is a high school-level specialization course in PLTW Engineering. In ES, students investigate and design solutions to solve real-world challenges related to clean drinking water, a stable food supply, and renewable energy. Students are introduced to environmental issues and use the engineering design process to research and design potential solutions. Utilizing the activity-, project-, problem-based (APB) teaching and learning pedagogy, students transition from completing structured activities to solving open-ended projects and problems that require them to develop planning, documentation, communication, and other professional skills.

Project Lead The Way Engineering: Introduction to Engineering Design

Introduction to Engineering Design (IED) is a high school engineering course in the PLTW Engineering Program. In IED, students explore engineering tools and apply a common approach to the solution of engineering problems, an engineering design process. Utilizing the activity-project-problem-based (APB) teaching and learning pedagogy, students progress from completing structured activities to solving open-ended projects and problems that require them to plan, document, communicate, and develop other professional skills.

Project Lead The Way Engineering: Engineering Design and Development

Engineering Design and Development (EDD) is the capstone course in the PLTW high school engineering program. It is an open-ended engineering research course in which students work in teams to design and develop an original solution to a well-defined and justified open-ended problem by applying an engineering design process.

Students in the Sustainability Leadership Pathway also have the option to complete the IGETC curriculum and/or the Water Technology Certificate Program courses (see Science courses above), both depicted in the table below:

IGETC + Water Technology Certificate	Area A: English Communication	Area 2: Mathematical Concepts & Quantitative Reasoning	Area 3 : Arts & Humanities	Area 4: Social & Behavioral Sciences	Area 5: Physical & Biological Sciences	Area 6A: LOTE	Water Technology Certificate
CSU Breadth Requirements	CSU 3 courses, one from each group: (A) Composition, (B) Critical Thinking, (C) Oral Communication	1 course	3 Courses, minimum one from each group: Arts & Humanities	3 courses from minimum 2 disciplines	At least 2 courses, 1 from Physical and one from Biological sciences, minimum 1 course with a lab	Completion of 2 high school courses OR SAC LOTE courses 101-202	
UC Requirements	UC: 2 courses, one from each group A & B	1 course	Four transferable college courses chosen from at least two of the following subject areas: • Arts and Humanities • Social and Behavioral Sciences • Physical and Biological Sciences			N/A	
Summer							CSCR 100 College Success & Career Readiness
9 Fall			MUSIC 106				
9 Spring				PSYC 101			
Summer			ART 104 + college & art enrichment activities				
10 Fall	COMM 108***						WATR 500^ + WATR 795
10 Spring					(ANTH 101 + ANTH 111)*		WATR 533^
Summer					ENVS 110 & environmental enrichment & field trip activities		
11 Fall				ECON 202#			WATR 537^
11 Spring		MATH 140	PHIL 105				
Summer							WATR 530^
12 Fall	ENG 101*#			PS 101#			WATER 504^
12 Spring	ENG 103#						WATR 509^
56	10	3	9	9	7	0	18
# MEETS HS GRAD REQUIREMENT							
* 4 UNIT CLASS							
***CSU REQUIREMENT ONLY							
^ MEETS CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENT							

INNOVATIVE CURRICULAR COMPONENTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

As detailed throughout the previous sections, VCPS is distinguished by its collaboration and partnership with Community Catalyst Partners' International Studies Schools Network (ISSN), with the goal of becoming an ISSN-certified school by the end of the first five years, along with our emphasis on STEAM. Our focus on the varying elements of student engagement, personalized and differentiated learning, active learning strategies and more are all based on research about how learning best occurs. Our program is carefully designed, based on our years of experience in this community, to prepare students to succeed in post-secondary school and beyond.

INTERVENTION AND ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

As detailed more fully below, in all VCPS, we implement California's Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Framework and approach to quickly identify academic and behavioral needs of all students and to intervene early and strategically.

Vista Lago will assist in meeting the individual needs of all our students through:

1. Direct, effective instruction that incorporates re-teaching and remediation as needed;

2. Ample instructional planning time during the school week (such as when students are engaged in specials) so that teachers can modify and create lessons and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students;
3. A culture among teachers of openness and collaboration, including weekly team collaboration time and professional development activities, allowing teachers to learn from each other's varying expertise in handling learning differences;
4. Ongoing communication between teachers and families and a commitment to work together for the education of their children;
5. Various forms of assessment that are used to guide instruction;
6. Learning goals that are clearly articulated; and
7. High expectations for all students.

The MTSS process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all students in the general education classroom. Struggling learners may participate in interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. Advisory/Global Hour is built into the daily schedule to facilitate student time on intervention programs such as Lexia, Fountas & Pinnell, Khan Academy and more, with small group targeted instruction. These services may be offered by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual student response to instruction. MTSS is designed for making decisions in both general education and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by student outcome data.

Enrichments are broad and engaging, including physical education, the arts, technology and opportunities outside of the classroom including field trips, as detailed above.

CURRICULAR AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The following table outlines the initial textbook adoptions planned for grades 9-12 in the core content areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Science and Science.

History Social Science

World History (9-12) - HMH - World History

US History (10-12) - HMH - American History: Reconstruction to the Present

AP US History (10-12) - HMH - American History: Reconstruction to the Present (will use more in-depth compared to regular US History course and aligned to AP test)

Government (11-12) - HMH - United States Government

Economics (11-12) - HMH - Economics

English

ELA 9 (9-12) - myPerspectives Grade 9

ELA 10 (10-12) - myPerspectives Grade 10

ELA 11 (11-12) - myPerspectives Grade 11

ELA 12 (12) - CSU Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum (ERWC)

AP Language (11-12) - Perrine's Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense

AP Literature (12) - Perrine's Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense
ELD 1-4 (9-12) - Designated ELD - myPerspectives ELD Companion

Math

Integrated Math I (9-12) - Agile Mind Integrated Math 1
Integrated Math II (9-12) - Agile Mind Integrated Math 2
Integrated Math III (10-12) - Agile Mind Integrated Math 1
Pre-Calculus (11-12) - Agile Mind PreCalculus
AP Calculus AB (12) - Agile Mind Calculus AB

Science

Biology (9-12) - Cengage - Biology: The Unity and Diversity of Life (15th Edition)
Chemistry (10-12) - Cengage - Chemistry: An Atoms First Approach (3rd Edition)
Physics (11-12) - Cengage - Modern Physics for Scientists and Engineers (5th Edition)

World Languages

Spanish 1 (9-12) - Descubre Level 1 (3rd Edition)
Spanish 2 (10-12) - Descubre Level 2 (3rd Edition)
Spanish 3 (10-12) - Descubre Level 3 (3rd Edition)
Spanish for Spanish Speakers 1 (9-12) - Descubre Level 1A (3rd Edition)
Spanish for Spanish Speakers 2 (9-12) - Descubre Level 1A (3rd Edition)
AP Spanish Language and Culture (10-12) - Temas: AP Spanish Language and Culture
Mandarin 1 (9-12) - Yale University Press - Encounters: Chinese Language and Culture Level 1
Mandarin 2 (10-12) - Yale University Press - Encounters: Chinese Language and Culture Level 2
AP Chinese Language and Culture (10-12) - Integrated Chinese: Level 2, Part 1 (Chinese Edition) 3rd Edition

VAPA: Teacher created

P.E./Health: Teacher-created, Health Smart

CTE: PLTW curricula; college/university partner curricula

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND STRATEGIES

At VLGA, we use the Framework for Engagement as the lens through which all instructional programs and practices will be implemented. Communication and relationships that extend beyond the classroom and incorporate a widening circle of adult influence and interaction necessitate a major shift from the current instructional practice of “stand and deliver” that dominates classrooms across America. Studies conducted by Csikszentmihalyi, the creator of Flow Theory and his team, found that students spent approximately 86% in passive lecture style or independent activities.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ Shernoff, E. S., Kratochwill, T. R., & Stoiber, K. C. (2003). Training in Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs): What are school psychology programs teaching?. *Journal of School Psychology, 41*(6), 467-483.

This framework necessitates that a shift in instructional practice is required to ensure the personalized learning experience is created to develop globally competent students. This shift in practice is commonly referred to as a move away from the “sage on the stage” model, in which the teacher directly delivers instruction through lecturing, to the “guide on the side,” in which teachers act as a coach and facilitate a more personalized learning experience and is based on a constructivist view in which, optimally, the classroom provides a series of experiences that prompt students to actively construct their own knowledge and learning (Taylor & Parsons, 2011; Vygotsky, 1987; Zepke & Leach, 2010). At VLGA we use this as an important lens through which all programs, processes, and practices are chosen and developed. Professional development extends to core instructional models that are critical to the success of the educational program. The following processes and procedures are considered integral to the VLGA learning experience:

Problem-based pedagogy. This model is described as “an atmosphere where there is a dialectic tension and conflict that can promote a learning environment through a process of inquiry and understanding (that) includes concrete experiences, opportunities for reflection, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.”¹²⁷ *VLGA will strategically use this approach with a global and STEAM curriculum that focuses on relevant application by applying learning to solving both local and global issues our students are facing today.* This also provides students the opportunity for active exploration of issues based on real life scenarios and problems.

Project-based learning (PBL). Project-based learning strives to increase relevance by applying real-life problems and issues to a final project outcome that function as an authentic assessment of student learning. Elucidating the relevance of a project has been linked to deeper engagement.¹²⁸ Providing students opportunities to explore issues that are meaningful in their circumstances and lives motivates them to learn and show more willingness to work through difficult ideas and learning.¹²⁹

Because we choose to focus on solid implementation of our core curriculum in the first two years (literacy, math, science, and social studies), VLGA teachers will receive training on PBL through our partnership with the International Schools Study Network (ISSN). The ISSN, in partnership with the Buck Institute, provides on-going professional development and coaching for project-based learning. The eventual expectation is for all grade levels to have one major PBL project their second year, and two projects (one each semester) by our third year and beyond. Although teachers are required to facilitate two projects each year, they are encouraged to create multiple, interdisciplinary projects beyond the requirements.

Kagan Cooperative learning and strategies. One key component of experiential or problem-based learning that repeatedly stands out in the literature, as a factor in engagement is the use of cooperative learning strategies. Although some research has indicated that teacher-student

¹²⁷ Samson, P. L. (2015). Fostering student engagement: Creative problem-solving in small group facilitations. *Collected Essays on Learning and Teaching*, 8, 153-164.

¹²⁸ Parsons, J., & Taylor, L. (2011). Improving student engagement. *Current issues in education*, 14(1).

¹²⁹ Samson, P. L. (2015). Fostering student engagement: Creative problem-solving in small group facilitations. *Collected Essays on Learning and Teaching*, 8, 153-164.

relationships are possibly the most important factor in increased student engagement,¹³⁰ another study that examined the difference in impact of student-teacher relationships, quality of student effort, and peer- to-peer interaction found that “peer interaction had the strongest predictive capacity for engagement and outcomes.”¹³¹ The Vista development team has recognized the importance of both teacher-student and peer-to-peer interactions in designing the school’s instructional approach. Clearly, both are important and are constantly considered when designing Vista’s pedagogy. Student interaction and collaborative learning promotes dialectic practices that support student viewpoints and interests. Cooperative learning has also been found to increase motivation, positive classroom behaviors, social networks, and academic improvements.¹³²

At VLGA, all teachers will receive Kagan Cooperative Learning training. Already, embedded into all VCPS schools, Kagan Cooperative Learning strategies are designed for implementation across all content and curriculum. Kagan structures involve cooperative interaction, and are designed to efficiently produce engagement, positive social interactions, and achievement because they incorporate four basic principles, the PIES principles:

- **Positive Interdependence:** We are positively interdependent when a gain for one is a gain for another. This dynamic produces a sense of belonging to the same team. In a traditional setting, students are set against each other in competition to answer questions. With Kagan structures, students work together and learn global attributes of sharing, caring, helping, and empathy.
- **Individual Accountability:** All students are held accountable for learning-- not just the student who raises her hand.
- **Equal Participation:** Because the structures involve every student, each student participates equally throughout the day.
- **Simultaneous Interaction:** All students have an opportunity to verbalize answers and thinking-- as opposed to a traditional class where only one or two students answer any given question.

Kagan Structures are bridges that allow teachers to pass easily from principles to practices, implementing basic principles and visions as part of any lesson, at any grade level, with any curriculum. At VLGA, teachers will learn to use a Kagan structure every time they ask the class a question, thus ensuring equal engagement for all.

Cooperative Learning follows our principles of engagement, is brain compatible, learner centered, and has real-life transfer because they enforce our belief that you learn by doing.

¹³⁰ Furlong, M. J., Whipple, A. D., Jean, G. S., Simental, J., Soliz, A., & Punthuna, S. (2003). Multiple contexts of school engagement: Moving toward a unifying framework for educational research and practice. *The California School Psychologist*, 8(1), 99-113.

¹³¹ Zepke, N., & Leach, L. (2010). Improving student engagement: Ten proposals for action. *Active learning in higher education*, 11(3), 167-177.

¹³² Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 97-131). Springer, Boston, MA.

Shernoff, E. S., Kratochwill, T. R., & Stoiber, K. C. (2003). Training in Evidence-Based Interventions (EBIs): What are school psychology programs teaching?. *Journal of School Psychology*, 41(6), 467-483.

Mastery learning. Mastery experiences develop self-efficacy by allowing students to reflect on where their skill level is at any given time and by using success, partial success, and even failure to point the way toward mastery of a subject or skill.¹³³ Currently, most classrooms see failure as an end in itself-- which results in a failing grade. By allowing students to fail on a task and then reflect on that experience as a stepping-stone to a learning goal fosters a growth mindset, increases resilience, and promotes life-long learning.¹³⁴ At VLGA teachers will receive professional development on the latest developments and research on Master Learning. One site that will be used by VLGA staff to understand and implement Mastery Grading is <http://www.gradingforlearning.wordpress.com>. Developed by Dr. Derrick Chau, he and his team have created a system in tandem with the website to help teachers and schools make the emotional and pedagogical shifts needed to honor student centered learning in developmentally appropriate ways.

Relevance. A recent study on student learning and engagement conducted at four out-performing urban schools in Southern California with a majority of at-risk students indicated that the relevance of instruction was continually and clearly drawn to the students' immediate and future lives. The study showed that student engagement occurred when students took ownership, invested in learning, and internalized curricula to incorporate—and purposefully use—it in their lives.¹³⁵ When they recognized the purpose of what they were learning, the students were motivated to persevere through difficult and rigorous lessons and projects.

- VCPS believe that when students have a clear understanding of the value, purpose, and procedures for learning activities and the logic by which teachers arrived at their design, they are more likely to see the value of what they are being asked to learn and consequently participate more eagerly in their learning with greater achievement levels.

We take an approach to education based on the idea that students work harder and dream bigger if their education is relevant to them. Every teacher and every parent has heard a student or child ask, “Why do I have to learn or do this?” When students don’t see the connection between the content and activities of the classroom and their future lives, they question what’s happening and what we ask them to do. Research has confirmed that perceived relevance is a critical factor in maintaining student interest and motivation.

To ensure VLGA relevancy for VLGA students, every lesson at VLGA will start by answering the *What? Why?* and *How?* before instruction begins

- **What?** What is our learning objective for this lesson? What are we doing in class today? What questions will we try to answer? What concepts will we address? What activities will we do?

¹³³ Furlong, M. J., & Christenson, S. L. (2008). Engaging students at school and with learning: A relevant construct for all students. *Psychology in the Schools*, 45(5), 365-368.

¹³⁴ Bempechat, J., & Shernoff, D. J. (2012). Parental influences on achievement motivation and student engagement. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 315-342). Springer, Boston, MA. Finn, J. D. (1989).

Withdrawing from school. *Review of educational research*, 59(2), 117-142. Pintrich, P. R. (2003). A motivational science perspective on the role of student motivation in learning and teaching contexts. *Journal of educational Psychology*, 95(4), 667

¹³⁵ Pike, G. R., & Kuh, G. D. (2005). A typology of student engagement for American colleges and universities. *Research in higher education*, 46(2), 185-209.

- **Why?** Why are we studying this? How are today's content and activities tied to the learning outcomes? What should I know or be able to do after today's class? How can the information and skills be used in everyday life?
- **How?** How are we going to address the content? What are the discrete steps we will need to take to reach our learning objective? What activities, discussions, and projects will we be using? How will I know that I have mastered the learning objective?

At VLGA, teachers will be expected to answer those questions for all learning. They will do so through clear objectives connected to real-world application, clear instruction, student-driven rubrics, and multiple opportunities and ways to demonstrate mastery of learning. At VLGA, we will believe that when students have a clear understanding of the value, purpose, and procedures for learning activities and the logic by which teachers arrived at their design, they are more likely to see the value of what they are being asked to learn and consequently participate more eagerly in their learning with greater achievement levels.

Digital Portfolios. Because students develop and grow in their desire for autonomy and independence, but at the same time, continue to rely on guidance from parents and other adults, VLGA students will develop Digital Portfolios upon enrollment. They have opportunities to reflect on their learning, make appropriate choices, and receive assistance with their learning plan in their pursuit of academic, personal, and career goals. Guidance from VLGA staff will occur on a frequent basis as they regularly conference and meet with students throughout the week.

Students will clarify of purpose by creating a Digital Portfolio that considers their current level of progress and long-term goals. VLGA faculty and parents will assist students as they map out their learning needs. The learning management system, weekly student/teacher conferences during workshop time, and regularly scheduled parent/teacher conferences provide a structured time during which students and families are able to monitor their own progress, review academic decisions, present problems or conflict, and revise goals as they learn and achieve. At VLGA, we will prepare our students to be fully participatory in their own educational journey, which extends to college and beyond.

The Digital Portfolio is a key tool for helping students' development of metacognition. This is built by giving students ownership over their learning and allowing them to think about how they learn. As students reflect on their plan, progress, achievements, and continued areas of work, they can take that understanding and apply it to learning in the classroom. Digital Portfolios also review assessments results in order to best prepare students for the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).

Another area that supports Digital Portfolios and student metacognition are student-led conferences. As parents, faculty, and students meet regarding a student's academic, personal, and career goals, the student presents his/her understandings about his/her development, challenges, strengths, and joys. As discoveries are made, steps on how parents and faculty can support further development are articulated.¹³⁶

¹³⁶ Marzano, R. J. (2011). *Formative assessment & standards-based grading*. Solution Tree Press.

Differentiated Instruction. VLGA staff will utilize its knowledge of the “whole child” in order to effectively implement differentiation of instruction. Evidence has suggested that students are more successful in school and find it more satisfying if they are taught in ways that are responsive to their readiness levels.¹³⁷

To effectively implement differentiation, students have multiple routes to demonstrate their understandings; use a variety of materials that address learning at their level of instruction and with their learning modality; work in small, flexible learning groups for instruction that are based on a variety of learning needs; work within a flexible pacing structures, which allows for learner variance; engage in lessons that are knowledge- centered and structured around essential learning; and have work that considers their learner traits so that students can learn successfully.

Individualized work is at an appropriate level of challenge; tasks and questions link to students’ interests, and address the students’ learning profiles (e.g., learning modality, culture, language). Hence, by giving them choices regarding topics of study, ways of learning, and presenting information, students are able to determine the best access points for their own learning and build upon areas strength. In a VLGA classroom, differentiation will provide students emotional safety, as similarities and differences, strengths and weaknesses, cooperation and respect are all valued. Selection of programs at VLGA will be based, in part, on their ability to meet these criteria. ISTE, Project Lead the Way, Cengage and other similar programs have mastery learning as a core value and are considered for implementation at VLGA.

Data-Driven instruction. The instructional path is paved through the CCSS and the use of Curriculum Maps. Throughout the week, teachers use a variety of formative assessments to understand where their students are successful and where they need more support. A full explanation of our assessments is provided later in this document. The results of these assessments drives follow-up instruction, support, and/or intervention. Grade-level staff groups create assessment calendars in conjunction with their curriculum. All students are assessed regularly to ensure clear progress. Teachers review their students’ scores, meet with grade-level teams and administration to review the results, and together determine what the next steps of action may be. Similarly, quarterly assessments are reviewed in order to determine learning directions. The Quarterly Assessment have more weight, as it will cover nine weeks of instruction. The Quarterly assessments are aligned to the SBAC. Possible outcomes may include a need for an SST and a review of any other types of interventions that would help the student; an online assessment tool and learning management system is the tool utilized to assess students and to create the assessments. Also, teachers have regular opportunities to discuss “data” and learning growth with students so that students are aware of their achievement level/mastery and what they need to do to grow.

Online assessment and learning management systems allow teachers and administrators the opportunity to gather and organize data that guides next steps. Edulastic, PowerSchool, and Google Classroom are examples of online assessment programs that are utilized by teachers to create assessments, and also for administration to support in writing of quarterly assessments. Currently, VCPS has recently adopted a Learning Management System, Google Classroom.

¹³⁷ Vygotsky, L. S. (1986). Thought and language (A. Kozulin, trans.).

VLGA will use the same online assessment and learning management system as all schools in VCPS system.

Homework. At VLGA, our approach to homework is research-based and in alignment with our core values of honoring the development of the “whole child.” The most comprehensive research on homework comes from a 2006 meta-analysis by Duke University psychology professor Harris Cooper, who found a positive achievement correlation for homework starting in the seventh grade, but a weak relationship for those in younger grades.

At VLGA, we believe that limited, but thoughtfully scheduled homework can teach important learner skills such as study habits, self-discipline, inquisitiveness, and independent problem-solving skills. The Charter School’s homework policy espouses general guidelines that allow for teacher flexibility and individualized student learning plans:

1. Homework is an extension of classroom learning and **not a replacement for teacher direct instruction**. Students might be asked to explore ideas, stories, and additional information related to a classroom theme, writing project, or science inquiry.
2. Teachers must ensure that **students understand basic concepts before assigning extended work**. We do not want students creating life-long bad habits from the repetition of incorrect concepts. Students should be able to complete the work primarily on their own without the need for extensive parental guidance.
3. Homework completion is not included as part of a student achievement grade. Our purpose is to create self-motivated learners that love exploration.
4. Homework should be developmentally appropriate and not create a burden on family time or resources.
5. Cooperative and shared learning projects may be assigned from time to time and needs to be completed from home with the help of a parent. For example, writing a narrative about one’s family may necessitate interviewing family members, and the parent is expected to support and facilitate this activity outside of school.¹³⁸

CTE Pathways. It is not enough that students are exposed to their chosen pathway in their academic lives. At VLGA, we want our students to take an interdisciplinary approach to their studies. That means they should understand the power of effective communication in conveying health information to a general population for purposes of public health and safety, the math that drives business principles, and the geopolitical and environmental issues at stake in as they work to develop climate change solutions.

We see interdisciplinary learning as a way to tie classes together so that they truly cross over. While our teachers implement Community Catalyst Partners ISSN’s GPO-aligned thematic units in their classrooms, interdisciplinary learning projects will take those units one step further. Students will focus on individual components of a greater whole in their day-to-day work. By the time the project is completed and ready to be presented, students can look back to see how each piece, and each class, relates to the finished product.

¹³⁸ Cooper, H., Robinson, J. C., & Patall, E. A. (2006). Does homework improve academic achievement? A synthesis of research, 1987–2003. *Review of educational research*, 76(1), 1-62.

Interdisciplinary learning projects reflect real-world applications. It is another way to look at the problems facing today's world.

HOW THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM WILL SUPPORT STUDENT DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY-RELATED SKILLS AND STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology is an important global strand that runs throughout our curriculum. It allows us to reach across the cultural, financial, and digital divides that currently separate our students from gaining full access to the American dream. Most of our students do not have full Internet and computer access in their homes. To level the playing field, *VLGA students will be provided a Chrome Book or similar device*. All classrooms will have a class set of Chromebooks for students to check in and out each period for academic use. Students will also be allowed to take devices home for select projects.

VLGA will extensively utilize Google Classroom and Google Apps for Education for students and teachers. These Google services are provided free of charge to the school. Students and families will also have access to the school's Learning Management System and online portfolio. In addition to investing in Chromebooks for the students, the school provide WIFI access in all areas of the campus and implement Internet security software that complies with the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

In addition to integrated technical skills, VLGA is committed to digital safety. Students will receive instruction in developing digital literacy skills, including self-regulation, curiosity, and responsibility in an extraordinarily connected world. Cyber-bullying and cyber-safety will be addressed yearly for all VLGA students. VLGA will ensure that students understand and exercise good judgment as they navigate the infinite amount of information that exists online. This approach is in line with our focus on social- emotional skills, as students must learn how, when, and why the Internet can support their personal and academic growth.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

As a public charter school and as a Local Educational Agency, VLGA has set graduation requirements that will best support our students. To earn a high school diploma from VLGA, a student must complete 220 credits of the following course of study.¹³⁹ A student must earn a score of 2 or higher in each course in order to earn credit for the course:

- *40 credits of core English Language Arts coursework*
- *30 credits of core Math coursework to and through Common Core Integrated Math III*
- *30 credits of History and Social Sciences including at least one year of World History, at least one year of US History, and at least one semester U.S. Government*
- *20 credits of Lab Sciences*
- *20 credits of a Language Other than English fulfilled by completing at least two sequential*

¹³⁹ VLGA will comply with California Education Code Section 51225.1 and ensure that students who qualify (i.e., foster youth, homeless youth, former juvenile court school pupil, child of military family, newcomer, or migratory child) will be provided exemption from local graduation requirements and/or be given a fifth year to complete the requirements for graduation.

- years of the same language*
- *10 credits of Visual and Performing Arts*
- *20 credits of Physical Education*
- *40 credits Advisory/Global Hour*
- *50 total credits of electives (including CTE Pathways courses), including 5 credits of Ethnic Studies*
- *VLGA Senior Defense*

The table below describes VLGA's required course of study's alignment to the A-G requirements, as well as to the California State Department of Education's graduation requirements.

VLGA GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS ALIGNMENT TO A-G

VLGA graduation requirements offer students options to exceed state graduation requirements, as well as surpass the California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC) a-g minimum undergraduate admission requirements, including Ethnic Studies, per education Code Section 5125.3(a)(1)(G). Our high school program and instructional schedule are designed to support all students to meet graduation requirements, successfully complete their a-g requirements, and personalize their educational experience to explore college and career options in a field of their interest, thereby achieving “Prepared” status on the CDE’s College/Career Indicator over the course of their high school careers. Our course offerings and graduation requirement options ensure that students are prepared for college and career success and have the skills, knowledge and certifications necessary to enroll and persist at the university level and/or enter the workforce directly after high school certified to compete for high-wage, high-demand employment. Additionally, the Diploma of Distinction incentivizes students to set themselves apart through sustained commitment in all content and/or co-curricular areas including, for example, dual enrollment.

To receive a foundational high school diploma, VLGA students must:

- Earn 250 credits
- Pass all courses with a grade of C or better
- Exceed all California Department of Education graduation requirements
- Meet or exceed the a-g minimum admission requirements
- Create and present a senior portfolio defense

To receive a high school diploma of distinction, VLGA students must:

- Earn 270 credits
- Pass all courses with a grade of C or better
- Exceed all California Department of Education graduation requirements
- Exceed the a-g minimum admission requirements
- Show
- Pass all required courses with a grade of C or higher
- Create and present a senior portfolio defense

	California State Mandated Requirements ¹⁴⁰	UC Requirements for Freshman Admissions ¹⁴¹	VLGA Requirements for Graduation Foundational Diploma ¹⁴²	VLGA course sequences fulfilling requirements	Course credits
ELA	Three Years	Four years of approved courses	Four years of approved courses (40 credits)	ELA 9	10
				ELA 10	10
				ELA 11 OR ELA 11 Honors OR AP English Language and Composition OR Dual Enrollment Composition Course	10

¹⁴⁰ <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/hsgtable.asp>.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/hsgtable.asp>.

				ELA 12 OR AP English Literature and Composition OR Dual Enrollment Literature & Composition Course	10
Mathematics	Two years, including Algebra I, beginning in 2003–04.	Three years, including algebra, geometry, and intermediate algebra. (Four years recommended.)	Three years including Common Core Integrated Math I, II & III (30 credits) (Four years recommended.)	Common Core Integrated Math I	10
				Common Core Integrated Math II	10
				Common Core Integrated Math III	10
				Pre-Calculus	10
				Advanced Placement Calculus AB OR Dual Enrollment Calculus/Statistics Course	10
				Financial Literacy	10

History/Social Science	Three years including World History, U.S. History and 1 semester each of American Gov't and Economics	Two years including World History and U.S. History or Gov't	Three years (30 credits)	World History OR Dual Enrollment World History course	10
				US History OR Advanced Placement US History OR Dual Enrollment US History course	10
				Government OR Advanced Placement OR Dual Enrollment Government course	5
				Economics OR Advanced Placement OR Dual Enrollment Economics Course	5
Science	Two years, including biological and physical sciences.	Two years with lab required, chosen from biology, chemistry, and physics. (Three years recommended.)	Minimum two years (20 credits); three years recommended	Biology OR PLTW Principles of Biomedical Science	10
				Chemistry OR PLTW Human Body Systems (A-G approved for Chemistry)	10
				Physics	10
Languages Other than English	One year of either visual and performing arts, foreign language, or career technical education**.	Two years in same language required. (Three years recommended.)	Minimum two years (20 credits) required; three recommended	Spanish I OR Spanish for Native Speakers I OR Dual Enrollment Spanish 101 course (equivalent of high school Spanish I & II)	10
				Spanish II OR Spanish for Native Speakers II OR Introductory College Spanish 101 (equivalent of high school Spanish I & II)	10
				Spanish III OR Dual Enrollment Spanish 102 (equivalent of Spanish III)	10
				Advanced Placement Spanish Language and Culture OR Dual Enrollment Spanish 201 (equivalent of Spanish IV)	10
				Mandarin 1 OR Dual Enrollment Mandarin 101 course (equivalent of high school Mandarin I & II)	10
				Mandarin 2 OR Dual Enrollment Mandarin 101 course (equivalent of high school Mandarin I & II)	10
				Advanced Placement Chinese Language and Culture OR Dual Enrollment Mandarin 201 (equivalent of Mandarin IV)	10
Visual and Performing Arts	One year of either visual and performing arts, foreign language, or	One year of visual and performing arts chosen from the following: dance,	Two years of visual and performing arts (10 credits) or two years of CTE	Beginning Band	10
				Advanced Band	10
				Beginning Choir	10
				Advanced Choir	10

Physical Education	career technical education**.	drama/theater, music, or visual art.	Two years (20 credits)	ASB Leadership	10
				Journalism	10
				Speech and Debate	10
	Two years	Not Applicable		Physical Education I	10
				Physical Education II	10
College Prep Electives		One year college prep elective	Two years		
CTE Pathways	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Two years (20 credits) including completer status or two years of VAPA	Pathways (3 Required in a Pathway) ¹⁴³	
				Health Science Pathway	
				PLTW: Principles of Biomedical Science	10
				PLTW: Human Body Systems	10
				PLTW: Medical Interventions	10
				PLTW: Biomedical Innovation	10
				MSJC Dual Enrollment Courses	
				Business Pathway	
				Business Management	10
				Business Finance	10
				Business Law	10
				International Relations	10
				Intro to International Business	5
				Culture & International Business	5
				Business Communications	5
				MSJC Dual Enrollment Courses	
				Sustainability Leadership Pathway	
				Introduction to Living Earth	10
				Introduction to Chemistry in the Earth System	10
				Introduction to Physics of the Universe	10
				Introduction to the Ethics of Global Climate Change	5
				Global Climate Change, Its Impacts, and Solutions at Scale	5
				Engineering Sustainable Solutions	5
				Economics of the Environment	5
				Climate and Environmental Justice Law	5
Ethnic Studies/Financial Literacy	One Semester of Ethnic Studies	Not Applicable	One year (one semester each)	Ethnic Studies	5
				Financial Literacy	5
Advisory/Global Hour	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Four years (40 credits)		
				Advisory 9	10
				Advisory 10	10
				Advisory 11	10
				Advisory 12	10

¹⁴³ Over the next few years as the program is developed, we will work with our partners to identify an appropriate sequence of courses, including advanced courses that will lead to an Associate's degree.

	California State Mandated Requirements ¹⁴⁴	UC Requirements for Freshman Admissions ¹⁴⁵	VLGA Requirements for Graduation Diploma of Distinction ¹⁴⁶	VLGA course sequences fulfilling requirements	Course credits
ELA	Three Years	Four years of approved courses	Four years of approved courses (40 credits)	ELA 9	10
				ELA 10	10
				ELA 11 Honors OR AP English Language and Composition OR <u>Dual Enrollment Composition Course</u>	10
				AP English Literature and Composition OR Dual Enrollment Literature & Composition Course OR two years of Journalism (with 4 years of ELA)	10
Mathematics	Two years, including Algebra I, beginning in 2003–04.	Three years, including algebra, geometry, and intermediate algebra. (Four years recommended.)	Four years including Common Core Integrated Math I, II & III and math elective (40 credits)	Common Core Integrated Math I	10
				Common Core Integrated Math II	10
				Common Core Integrated Math III	10
				Pre-Calculus	10
				Advanced Placement Calculus AB OR Dual Enrollment Calculus/Statistics Course Financial Literacy	10 10
History/Social Science	Three years including World History, U.S. History and 1 semester each of American Gov't and Economics	Two years including World History and U.S. History or Gov't	Three years (30 credits)	World History OR Dual Enrollment World History course	10
				US History OR Advanced Placement US History, OR Dual Enrollment US History course	10
				Government OR Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment Government course COLIIN I need another line that says one history course must be met through dual enrollment or students must participate in 2 years of ASB Leadership	5
				Economics OR Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment Government Course	5
Science	Two years, including biological and physical sciences.	Two years with lab required, chosen from biology, chemistry, and physics. (Three years recommended.)	Minimum three years (30 credits)	Biology OR PLTW Principles of Biomedical Science	10
				Chemistry OR PLTW Human Body Systems (A-G approved for chemistry)	10
				Physics	10
Languages Other than English	One year of either visual and performing arts, foreign language, or	Two years in same language required. (Three years recommended.)	Minimum three years equivalency (30 credits)	Spanish I OR Spanish for Native Speakers I OR Dual Enrollment Spanish 101 course (equivalent of high school Spanish I & II)	10
				Spanish II OR Spanish for Native Speakers II OR Introductory College Spanish	10

¹⁴⁴ <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gc/hs/hsgtable.asp>.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gc/hs/hsgtable.asp>.

				101 (equivalent of high school Spanish I & II)	
				Spanish III OR Dual Enrollment Spanish 102 (equivalent of Spanish III)	10
				Advanced Placement Spanish Language and Culture OR Dual Enrollment Spanish 201 (equivalent of Spanish IV)	10
				Mandarin 1 OR Dual Enrollment Mandarin 101 course (equivalent of high school Mandarin I & II)	10
				Mandarin 2 OR Dual Enrollment Mandarin 101 course (equivalent of high school Mandarin I & II)	10
				Advanced Placement Chinese Language and Culture OR Dual Enrollment Mandarin 201 (equivalent of Mandarin IV)	10
Visual and Performing Arts	One year of either visual and performing arts, foreign language, or career technical education*.	One year of visual and performing arts chosen from the following: dance, drama/theater, music, or visual art.	Two years of visual and performing arts (20 credits)	Beginning Band	10
				Advanced Band	10
				Beginning Choir	10
				Advanced Choir	10
				ASB Leadership	10
				Journalism	10
				Speech and Debate	10
Physical Education	Two years	Not Applicable	Two years (20 credits)	Physical Education I	10
				Physical Education II	10
				Physical Education elective course OR participate for 2 years on the same VLGA athletic team	
College Prep Electives		One year college prep elective	Two years		
CTE Pathways	Not Applicable	One year college prep elective.	Two years (20 credits) including CTE Pathway completion	<u>Pathways (3 Required in a Pathway)</u> ¹⁴⁷	
				<u>Health Science Pathway</u>	
				PLTW: Principles of Biomedical Science	10
				PLTW: Human Body Systems	10
				PLTW: Medical Interventions	10
				PLTW: Biomedical Innovation	10
				MSJC Dual Enrollment Courses	
				<u>Business Pathway</u>	
				Business Management	10
				Business Finance	10
				Business Law	10
				International Relations	10
				Intro to International Business	5
				Culture & International Business	5
				Business Communications	5
				MSJC Dual Enrollment Courses	
				<u>Sustainability Leadership Pathway</u>	

¹⁴⁷ Over the next few years as the program is developed, we will work with our partners to identify an appropriate sequence of courses, including advanced courses that will lead to an Associate's degree.

				Introduction to Living Earth	10
				Introduction to Chemistry in the Earth System	10
				Introduction to Physics of the Universe	10
				Introduction to the Ethics of Global Climate Change	5
				Global Climate Change, Its Impacts, and Solutions at Scale	5
				Engineering Sustainable Solutions	5
				Economics of the Environment	5
				Climate and Environmental Justice Law	5
Ethnic Studies/Financial Literacy	One Semester of Ethnic Studies	Not Applicable	One year (one semester each)	Ethnic Studies	5
				Financial Literacy	5
Advisory/Global Hour	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Four years (40 credits)		
				Advisory 9	10
				Advisory 10	10
				Advisory 11	10
				Advisory 12	10

- CAASPP in ELA and Math (April/May of grade 11).¹⁴⁸

VLGA students have access to Dual Enrollment and/or Advanced Placement courses as early as the summer prior to their ninth grade year. Students will earn ten credits per year for high school year-long courses and five credits for high school semester credits. Students will earn ten credits per semester for dual enrollment courses. To meet Diploma of Distinction status, VLGA students are incentivized to take courses beyond the a-g requirements, personalize their education in areas of interest, demonstrate sustained commitment to instructional and/or co-curricular programs, and/or pursue dual enrollment courses.

In addition to a robust selection of dual enrollment pathway options, VLGA students also have access to Advanced Placement courses in order to optimize their postsecondary options and successfully compete for university admission. Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment courses are unrestricted and accessible to any interested VLGA student. Advanced Placement teachers will be qualified and prepared to teach AP courses and will provide additional activities and enrichment to prepare students to pass AP exams.

Career Technical Education

Career Technical Education is a critical component of the educational process and VLGA students have access to various CTE pathways, beginning in elementary, continuing through exploration in middle school and continuing through high school CTE pathways that culminate in dual enrollment certificate opportunities. VLGA CTE pathways are selected through the review of regional labor market information that is reviewed through various consortia focused on the economic health of the region. Pathways are reviewed and selected for implementation based on job projects for high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand jobs.

¹⁴⁸ No VLGA student or family will be assessed a fee for any exam in which VLGA requires participation as a condition for graduation. VLGA will obtain fee waivers and/or fee reduction for all AP and SAT exams, as well as for college application fees. VLGA will finance remaining costs not covered through the College Board's fee waiver and reduction programs.

The CTE pathways at VLGA focus on VLGA's global education as well as address student interest and the regional economic development needs. CTE pathways provide both high school level and college level CTE pathway courses, ultimately culminating in a dual enrollment and/or professional certificate program. Pathways designed for VLGA include Global Business, Cybersecurity, Biotechnology, and sustainability-related pathways such as Water Technology and Environmental Resource Management.

All high school CTE courses are a-g approved and meet the rigorous standards of the UC course approval system. CTE courses will include a robust work-based learning continuum of activities designed to build awareness, provide exploration, and finally provide preparation for students to enter the workforce after high school. The series of work-based learning activities include industry expert guest speakers, field trips and job site visits and shadowing, and finally opportunities for paid and unpaid internships. VLGA CTE teachers will also be encouraged to participate in CTE externships that sharpen their skills, keep their knowledge relevant, and put them in contact with a growing network of industry professionals who collaboratively contribute to the CTE students' success and integration into the workforce.

Although both VLGA diplomas exceed the California Department of Education's minimum graduation requirements, VLGA will grant graduation requirement exemption status for students meeting specific state-identified criteria for local graduation requirement exemption including Foster and Homeless Youth, students of military families, students participating in a Newcomer Program. Students meeting all criteria for these exemptions will have the option to review all sets of graduation requirements and elect to graduate under the CDE's requirements under such education code as 51225.1 and 51225.2.

Grading System, Academic Support, and Interventions

VLGA uses mastery-based grading to assess student learning. Mastery-based grading is a tiered grading system designed to fairly and accurately assess all students' understanding and proficiency in the standards of all courses. The grading system includes the following grades: 4-Advanced, 3-Proficient, 2-Developing, 1-Emerging, NE-No Evidence, and NA-Not Assessed and is implemented in conjunction with students' IEPs, 504 plans.

An Advanced (4) grade shows that a student has developed a deep understanding of the content, skill, or standard. They are in the 'Collaboration and Problem Solving Phase,' showing autonomy and a more developed sense of self-directed learning. They exhibit confidence by stating, "I create my own learning."

A Proficient (3) grade signifies that students at this level have a grade-level understanding of the content, skill, or standard and can apply it regularly. They are in the 'Guiding and Checking Phase,' seeking confirmation of their correct application with questions like "Did I do this right?"

A Developing (2) grade indicates that students are growing in their understanding of the content, skill, or standard. They are in the 'Practice and Coaching Phase' and still need support, asking for help to improve with statements such as "Help me do better."

An Emerging (1) grade indicates that students are in the early learning of content, skill, or standard. Students at this stage require considerable support and are in the 'Educate and Training Phase.' They often express the need for guidance with phrases like "Show me how."

A grade of NA indicates that at the time of the quarter grade update, the standard in question has not yet been assessed. A grade of NE (0) indicates that the student has not provided evidence of participation or effort to learn the standard in question.

Students are assessed throughout the year through various summative and formative assessment methods including traditional assessments, project-based learning, and conferring. Conferring happens on a regular one-on-one basis where teachers confer with students on their standards-based progress and give advice and instructional coaching on how to reach the next level of mastery.

The mastery-based grading system not only eliminates the mathematical inequities of a traditional 10% scale grading system, it increases and improves teacher-student relationships while developing a sense of fairness and agency with students and encourages them to make the effort to reach attainable and relatable goals in their courses.

Finally, students' mastery-based grades are calculated into a traditional letter grade GPA for each course, using a research-based calculation method developed by educational researcher Robert J. Marzano. The course standards grades for each course are added up, averaged, and assigned a letter grade based on Marzano's scale, indicated in the table below:

Average Standard Score	Traditional Grade
3.75-4:00	A+
3.26-3.74	A
3.00-3.25	A-
2.84-2.99	B+
2.67-2.83	B
2.50-2.66	B-
2.34-2.49	C+
2.17-2.33	C
2.00-2.16	C-
1.76-1.99	D+
1.26-1.75	D
1.00-1.25	D-

0.00-.99	F

Standards grades are reported at the end of each quarter (progress reports), with the end of each year report showing their traditional letter grade. These letter grades are part of students' high school transcripts, including a GPA for college admissions. Students participate in Student Led Conferences twice a year to report their learning progress to family/guardians to highlight their accomplishments and develop a sense of awareness and agency in their own learning.

All VLGA students are required to curate an electronic portfolio throughout their high school careers. Graduating seniors are also required to summarize their learning by presenting and defending their high school learning portfolio. The presentation represents their learning experiences over four years, their significance, how they have developed their global competencies throughout, how they have taken action as a global citizen, and what their post-secondary steps are in furthering their impact as a global leader. The portfolio is assessed by panels of teachers, administrators, board members, and community partners on organization, overall content, the descriptions of how the learning experiences have inspired and impassioned students, the visual quality of the presentation, and the presentation style.

CREDIT RECOVERY OPPORTUNITIES AND SUPPORT

VLGA provides a variety of interventions and opportunities for credit recovery to assist students in danger of not graduating and/or not meeting the a-g requirements. A critical element of our mastery-based grading system is multiple and regular opportunities for students to meet individually with their teachers to assess their progress and receive feedback and tutoring in order to reach proficiency level and beyond. Students also have access to instructional aides in most classes to provide additional individual and small group instruction within the school day. VLGA courses also include periodic opportunities for students to recover credit by challenging their current standard grade by doing additional work to demonstrate an accurate assessment of their level of mastery. During students' Global Hour class, students also have opportunities to seek help from content-area teachers. In addition to these opportunities, credit-deficient students have other opportunities for recovery including APEX in a lab class with small adult to student ratio where students are monitored, coached, encouraged, and celebrated. The Global Hour period is also dedicated to tutorials 2 days a week where students can move to different classrooms to seek help from content specific teachers. And of course, there are summer school opportunities, as well.

VLGA counselors meet regularly with students and have small counselor-to-student ratios. Graduation checks are completed on a regular basis so that students are identified early and provided with the interventions, time, and opportunities necessary to meet graduation and/or a-g requirements. For those students who, by the end of their senior year, have not met graduation requirements, will have the opportunity to access summer school and/or APEX in order to recover credit.

Transferability of Courses

VLGA courses are transferable to other public schools and meet university eligibility standards. Families are notified of the transferability of courses in the student/parent handbook as well as during the regular counselor meetings. Students begin their college planning prior to the beginning of high school by participating in various college and career lessons provided by the California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI) curriculum. This curriculum takes middle and high school students through a series of college and career, financial planning, and financial aid lessons and steps through the college and financial aid application process including the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or California Dream Act. Vista Lago Global Academy counseling and administration staff will assure that all pertinent laws regarding financial aid application are compiled with and that students and families are fully informed and supported through the process.

ENSURING TRANSFER STUDENTS CAN MEET GRADUATION AND COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

We will provide a pathway for transfer students into the school whereby they can access VLGA's program, meet VLGA's promotion requirements, and graduate on time. We will accept credits from other high schools. Credits from other high schools will be recognized according to their A-G distinction. Students entering VLGA in grades 10 through 12 will complete an alternate path toward graduation that recognizes any discrepancies in credits earned in previous years versus previous years' promotion requirements at VLGA but that still supports the student to meet the A-G requirements. For example, if a student were to enter VLGA as a junior, the student would not be required to take the PSAT if he/she had not already done so, and the number of electives required for graduation might be adjusted accordingly. The student would be granted the requisite credits to be placed in the grade level appropriate to his/her accumulation of A-G core credits.

ENSURING STUDENTS MEET THE CDE'S COLLEGE/CAREER INDICATOR

VLGA will work to ensure that all students meet the "Prepared" level on the CDE's new College/Career Indicator. We will work to meet this state metric with our students achieving a High School Diploma and any one of the following:

Career Ready

- Complete a CTE Pathway with a grade of C- or better in the capstone course and meet one of the additional criteria below:
 - Smart Balanced Summative Assessments: Receive a score of Level 3 or higher in one subject area (ELA or Mathematics) and a score of Level 2 or higher in the other area
 - Complete one semester/two quarters/two-trimesters of College Credit Courses with a grade of C- or better in academic/CTE subjects where college credits are awarded for each course
- Registered Pre-Apprenticeship
 - Complete a registered pre-apprenticeship
- State and Federal Job Programs
 - Complete one of the programs and complete one semester/two quarters of a CTE course with a C- or better

- Transition Classroom and Work-Based Learning Experiences (available only to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who earn a Special Education Certificate of Completion

College

- Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments
 - Receive a score of Level 3 “Standard Met” or higher on both English language arts (ELA) and Mathematics
- Advanced Placement (AP) Exams
 - Receive a score of 3 or higher on two AP exams
- College Credit Courses
 - Complete two semesters/three quarters of college coursework with a grade of C- or better in academic/Career Technical Education (CTE) subjects where college credits are awarded
- State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB)
 - Receive the SSB and a score of Level 3 or higher in ELA on the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments
- University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) Requirements
 - Meet all a-g requirements for admission to a UC or CSU school and meet one of the additional criteria below:
 - Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments: Receive a score of Level 3 or higher in one subject area (ELA or mathematics) and a score of Level 2 in the other area
 - Complete one semester/two quarters of College Credit Courses with a grade of C- or better in academic/CTE subjects where college credits are awarded for each course
 - Receive a score of 3 on one AP exam
 - Complete a CTE pathway

With graduation requirements that exceed UC A-G requirements, a rigorous, mastery-based program of instruction that prepares students to excel on the CAASPP exams, and an array of AP course offerings and opportunities for dual enrollment, we are confident all of VLGA’s students can and will meet this college/career readiness indicator criteria.

Retention and Promotion Policies

VLGA expects students to progress through each grade level within one school year. To accomplish this, VLGA staff including administrators, counselors, teachers, and parents should collaborate on innovative, student-centered interventions and support services to identify and assist any students who may be in danger of not graduating and who have not responded to the various credit recovery opportunities provided. The committee will evaluate students’ progress and areas of growth and determine opportunities to complete graduation requirements including summer school and online courses after the completion of the 12th grade or in some events, a 5th year of high school.

If the committee has determined that a student must use the aforementioned measures to meet graduation requirements, the student and his parent/guardian must be notified as early in the

school year as possible. The decision to retain a student may be appealed to the Superintendent.

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES (WASC) ACCREDITATION

VLGA will complete all necessary steps and apply for WASC accreditation. We note that both of VCPS' middle schools have voluntary WASC accreditation.

A TYPICAL DAY – HIGH SCHOOL

The following provides an example of what part of a week in the life at VLGA might look and feel like for a student. Schools are dynamic, human-centered organizations and, while schedules and basic routines will have consistency, no two weeks will look exactly alike. The following description strives to highlight unique features of a VLGA week but is solely demonstrative. Times and the actual bell schedule have been manipulated to showcase innovative programs, approaches, and signature practices.

Miguel, a tenth-grade student, hops off the bus with two of his buddies, Jesse and Julian, and the three boys walk towards the entrance of their high school, VLGA. As they cross the parking lot Miguel sees a few familiar sights. A few cars pull up and some of his classmates jump out of their parents' cars, and simultaneously wave goodbye to their parents and wave hello to Miguel and his friends. Mr. Bailey, the Assistant Principal, is there to greet the students being dropped off, as he always is, and he offers his fist for Miguel to "fist bump" as Miguel walks by.

"Happy Wednesday gentlemen. Let's make this a terrific day. Make sure you have spoken to Ms. Creed and registered for the PSAT."

Miguel silently nods. He already has his appointment with Ms. Creed, the school's counselor, later this afternoon. Ever since beginning 10th grade, Miguel and Ms. Creed have held numerous conversations about his grades, goals and future plans.

Miguel smiled as he reflected on being one of the students who began at Vista in Kindergarten and made it all the way through to the high school and will be in the school's first ever graduating class. "You will be the ones who show future classes the Vista way." The message was burned into Miguel's memory. He burned to be one to show his classmates, his community, and the world "the Vista way." Miguel feels enormous pride in being in this graduating class, even if it is corny.

The boys are asked for their school lanyard by the supervision aide standing at the door. She also checks each student for proper uniform, and having no issues with his dress, Miguel enters the school, and proceeds to the cafeteria to grab a hot breakfast. He finds a group of his closest friends, and they share gossip and laughter as Miguel eats his food. He eats hurriedly because he wants to ensure he has time to hit the gymnasium to fit in a short basketball game during morning club time before class begins. Even before he swallows his last bite, a group of the boys, Miguel included, jump up, collect their bags, toss their trash in the bin, and head towards the gym.

The gym is bustling with activity. He sees Mr. Jimenez, the PE teacher, setting up for his day while various groups of kids play soccer, or basketball. Other students sit along the perimeter of the gym, listening to music, or pointing and laughing at the students playing. Miguel and his buddies collect a basketball from the rack supplied by Mr. Jimenez. They find an empty net and play a quick, sloppy, and brag filled game of half-court basketball.

At 8:20, precisely ten minutes before the start of period 1, Mr. Jimenez blows his whistle and students slowly begin to return equipment and collect their belongings. It is time for period 1, and for Miguel that means it is time for Chemistry. He says goodbye to his basketball friends, who linger in the gym, and walks down the hall towards his classes.

Late in his 9th grade year Miguel and his classmates each selected which of the three academic pathways offered at Lago that he would pursue. He was provided information about each pathway: a Health Science pathway, a Business pathway, and a Sustainability Leadership pathway. Although he has a strong love for the planet and environmental issues and was tempted to select the Sustainability Leadership pathway, Miguel's mom reminded him that he always has said that he wanted to be a doctor when he grew up. By selecting the Health Science pathway, Miguel will have the opportunity to take classes at nearby Mount San Jacinto College, and maybe even earn his Associate's Degree while he is still in high school. Nobody in his family has yet attended college and he could earn a degree while still in high school! Miguel is determined to make that happen.

Wednesday 8:30 a.m. Period 1: CHEMISTRY

Miguel is greeted at the door by his teacher Ms. Sotero. She smiles and says, "Good morning, Miguel," as she hands him a sheet of paper, and adds, "This is the goals sheet for your group for today. Your group is here already." Miguel knows that is Ms. Sotero's way of warning him about almost being tardy, so he quietly joins his group of 4 to work on the goal sheet.

After 5 minutes, Ms. Sotero dings her bell, and calls the class to attention. She then introduces the day's teaching point, which she presents using Lago's WHAT, HOW, and WHY template. Pointing to the smart board she explains, "Okay Chemists, we've been becoming experts on the chemical processes of how viruses do their dirty work. You've all learned many things about what chemicals destroy different viruses and why. Eddie, head up please," she says. Eddie's head pops up across the room. "Today, chemists, I want to teach you how knowledge of chemistry, and chemists themselves, can be a benefit to the general public. I am going to demonstrate that by walking your groups through how to use your computers to create an infographic for use in public spaces all around the community, which can share a great deal of important information quickly in an engaging way. We are going to learn this because globally competent scientists use their knowledge to inform the public about possible health hazards when they can." She scans the room, and continues, "Make sure you have the essay you are writing in ELA handy because you will want to make sure that the same points you are arguing in the essay will also be on your infographic."

Miguel reaches into his bag and pulls out his English folder. The teachers in Miguel's 4 core classes (Chemistry, English, Integrated Math II and U.S. History) had worked together during their preparation periods and during professional development meetings to craft a multidisciplinary unit on "Infectious Disease." Every class had spent the last three weeks

learning about infectious diseases through the lenses of different courses. Miguel enjoyed learning about the topic so much that he often forgot he was really learning chemistry or math or writing. His teachers made his schoolwork feel so authentic that it was easy to get lost in the flow of his work. To Miguel, what he was doing at school felt important.

Ms. Sotero continues class with a fast ten-minute lesson where she uses her own computer to demonstrate a way the students might create their infographics. As she does so she shares her thinking. “The first thing I need to decide is what facts and information I will include in my infographic. I know this infographic will be used inside laboratories and universities where scientists work. So on this infographic I am going to make sure I am using scientific terminology. Instead of “clean” I might say “use anti-viral solutions.” I know that part of the assignment will be to create a second infographic for lay people, so I can use the informal language there.” She pauses slightly. “Now look through your essays. Each of you find one fact or piece of information you think you must include in your infographic.” Students across the room rifle through their papers. Miguel scans his own essay and selects the fact “one virus alone killed over 675,000 Americans in 1918.”

“Now share your one fact with your team and explain why you feel this fact must be included in your infographic. What makes your fact so important? I will set the timer for 5 minutes.” She sets her timer and walks among the teams. Miguel and his team take turns sharing their ideas.

When it is his turn, Miguel shares his fact, adding, “We need to include this because it shows how bad this can get.”

“How bad can what get?” asks Ms. Sotero, who has walked up while Miguel was focused on listening to his teammate.

“How bad an...infectious...outbreak...could be?” Miguel offers hopefully.

“Well that is a little better, but I think you and your team will need to work being very specific in your explanations. It does not help to be vague and general when you are using science to save the world.” She moves on to the next group. Miguel cannot help but smile for two reasons. The first reason is that he thinks Ms. Sotero is funny. She is firm, and she can be weird, but Miguel loves her warmth and gentle guidance. The second reason he is smiling is because the goal his group wrote down during the warmup was “Try to be as clear about what we say and mean as possible.” When he looks back at his team, he sees they are smiling too.

When the timer goes off, Ms. Sotero asks, “What questions might there be?” When no one asks a question she quips, “Oh, there will be questions. Ok. You know what to do. You have 40 minutes. Get cracking. I will come around.”

The room erupts in energy and action as groups pull out their Chromebooks and notebooks and get down to work. His team begins its work by everyone assuming their previously chosen role. Miguel is the timekeeper. His job is to move the team along if it gets stuck and he is also responsible for letting the team know how much time was left. He had requested this role, because he often found himself forgetting how much time was left when he was in the middle of

working with his team. By the time 40 minutes had passed, his team had chosen their 8 facts, and their visual theme and had begun laying out the infographic using the application Ms. Sotero had shared.

Ms. Sotero once again calls the class to attention and begins the routine of class progress share out. She begins, “Today I taught you how knowledge of chemistry, and chemists themselves, can be a benefit to the general public. We demonstrated this by working on creating infographics which can share a great deal of important information quickly in an engaging way. So, let’s go around the room and can I have each facilitator share today’s progress with the class? Team Alpha?”

Angie, the facilitator of Miguel’s group shares, “We chose our 8 pieces of information, and then we decided on our theme. We are now in the middle of designing the first one.”

Ms. Sotero thanks her and asks the other groups to share their progress. Miguel tries hard to listen to each group but he keeps drifting off and thinking about his next class, English. He feels nervous.

As the last team finishes, Ms. Sotero says, “Today’s exit ticket is a review. Everyone should get this one. What are the 6 most common types of chemical reactions? List them.”

Miguel quickly scribbled, *combination, decomposition, combustion, single and double something* on the paper and hung his head as he handed his paper in. He is frustrated he couldn’t remember the last three names. It annoys him until he bumps into Julian who asks, “Are you ready man. You go today, right?”

“Yeah, I go,” Miguel says.

“I can’t wait to hear your speech, bro.”

By this time the boys have reached their next class.

Wednesday 10:10 a.m. Period 3: ENGLISH 10

As Miguel and Julian enter the room, Miguel notices the shelves of books along the far wall. He has read eight full books so far this year, during his independent reading time, and Miguel has spent a significant amount of time “book shopping” in those bookshelves.

The second thing he notices is that his teacher, Mr. Aguilar, has arranged the seats in a circle, which could only mean one thing.

“Socratic Seminar,” says Miguel excitedly. He loves Socratic Seminar. When teachers and students hold deep conversations about what they are reading and writing Miguel feels much more connected to his classmates. He enjoys sharing ideas about great authors, and classic books, and debating controversial ideas in the safe structure the Seminar provides.

Mr. Aguilar waits until the last student has settled into the circle before addressing the class. “Good morning Writers! One thing that strong writers do to strengthen their writing is to talk about their writing with other writers. Sharing struggles and ideas helps all writers because by sharing these things writers can gain different perspectives on their work. Other writers may have solutions to our writing problems, or they may offer a differing viewpoint which forces you to fortify your own thinking and of course writing. So if everyone looks at the agenda for the day...”

Heads turn to view the white board.

Mr. Aguilar continues, “So today we will begin class with a Socratic Seminar. I will ask you open ended questions about your Infectious Disease Position Papers and we will see if we can’t assist one another as we get ready for final edits on Friday. After Seminar we will have Independent time, where most of you will be revising your drafts, or rehearsing for round one of your speeches. During that time, I will be finishing up the last couple of writing conferences. Miguel, I think we have a conference today, and Amy, Luis, and Giovanny. Then we will close class with the first round of Speech rehearsal and feedback. Look at the sign up on the board. Today’s speakers shall be Miguel, wow, Miguel, it is a busy day for you.” Miguel knows that. That’s why he feels nervous.

“Ok, writers, you all have been working and researching different aspects of the topic infectious Disease. We’ve read and analyzed parts of Journal of the Plague Year by Daniel Defoe...” A moan ripples through the room. “Yeah, yeah, you loved it. We looked at part of Pale Horse, Pale Rider by Katherine Anne Porter. We’ve read a few articles about COVID 19 and the Spanish Flu. All that in addition to whatever research you’ve done on your topics. Wow, you must really be experts on disease by now.” Miguel feels like he is far from an expert but he is learning so much about this topic through the way his teachers organize their lessons. If this is what Health Science looks and felt like, he is all in.

“So, my first question is what part of writing up your findings in your position paper is challenging you the most? Share your specific topic and then share what you find most challenging.”

Following an engaging Socratic Seminar discussion, the class is given time to work on their writing.

“We have three speakers today. I want to remind everyone about our Rules for the Audience. These are not finished speeches. After each speech we will provide 3 pieces of feedback. Miguel, are you ready?”

Miguel slowly walks to the front of the class. He fights the butterflies off and clears his throat. Then he begins, “In an increasingly interconnected world, the issues of global health and infectious disease have a real impact on us all. Malaria kills more than half a million children each year. The most frequent cause of death in developing nations are infectious diseases, such as malaria and tuberculosis, which are virtually nonexistent in developed nations. Millions of children under five die from preventable infectious diseases. This is why, although the economy was harmed, closing down businesses and forcing people to stay home was the right thing to do,

because it saved lives and prevented our hospitals from being crowded ...” As Miguel continues, his breathing becomes steadier.

Miguel finishes his speech and takes a deep breath. Public speaking always makes him nervous, and almost every class requires some kind of speaking. He knows that even though he is not the best speaker, he is getting better each time. Mr. Aguilar asks the class for feedback.

“Slow down. You speak quickly,” one student offers.

“Towards the end, when you stumbled, you almost let it throw off the rest of the speech. The audience does not know when you make a mistake. Just keep going.”

“Eye contact. You never looked up from your paper.”

Miguel thanks the class for their polite applause and returns to his seat to listen to the next two speakers. Miguel feels jealous that they seem to be so comfortable, but he knows he can get to the same place if he keeps on working. It worked in Math when he struggled, and it will work here.

Once the speakers receive their feedback, Mr. Aguilar reminds them what is due Friday when they meet again and dismisses the class. Miguel collects his belongings and as he leaves, Mr. Aguilar says, “Miguel, your speech was so much improved. I can tell you have been putting effort into this.” Miguel thanks him. He has been working hard on this.

As he steps into the hall, Miguel realizes that he is hungry. Good thing it is lunch time. He waits for his boys outside their class before heading to the gym for pre-lunch recess. At Lago, students are given their recess before they eat. It helps them build an appetite, and more students seem to eat the healthy and tasty school lunches when they aren’t rushing off to play.

11:45 a.m. Lunch

When he arrives, the gym is already alive with activity. He sees the campus supervision team stationed around the gym watching the games of soccer, basketball, and volleyball being played. Scattered around the gym are clusters of students. He finds his buddies and joins the basketball game already in progress. Miguel hopes that by next year, when he is a Junior, he will be able to play on the school’s basketball team. He badly wants to represent his school as a Lago Eagle by playing his favorite sport. If he continues to practice, and listen to Coach Jimenez, he knows he will improve in basketball just as he has improved in Math and Writing.

Fifteen minutes pass too quickly, and the whistles blow alerting the students that it is time to join the cafeteria line. He grabs his lunch, chicken quesadillas, his favorite, and sits in his usual spot. He gobbles his food down and spends the remainder of lunch time chatting and laughing with his friends. Once the signal is given to dismiss by table, Miguel and his table throw out their trash and head on to their next class. For Miguel, that is Integrated Math II.

12:25 p.m. Period 5: Integrated Math II

Miguel knows the routines of Math class like the back of his hand. Upon being greeted by his teacher Ms. Penate, he joins the other students at his assigned table, as they all take out their Chromebooks and log in to Google classroom. There he finds his Math Goals Tracker form. On this form he reviews the work he accomplished during the last class, this past Monday. He reminds himself that he was in the middle of practicing translating the information included in word problems into an appropriate equation that Ms. Penate had taught him and his group at the teacher's table.

Miguel understands that he still needs to practice this skill today, because on Monday he did not reach his goal: *I will select the best equation to solve a problem, based on the information contained in the word problem in at least 4 out of 5 tries.* Shaking his head, Miguel remembers how he struggled on Monday. He reassures himself by recalling what Ms. Penate said to him then, when she saw his scrunched-up face. "Remember, Miguel, what I always say. Fail early and fail often. As long as you keep your Growth Mindset, you will get better. Don't give up on yourself. I'm here when you need my help." Smiling with confidence, Miguel decides he will continue to work on the same goal. He is not going to give up on himself.

"What's your daily goal, Miguel?" asks Anahi, his elbow partner.

"I'm still going to practice word problems," he responds. He glances at Anahi's tracker and sees that she has a completely different goal. Anahi will be using Khan Academy for independent practice on inequalities. Miguel practiced his inequalities last week and feels the pride that comes from accomplishing a goal one sets for oneself. He submits his daily goal tracker online and finds the Word Problem practice that Ms. Penate has uploaded.

Just as he is about to begin, Ms. Penate calls the class to attention. "By now, you all should have submitted your daily goals...Anahi, it looks like I still don't have yours." Miguel notices Anahi quickly hit a button on her keyboard. Soon after Ms. Penate says, "Ahh, there we go. Thank you, Anahi, my friend.

"I noticed on Monday that a few of you still had some questions about how to pick the proper equation for word problems. So today I will start by meeting with you at the Teacher's Table. So can I see Eduardo, Miguel, Daniella, Hector and Estrella up here with me? In the second rotation I would like to see Angel, Ashley, Raymond, and Sissi at the teacher's table, and we will review ratios, okay? Raise your hand if you would like to begin with continuing working on your Cost-Benefit analysis of the COVID 19 shutdowns." Miguel sees the hands of seven classmates go up in the air. He is anxious to work on his analysis, but he knows he must meet the teacher at the teacher table first. "Great. You all start the rotation at the back tables. Who is ready for an assessment?" Only two hands go up. "Okay, Jesse and Maribel, do you know what standards you are assessing?" They nod in the affirmative. "Okay, all the assessments are already in Google classroom listed by standards. Take your time. I suppose the rest of you are looking to begin with peer study partners?" Many head nods. "Ok then, get to it."

The classroom explodes with movement as students pack and stack their belongings and move to the appropriate table. The students in the back at the independent practice table pop earbuds in and begin intently watching the Khan Academy videos their teacher had linked to their accounts.

Other students paired off and began to hold quiet “six-inch voice” conversations about their Math assignments. Jesse and Maribel transitioned to the assessment corner. Miguel was impressed as he looked at Jesse, who had an eager and determined look on his face. Miguel could remember a time where Jesse hated Math class and would spend most of his time misbehaving or checking his cell phone. However, ever since joining Ms. Penate’s class, with her way of teaching Jesse has changed completely. It seems to Miguel that Jesse actually enjoys Math class.

Miguel knows why. In the past, the entire class had to sit quietly while the teacher would speed through practice problems on the board, assign the same practice problems for homework, and give the same exam to everyone on Friday. Now, in Ms. Penate’s class, students are given the choice to work on the things that they want and need to work on. No longer is the Math lesson one-size-fits-all. Ms. Penate meets with small groups of students and teaches them the standards they still have to Master. Miguel finds it much more exciting and fun because he knows he is learning exactly what he needs to know, and he is ready to learn it, and eager to demonstrate when he masters a new idea.

By the end of this class, Miguel has revised his weekly goals for word problems and he has collaborated with Anahi on his COVID Cost Benefit analysis. Again, class was dismissed before he knew it. Miguel was very satisfied with the work he had completed. Ms. Penate refers students to today’s exit ticket on google classroom. Miguel types in his reply and waits to be dismissed.

The hallways are bustling, as Miguel walks towards his final class of the day, Physical Education. That means he is headed back to the gymnasium.

2:05 p.m. Period 7: PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Most students entered the gym and walk immediately to the appropriate locker room to change into their PE uniforms, with “Vista Athletics” boldly printed across the front, with a small Eagle on the sleeve. Miguel instead walks to Coach Jimenez, who is laying out traffic cones at each corner of the gym in preparation for the mile run which is held every Wednesday.

“Hi Coach.”

“What is going on, Miguel? Go get your uniform on.”

“I have an appointment with Ms. Creed at 2:10 and I wanted to tell you first. I am not ditching.”

“Thank you for telling me. When you get back you are still doing the mile.”

“Yes, coach.” Miguel walks to the front office, and speaks to Ms. Ruth, the office manager. “Hi Ms. Ruth, I have a meeting with...”

“...Ms. Creed. I know, Miguel. You can go in. She is waiting for you.” Miguel is always amazed that Ms. Ruth seems to know everything that is going on at Lago. She knows every student, and most of their parents by name.

Miguel enters Ms. Creed's office and already she has a few documents spread out on the table. She welcomes Miguel and closes her door.

"Thanks for coming on time, Miguel. There are a few things I would like to run through with you. The first thing I want to do is make sure you have registered for the PSAT next month. Have you registered yet?"

"No ma'am. I want to register now."

She hands him the school registration form, and he carefully fills it out. The PSAT is a requirement of all 10th graders and the registration is simple. Ms. Creed accepts the registration and hands him a reservation ticket. "You will be in group 3. Do not lose that ticket. We won't allow you to test in your session without it."

"OK."

"Now let's go over your Individual Graduation Plan. I was reviewing this earlier, and I am impressed. You are all caught up on your credits, and so far your grades look good for this semester. I do want to ask what is going on in English class?"

Miguel's lowest grade was in English. It was always lowest in English. "Yeah, I am not a great writer, but Mr. Aguilar and I have been really working to improve it. I should raise that to a B with my next project."

"I am glad to hear that you and Mr. Aguilar are working on it, but how would you feel if we could get you some additional support? If I can arrange for a tutor during Zero Period, would you be open to work with them?"

Miguel understood that hard work and practice pays off. That is the Vista way. He agreed to working with a tutor to raise his grade.

"Excellent. Now let's talk about your progress in your Pathway. How is that going?" Miguel says it is going well, and that his family is so proud of him for being the first in their family to earn college credits.

Miguel's time at Vista had taught him how to maintain a Growth Mindset. He had learned over time to relish challenges. He understands that growth comes through hard work and discomfort.

"Ok, Miguel. Good meeting. Let's schedule our next meeting. How about one month from today? Does this time work for you?"

Ms. Creed smiles her warm smile, as he leaves her office. Miguel wonders if he would be doing as well as he is without the support of his counselor. Miguel was grateful for all the adults at Lago who care so deeply. Teachers come early and stay late to offer additional support and practice. The counselors maintain regular meetings with all students to monitor their progress.

Even the Principal, Dr. Felch, runs the school with a kind heart, and tremendous pride in all his students.

Miguel could no longer delay. He changes in the locker room and walks to the starting line. By now the rest of the class are split off. Some are working with the Teacher's Assistant on plyometric exercises. Others are huddled around Coach Jimenez who is demonstrating the proper grip on a golf club. Coach Jimenez sees Miguel on the starting line, and calls, "Miguel, 25 laps. Hit it!" Miguel is off and running.

As he runs, he goes through the day's events in his mind. Dismissal time is coming soon, and it does not even feel to Miguel as though he has been doing schoolwork all day. He is proud of his infographic, glad his speech went well, and is satisfied with the progress he made in Math today, and happy with his time with Ms. Creed. He then thinks ahead to tomorrow and what it will bring. He will engage in a debate in U.S. History over the U.S. response to the 1918 Spanish flu epidemic. One more challenge: 23 more laps and he takes off.

Coach Jimenez dismisses the class at 3:30 to change back into their school clothes.

When his mother arrives to give him a ride home from school, Miguel is shiny with sweat, and exhausted from the day. She asks him, "So how was your day? I know you were nervous about your speech?"

Miguel thinks for a minute, then replies, "Oh you, know, it was a regular day at VLGA."

"So, was it good?" Mom pushes.

"It was a great day," Miguel says, looking out at the school logo as they drive away home. *Tomorrow I get to do it again*, he thinks as the school recedes in the distance.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The academic calendar complies with the annual instructional minutes requirements set forth in Education Code Section 47612.5(a). The proposed school calendar for 2025–2026 includes 180 instructional days and 190 teacher workdays (180 instructional, five summer Professional Development and five school-year Professional Development).



VISTA LAGO GLOBAL ACADEMY

A Vista Charter Public School

2025-2026 Instruction Calendar

Superintendent: Donald Wilson Ed. D.

Deputy Superintendent: Collin Felch Ed. D.

Assistant Superintendent: Karen Amaya

JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
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Professional Development

Professional Development

Professional Development

No School/Break

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULES

VLGA will offer 390 minutes of instruction for all grades per regular day and 290 minutes for all grades on “early release” days on Friday in grades 9-12. Teachers will have professional development (PD) and collaborative time for two hours each Friday after early release. During Zero Period, students in need of additional support and intervention will be able to receive targeted intervention and support with core teachers leading small group instruction and tutoring, along with certain optional classes students can choose to take before the school day begins. After-school tutoring and support also will be available, pending funds availability.¹⁴⁹

Monday/Wednesday

8:30-10:05 - Period 1

10:10-11:45 - Period 3

¹⁴⁹ Our charter petition budget is conservatively planned and does not include some start-up funds which we plan to secure, such as grants from the CA Department of Education (Public Charter Schools Grant Program) and various foundations, as well as after-school funding that is available after our first year of operations. As with our existing schools, we assume that we will be able to offer an engaging after-school program of enriching club and sports activities as well as academic support, pending funds availability.

11:45-12:20 - Lunch
 12:25-2:00 - Period 5
 2:05-3:40 - Period 7
 Instr. Minutes = 390

Tuesday/Thursday

8:30-10:05 - Period 2
 10:10-11:45 – Advisory/Global Hour
 11:45-12:20 - Lunch
 12:25-2:00 - Period 4
 2:05-3:40 - Period 6
 Instr. Minutes = 390

Friday (PD Day) - Alternating Weeks

8:30-9:40 - Period 1/2
 9:45-10:55 - Period 3/Advisory/Global Hour
 11:00-12:10 - Period 5/4
 12:10-12:45 - Lunch
 12:50-2:00 - Period 7/6
 Instr. Minutes = 290

INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS AND MINUTES

VLGA will offer more than the 64,800 instructional minutes per year required for grades 9-12.

Grades	Grades Offered	Number of Regular Days	Number of Instr. Minutes Per Regular Day	Number of Early Dismissal Days	Number of Instr. Minutes Per Early Dismissal Day	Number of Minimum Days	Number of Instr. Minutes Per Minimum Day	Number of [Other] Days	Number of Instr. Minutes Per [Other] Day	Total Number of Instr. Days	Minutes Req'd Per State Law	Total Number of Instr. Minutes	Number of Instr. Minutes Above/Below State Req't.
TK/K	No									0	36000	0	-36000
1	No									0	50400	0	-50400
2	No									0	50400	0	-50400
3	No									0	50400	0	-50400
4	No									0	54000	0	-54000
5	No									0	54000	0	-54000
6	No									0	54000	0	-54000
7	No									0	54000	0	-54000
8	No									0	54000	0	-54000
9	Yes	135	390	45	290					180	64800	65700	900
10	Yes	135	390	45	290					180	64800	65700	900
11	Yes	135	390	45	290					180	64800	65700	900
12	Yes	135	390	45	290					180	64800	65700	900

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TEACHER RECRUITMENT

VLGA will utilize multiple search methods to attract and recruit qualified teachers to deliver our instructional program. Some of these will include EdJoin, VLGA job fairs and its website, advertisements at colleges and universities, and word of mouth. Selection of teachers is based on their teaching experience and ability to demonstrate effective instructional capabilities in the classroom. VLGA will recruit ESSA-compliant teachers holding a CLAD or BCLAD credential with experience in planning and implementing an engaging, differentiated instructional program. Teachers need to be well versed in SDAIE and English Language Development (ELD) techniques. (See full job description in Element 5.)

The Superintendent and Principal will review the qualifications of applicants' resumes and VLGA employment applications. The Superintendent and Principal will screen promising applicants by speaking with previous employers prior to selection for an interview. VLGA's administrators and Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) will conduct interviews with candidates. From the first interview, teachers who meet federal and state requirements are asked to come back for a demonstration lesson with the ILT. The Principal ultimately selects teachers based on teaching experience, subject matter/grade level expertise, and demonstrated classroom capabilities. The Principal will notify each person of his or her status once a decision is made. Candidates who are offered employment will receive written notice from VLGA.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

At VLGA, professional development will be critical to the success of our students. At VLGA, we understand that effective professional development needs to be consistent; the one-time professional development approach traditionally used by school districts has been shown to be less effective than ongoing professional development.¹⁵⁰ At VLGA, professional development will be directly applicable to classroom practices (such as promoting global competence) in order for teachers to maximize the usefulness of the training, learning Kagan strategies to increase collaborative processes, and Way of Council training to ensure rich social/emotional environments for our students.¹⁵¹

VLGA has both short-term and long-term professional development plans that will promote deep learning and strong implementation of its programs.

VLGA will utilize several specific structures to ensure that teachers are continuously learning and growing their practice. Below are the key structures that contribute toward professional learning:

All Vista Days: VLGA will participate in All Vista Days, which are dedicated to professional development common to all Vista schools. This training includes such topics as: the ISSN framework, Kagan Cooperative training, Way of Council, integrated technology, integrated English Language Learning, and similar initiatives.

¹⁵⁰ Castillo, R. L. (2011). *Effective implementation of professional development and student achievement*. California State University, Fresno. Coleman, J. C. (2014). A study of a professional development initiative to increase cultural competency.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

Collaborative planning time: Teachers will have weekly common planning time during the week for deliberate collaboration with grade-level teams. This structure will ensure that grade-level teams have regular time to discuss trends of particular students and to jointly develop projects and lesson plans. The weekly time allotted to teachers will increase as the school grows and adds additional teachers for PE, music, art and other enriching activities.

Professional Learning Communities: VLGA faculty works as a professional learning community in order to deliver the type of focus, differentiation, and rigor required by the educational program. A professional learning community is characterized by a collective focus on student learning, shared norms and values, collaboration, de-privatization of practice, data-driven decisions, and reflective dialogue.¹⁵² Not unlike the students, the faculty at VLGA will meta-cognitively process their instruction. The focus questions rely not upon what was taught, but rather upon what was learned. The staff and structures of the school must be responsive to student needs, whether through professional development in new areas of practice, improvement of instruction using peer coaching, realignment of time and resources to meet the greatest areas of need. Faculty analyze student data from assessments and adapt their instructional plans to meet deficit areas by collaborating twice a month in both content and grade-level teams. Faculty receive Professional Development support during minimum days (currently set for Fridays). This support enhances the Professional Learning Community.

Peer coaching: Grade-level teams will be given time to meet with and observe one another frequently. These teams will utilize a protocol to provide each other with targeted feedback and personal growth support.

Instructional rounds: Instructional rounds are a powerful collaborative structure in which a group of teachers or the school identifies a shared struggle or concern of practice and then conducts classroom walkthroughs to intentionally learn from the instructional practices of the observed teacher. The premise of instructional rounds is that many of our teachers are already implementing successful strategies that may not be widely known or shared. Another underlying purpose of instructional rounds is for a community of teachers, or network, to collaboratively identify and solve a problem of practice by implementing and modeling different solutions. Additionally, instructional rounds provide a non-threatening method for a school community to review yearly goals and program implementation.

Teacher growth and development: VLGA will use the Dr. Charlotte Danielson Evaluation Instrument¹⁵³ as a way to measure and support teacher growth and development. The Danielson framework is a structured program that allows teachers to self-analyze using rubrics to distinguish, in any area, whether they are proficient, below, or can work toward reaching new heights. It provides clear examples, enabling teachers to differentiate between levels of performance. The Danielson Framework was not intended as a tool for evaluation, but provides a framework that is clear and growth oriented. The framework covers four major domains:

¹⁵² Marzano, R. J. (2011). *Formative assessment & standards-based grading*. Solution Tree Press.

¹⁵³ The Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument. Accessed from: <http://www.loccsd.ca/~div15/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2013-framework-for-teaching-evaluation-instrument.pdf>.

Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities. Within those domains are the different components listed below:

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

- 1a Demonstrating Knowledge of Content Pedagogy
- 1b Demonstrating Knowledge of Students
- 1c Setting Instructional Outcomes
- 1d Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources
- 1e Designing Coherent Instructions
- 1f Designing Student Assessments

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

- 2a Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport
- 2b Establishing a Culture for Learning
- 2c Managing Classroom Procedures
- 2d Managing Student Behavior
- 2e Organizing Physical Space

Domain 3: Instruction

- 3a Communicating with Students
- 3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
- 3c Engaging Students in Learning
- 3d Using Assessment in Instruction
- 3e Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

- 4a Reflect on Teaching
- 4b Maintaining Accurate Records
- 4c Communicating with Families
- 4d Participating in a Professional Community
- 4e Growing and Developing Professionally
- 4f Showing Professionalism

ISSN Professional Development: Our partnership with ISSN includes collaboration with other network schools and additional services. Administrative and instructional staff participate in professional development that include the following:

Site visits: VLGA will host an ISSN site visit during its first and third years in the network.¹⁵⁴ Visits will be conducted by a group of four to six network principals and consultants, who spend two and a half days at a school, visiting classrooms, conducting focus groups and interviews, and reviewing curriculum maps, student and staff handbooks, and other artifacts that capture the work of the school. At the end of the visit, the host school receives a 40-page report with

¹⁵⁴ We also host site visits for other organizations, MTSS, CSU Long Beach, OC Charter Principals Network, who come to observe our model and instructional practices.

feedback on each area of the ISSN School Design Matrix. That report becomes a tool to guide strategic planning and ongoing improvement efforts. The visits also serve as a rich professional development opportunity for the visiting principals.

National network meetings: Community Catalyst Partners hosts biannual meetings for ISSN school leaders, where they conduct a study tour of a network school, participate in targeted learning activities, and have time to connect and share ideas. These meetings provide a rare opportunity to connect with peers, exchange ideas, solve common challenges, and learn together in a safe community.

Regional events: Regional ISSN coordinators offer additional trainings and events for ISSN educators to connect within a geographic region. These are opportunities for teachers to share feedback on curriculum, for administrators to support each other in solving common problems of practice, and for all staff to gain new skills and knowledge relevant to the global studies mission.

Professional Development Topics and Professional Learning Community	
Compliance and Mandated Training	Mandated Reporting Uniform Complaint Procedures FERPA Blood Borne Pathogens Safe School Plan & Procedures – Emergency Drills, Evacuation procedures, etc. Sexual Harassment Appropriate Use of Technology
School Culture	Way of Council School Discipline Policies and Procedures Restorative Justice practices Classroom management
Curriculum & Instructional Methods	Lesson Plan Components Direct Instruction (I Do, We Do, You Do) ISSN (GPS, PBL, Global Standards) Kagan Cooperative Learning strategies Subject/departamental meetings Technology instruction and integration Mastery Learning Educating for Global Competence
Assessments & Standards	Assessments to inform instruction Common Core and State standards Internal Standards Scope and Sequence Alignment of Curriculum, Standards, Assessments Progress Reports and Report Cards Assessments (teacher created, publisher, and national normed) Adoption of the Dr. Charlotte Danielson Evaluation Instrument

	Deep Dives of Domains (1. Planning; 2. Classroom Environment; 3. Instruction; 4. Professional Responsibilities) SBAC aligned assessments PSAT, SAT, ACT testing and results AP test prep strategies Learning Management System
Differentiation / Special Education/Student Supports	Modifications and intervention strategies Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Data Driven Instruction Techniques for Differentiation English Learner strategies, reclassification and monitoring policies and procedures Special Education compliance and services

MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS

VLGA is committed to meeting the needs of each and every student and helping them to succeed. All members of our faculty and our instructional leaders will assist each family to ensure the educational success of their teenager, including making appropriate referrals to community organizations.

By providing highly differentiated and scaffolding supports for each learner, all students are capable of thriving academically, socially and emotionally at VLGA. The educational program is appropriate for students of various backgrounds, including students who are academically low achieving, students who are academically high- achieving, English Learners, and students with disabilities. As described below, VLGA will use a variety of assessment tools to identify students who fit into these categories and in turn, implements a variety of effective strategies to target the unique needs of each student. Through transparent and continuous communication with their families, we ensure that students' needs are being met in the school community and also supported at home.

After a student has enrolled in VLGA, baseline assessments will be given to each student. Included in the baseline assessments are the following:

- An enrollment form collected after admission that asks families to provide information they wish to share including student's interests/strengths, areas of growth, learning preferences and other pertinent background information.
- Renaissance STAR 360 and Agile Math diagnostic assessments will be administered for all entering high school students to assess course placement and identify any needed support, intervention or remedial needs. (VLGA also will administer a variety of formative and summative assessments throughout the high school years as detailed in Elements 2 and 3.)

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT (MTSS)

As in all VCPS, VLGA will implement California's Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Framework and approach to quickly identify academic and behavioral needs of all students and to intervene early and strategically.

Vista Lago will assist in meeting the individual needs of all our students through:

1. Direct, effective instruction that incorporates re-teaching and remediation as needed;
2. Ample instructional planning time during the school week (such as when students are engaged in specials) so that teachers can modify and create lessons and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students;
3. A culture among teachers of openness and collaboration, including weekly team collaboration time and professional development activities, allowing teachers to learn from each other's varying expertise in handling learning differences;
4. Ongoing communication between teachers and families and a commitment to work together for the education of their children;
5. Various forms of assessment that are used to guide instruction;
6. Learning goals that are clearly articulated; and
7. High expectations for all students.

The MTSS process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all students in the general education classroom. Struggling learners may participate in interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be offered by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual student response to instruction. MTSS is designed for making decisions in both general education and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by student outcome data. The chart below details the MTSS Tiers for academic and behavioral interventions.

MTSS for Academic and Behavioral Interventions



Tier 1 – Proactive Prevention through high-quality first instruction and pedagogy

- Academic
 - Diagnostic and ongoing assessment
 - CCSS-driven instruction
 - Integrated ELD in all subjects
 - Progress Reports
 - Differentiation through PBL, Kagan strategies
 - Small Group
 - Teacher Assistant Support
 - Frequent CFU
- Behavior
 - Student reflection
 - Preferential seating
 - Positive Reinforcement
 - Recognize On-Task Behavior
 - Frequent school-to-home communication
 - Clear Classroom Expectations
- Social Emotional
 - Way of Council

- Build Personal Connections
- Positive classroom Culture
- SEL Lessons as needed

Tier 2 – Targeted Intervention (increased frequency and intensity of Tier 1 Supports)

- Academic
 - Learning Management System updated regularly
 - Small Group
 - Graphic Organizers
 - Sentence Frames
 - Audiobooks
 - Targeted small group Literacy instruction using Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy intervention (LLI) and Ready Math intervention strategies
 - Advisory/Global Hour (daily intervention period with students receiving small group, targeted support)
- Behavior
 - Added to Behavior Interventionist Caseload
 - Family and school communication
 - Behavior Support Plan/Contract
 - Structured breaks/tracker
 - Provide Alternative Action Items (stress balls, fidgets)
- Social Emotional
 - Parent conferences and/or phone calls
 - Home visits
 - Students in Tier 1 and 2 referred to counselor/community partner
 - Way of Council/Harm Circles/Peace Talks
 - Group Counseling

Tier 3 – Intensive Intervention (Increased frequency and intensity of Tier 2 supports)

- Administrative involvement
- Referral to Student Success Team
- Administration, teacher, student interventions (e.g., Way of Council and other restorative student to student practices)
- Individual Counseling
- Possible referral for special education assessment

Student Success Team

The Student Success Team (SST) is centered on the student, and reviews individual student strengths and areas of concern in academics, behaviors, or other areas. The SST is the main vehicle for Tier 3 MTSS strategies. The SST is comprised of one administrator, one Special Education teacher or Specialist, the current teacher(s), parents of the student being discussed, and other staff or personnel such as teaching assistants that may have valuable information regarding the strengths and needs of the student. The SST plans strategies and organizes resources to assist

students, parents, administrators, and teachers with concerns that are interfering with success. The SST is a general education function, and all students can benefit from an SST, including, but not limited to, those students achieving below or above grade level, English Language Learners, students with educational needs, and students who have experienced emotional trauma or behavioral issues.

Any VLGA family member or staff member who has a concern for a student can refer that student to SST for consideration. Anyone who is connected to that student can be included in the SST to share about the student's strengths as well as concerns and strategies that may or may not have been used in the past. People who may be included in an SST meeting might be, for example, teachers, parents, counselors, doctors, administration, social workers, and law enforcement representatives. The meeting is designed to convene a supportive team in a positive atmosphere to determine and implement best strategies to support VLGA students in finding success.

The VLGA SST meetings shall include the following steps:

1. Introduction of SST team members and participants
2. Meeting purpose and process
3. Timekeeper appointed to track SST meeting minutes
4. Identification of Student Strengths
5. Concern areas are listed, discussed, clarified, and brainstormed
6. Pertinent information and modifications are listed
7. Concerns are synthesized with one or two chosen for focus
8. Strategies to deal with are brainstormed or chosen
9. Identification of actionable strategies
10. Individual commitments to actionable strategies
11. Person responsible and timelines for all actions are recorded
12. Follow-up date is set

After implementation of an SST plan and follow-up, if the problem continues, revisions to the plan are discussed and implemented; however, if deemed necessary by the SST, a referral for special education or Section 504 assessment might be made.

The following subsections explain the ways in which VLGA will identify and addresses the needs of diverse learners.

ENGLISH LEARNERS

Approximately one third of our students are English Learners (ELs), with the vast majority being Spanish speaking. We have structured our program to meet the needs of ELs with a goal that they gain fluency in English as quickly as possible in a supportive setting. VLGA teachers, staff and school leaders will communicate to parents in their home language as needed—but use English instruction for the content areas in the classroom.

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will communicate to parents in their home language as needed—but use English instruction for the content areas in the classroom.

IDENTIFICATION OF ENGLISH LEARNERS

VLGA’s EL program will adopt the VCPS English Learner Plan. VLGA’s EL program is designed to ensure English Learners (including those who are reclassified) have equal access to instructional materials and supports in order to achieve grade-level content mastery and English-language proficiency.

In order to identify EL students in a timely fashion and to provide appropriate instructional support and services, all parents are required to complete a *Home Language Survey* upon enrollment at the Charter School. (Cal. Education Code § 52164.1) Students whose primary language is not English are assessed using the English Language Proficiency for California (ELPAC) assessment aligned to the CA ELD Standards 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 ELPAC test results. The ELPAC assessment will take place within 30 days of the start of the Charter School year or within two (2) weeks after the date of the student’s first enrollment at VLGA.

The ELD Coordinator will assess English language proficiency of all enrolled English Learners in accordance with 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 ELPAC, according to the guidelines set forth in the student’s IEP. The Charter School will notify parents of the Charter School’s responsibility to conduct ELPAC testing and inform parents of ELPAC assessment results within 30 calendar days following receipt of results from the test contractor.

Students will be monitored in conjunction with the ELPAC General Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs):

Level	Description
4	English learners at this level have well developed oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) skills. They can use English to learn and communicate in meaningful ways that are appropriate to different tasks, purposes, and audiences in a variety of social and academic contexts. They may need occasional linguistic support to engage in familiar social and academic contexts; they may need light support to communicate on less familiar tasks and topics. This test performance level corresponds to the upper range of the “Bridging” proficiency level as described in the 2012 California English Language Development Standards, Kindergarten Through Grade 12 (CA ELD Standards).

3	English learners at this level have moderately developed oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) skills. They can sometimes use English to learn and communicate in meaningful ways in a range of topics and content areas. They need light-to-minimal linguistic support to engage in familiar social and academic contexts; they need moderate support to communicate on less familiar tasks and topics. This test performance level corresponds to the upper range of the “Expanding” proficiency level through the lower range of the “Bridging” proficiency level as described in the CA ELD Standards.
2	English learners at this level have somewhat developed oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) skills. They can use English to meet immediate communication needs but often are not able to use English to learn and communicate on topics and content areas. They need moderate-to-light linguistic support to engage in familiar social and academic contexts; they need substantial-to-moderate support to communicate on less familiar tasks and topics. This test performance level corresponds to the low- to mid-range of the “Expanding” proficiency level as described in the CA ELD Standards.
1	English learners at this level have minimally developed oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) English skills. They tend to rely on learned words and phrases to communicate meaning at a basic level. They need substantial-to-moderate linguistic support to communicate in familiar social and academic contexts; they need substantial linguistic support to communicate on less familiar tasks and topics. This test performance level corresponds to the “Emerging” proficiency level as described in the CA ELD Standards.

(<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ep/elpacgp1d.asp>)

Parents are notified of their rights and their child’s ELPAC scores each year and are encouraged to participate in the reclassification process. Parents are notified when a student is being considered for reclassification and again when they are officially reclassified.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

All EL students learn with all other students in the classroom during instructional time. In addition, EL students have designated ELD instruction during an ELD class in their course schedule. All students participate in the general education classroom during instructional time where teachers implement strategies to support “integrated” academic language acquisition. Teachers use modeling, graphic organizers and visuals to support students’ recognition of essential information in all academic subjects. Teachers are mindful of the stages of language acquisition and differentiate instruction within the classroom to meet the needs of each student.

During designated ELD, students will complete curricular tasks in Reading Comprehension, Grammar, Word Meaning and Writing at their level of English, using the Lexia platform. Upon completion of weekly tasks student data is analyzed to track progress of language acquisition. The Lexia Platform also provides a norm-referenced test that students take three times a year to track progress and standards mastery. When a student is identified as to having difficulties mastering a concept, students are pulled out for targeted intervention on the specific content necessary.

All VLGA teachers will be trained to use Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) techniques to meet the needs of ELs. The instructional design model that will be used by VLGA places a heavy emphasis on differentiating instruction to meet the needs of ELs based on their academic and language readiness. VLGA's philosophy of personalizing instruction for all students also benefits ELs by providing entry points learning tasks and outcomes that are tailored to the student's needs.

Sheltered instruction/SDAIE is grounded in a pedagogical commitment to meeting the needs of diverse learners, in this case particularly those students who are English learners. Teachers engage in the following practices to support universal access of subject matter content for all students:¹⁵⁵

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

¹⁵⁵ 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).

- I. **Intro:** Determining what the students know about the topic of study. Possible SDAIE strategies for “Intro”:

Anticipatory Guide: Students are given a series of statements that relate to concepts they are 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 take responsibility for learning by participating in group-work and sharing understanding with others. Possible SDAIE strategies for “Through”:

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

- Comparison-Contrast Matrix-Students determine similarities and differences between two topics studied
- Flowcharts – Students sequence important events in the content studied.
- Cause and Effect Chart – Students chart the ways in different characteristics effect change and impact others.

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. They create a chart listing the quote and the point they feel the quote illustrates.

HOW THE PROGRAM WILL MEET THE NEW STATE ELD STANDARDS AND USE THE RESULTS OF THE ELPAC

VLGA has based its English Learner support program on the 2012 California ELD Standards. As guided by the CA ELD Standards, VLGA teachers will provide instruction grounded in the best available research on supporting ELs in an English Immersion environment. Students are expected to advance at least one ELD level annually. Our ELD Coordinator (the Assistant Principal) partners with the classroom teachers to include ELD goals on students’ learning plans, including specific goals to meet during dedicated ELD instruction. Additionally, our ELD Coordinator assesses student progress towards attainment of the standards using standards-based portfolios.

If students are not making sufficient academic progress as indicated through ELPAC data, we will modify our EL program as needed.

VLGA will ensure that teachers meet all state and federal requirements and are supported to meet the needs of ELs. We hire teachers that are CLAD/BCLAD certified and place a priority on hiring teacher(s) that speak Spanish and English and can provide strong instruction within a structured immersion classroom. We also support teachers by providing professional development on structured immersion instruction, specially designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE) teaching strategies, language development, monitoring, and assessment of ELs. We commit to monthly professional development specifically addressing the instructional effectiveness, reviewing assessment data and revising curriculum to meet our EL students’ needs.

Parents are notified regarding their student’s English Language Development along with ELPAC scores every progress report or every semester and/or as often as needed.

SERVICES AND SUPPORTS FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS, INCLUDING INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTION

See above. Teachers will have access to ELD assessment results to inform program placement, reclassification, and instruction. VLGA will use assessment interpretation resources to help teachers and administrators use student results to inform English Learners and their parents or guardians about student progress.

VLGA will provide high quality professional learning opportunities for all of its educators to ensure that every English Learner has access to teachers who are prepared to accommodate individual instruction to meet the levels of rigor and depth required by the CA ELD Standards. Professional development will focus on enhancing teacher’s knowledge of how to teach English

learners to read and write as well as how to address the achievement gap by providing pedagogical tools to ensure that all ELs can meet the CA ELD Standards. All teachers will be authorized to teach English Learners and receive training in the effective implementation of techniques such as SDAIE, scaffolding and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model. Our ELD Coordinator will also communicate the specific language needs of our EL students. Strategies such as front-loading content, using visuals and other means of organizing information, and pairing ELs with more capable peers will further ensure student access to academic content.

PROCESS FOR ANNUAL EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL'S ENGLISH LEARNER PROGRAM

The Principal at VLGA will be responsible for ensuring the quality and success of all instructional programs and will report to the VCPS Superintendent and Board on progress towards academic goals, including serving EL students. The Principal will conduct regular classroom observations and provide feedback and coaching. In addition, the Principal will work with relevant staff annually to review summative data on student progress, including our annual ELPAC scores. This data analysis will be followed by conversation and, if necessary, additional staff training. We expect our English Learners to show proficiency in content areas and that our ELs improve at least one ELD level annually as measured by the ELPAC.

Teachers will be expected to regularly evaluate student progress by reviewing EL data from formative and summative assessments. Teachers will use the results of this data to change their instructional practices to better serve each student. In order to document progress, all teachers will receive an ELD folder for each of their EL students that is used to monitor individual progress at their targeted ELD level. These folders include the new ELD standards by level 1-4. Teachers will use these folders to collect student work samples, and check of mastery towards each ELD standard.

PROCESS AND SPECIFIC CRITERIA FOR RECLASSIFICATION

VLGA will monitor student mastery of the ELD standards through the use of ELD folders. The ELD folder will be used as a guide that, when implemented systematically and consistently, ensures the implementation of a quality ELD program. Teachers will select assessments and work samples that accurately represent the student's current level of performance in listening, speaking, reading, writing and language.

As English Learners progress, work samples that no longer characterize the student's best work will be replaced with more representative samples. By the time an ELD portfolio is complete, it will contain at least one sample for each domain. The ELD Coordinator will review ELD folders at the end of each reporting period and EL students will receive ELD grades in addition to ELA grades in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

The following assessments are examples of ELD folder evidence:

- Publisher ELD assessments

- End-of-unit assessments from state-adopted ELD programs
- Teacher/grade-level created performance tasks
- Checklists to informally observe student performance in everyday activities
- Core content area assignments scored using an ELD standards-based scoring rubric

It is the responsibility of the Principal, collaborating with the ELD Coordinator, to work with classroom teachers to carry out the EL Master Plan. The ELD Coordinator will maintain ELD portfolios, monitor classroom instruction, update ELD levels in the EL Student Information System (Power School), place ELs according to ELD level, review EL monitoring rosters to ensure ELs are advancing a minimum of one ELD level per year, review ELD grades to ensure that students and parents receive updated information of ELD progress at each reporting period, and check readiness for promotion, reclassification or need for intervention. The ELD Coordinator will work with teachers to make the final decision regarding progression to the next ELD Proficiency Level.

EL student classification will use the 2012 California English Language Development Standards' three Proficiency Level Descriptors -- Emerging, Expanding, and Bridging -- in conjunction with the more recently approved (2016) ELPAC four Performance Level Descriptors (Levels 1-4) as described above.

The three levels represent the stages of English language development, describing expectations for how well students can understand and use the English language at each level – knowledge, skills, and abilities across a continuum -- as they will continue to build on existing language skills and knowledge.¹⁵⁶

Emerging: Students at this level typically progress very quickly, learning to use English for immediate needs as well as beginning to understand and use academic vocabulary and other features of academic language.

Expanding: Students at this level are challenged to increase their English skills in more contexts and learn a greater variety of vocabulary and linguistic structures, applying their growing language skills in more sophisticated ways that are appropriate to their age and grade level.

Bridging: Students at this level continue to learn and apply a range of high-level English language skills in a wide variety of contexts, including comprehension and production of highly technical texts. The “bridge” alluded to is the transition to full engagement in grade-level academic tasks and activities in a variety of content areas without the need for specialized ELD instruction. However, ELs at all levels of English language proficiency fully participate in grade-level tasks in all content areas with varying degrees of scaffolding in order to develop both content knowledge and English.

¹⁵⁶ California Department of Education. California English Language Development Standards, K-12 (Nov. 2012). <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/eldstndpublication14.pdf>. Accessed on August 6, 2018.

Both teachers and administration monitor the progress and performance of each student identified as an English Learner with the goal of helping these students reclassify to Re-designated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) status. Once the Charter School receives ELPAC results, the EL Coordinator begins to analyze the data and determine the eligibility for re-designation of each student within 30 days of receiving the scores. The reclassification criteria are as follows:

<i>Reclassification Criteria</i>	
Annual ELPAC Scores	<i>Overall annual ELPAC score of 3 or 4 (with skill area scores of 3 or higher in Oral and Written language)</i>
Teacher Evaluation	The teacher judges the student will be successful in a Mainstream English Program based on a review of:
Report Card	Report card grade marks of C or higher in English Language Arts
CAASPP (11th grade) or Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) for other grades	The student has demonstrated basic grade-level skills on the Assessment by performing in the Nearly Met band or above
Parent Opinion/Consultation	

Students scoring Level 3 or 4 on the ELPAC are considered for possible reclassification. If a student scores below Level 3 on any subtest (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing), he/she will no longer be considered for reclassification despite an overall score of Level 3 or Level 4. Teachers submit ELD folders and work samples for each student that was administered the ELPAC regardless of score.

Annual Review of Student Progress begins mid spring, after ELPAC scores become available and just after the second submission of ELD folders and work samples. All student ELD folders are initially reviewed by the ELD coordinator. If the standards check off sheet and work samples indicate Average Progress or Advanced Progress for their identified ELD level and ELPAC scores also meet the requirements listed above, the student moves forward on to the second step of the Reclassification process.

The reclassification team (which includes the teacher, an Administrator, and may include a parent) reviews the information listed above as well as teacher recommendations and overall successful classroom performance in academic areas as indicated by report cards, and benchmark/summative assessment type tests. The reclassification team also discusses if the student has met sufficient goals. If a student has satisfied all of these requirements, they can then be recommended for reclassification pending the release of CAASPP scores for that year (for

11th graders); and SRI scores and ELA course grades (for 9th, 10th, and 12th graders). If a student Meets or Exceeds standards on the ELA test, he/she is officially reclassified, and their file will be updated to reflect Reclassified Fluent English Proficient in that academic year. A student continues to be monitored by the reclassification team for two years after official reclassification, as required by ESSA.

PROCESS FOR MONITORING PROGRESS OF ENGLISH LEARNERS AND RECLASSIFIED (RFEP) STUDENTS

In order to meet the individual needs of each English learner, the ELD Coordinator will carefully monitors student performance on both classroom assignments and standardized testing. Students scoring at the lowest levels of the ELPAC will be provided supplemental English Instruction focusing on skills, vocabulary and information that support both their oral and written English language acquisition. The goal is to ensure a quality instructional program that enables English Learners to attain English proficiency, achievement of all learning plan goals, and to have full access to the range of educational opportunities that VLGA will provide for all students.

Students will be monitored in conjunction with the new CA ELD Standards Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs). The PLDs describe student knowledge, skills, and abilities across a continuum, identifying what ELs know and can do at early stages and at exit from each of three proficiency levels: Emerging, Expanding, and Bridging. These descriptors will guide VLGA teachers as they provide ELs with targeted instruction in English language development as well as differentiated instruction in academic content areas¹⁵⁷:

Emerging: Students at this level typically progress very quickly, learning to use English for immediate needs as well as beginning to understand and use academic vocabulary and other features of academic language.

Expanding: Students at this level are challenged to increase their English skills in more contexts and learn a greater variety of vocabulary and linguistic structures, applying their growing language skills in more sophisticated ways appropriate to their age and grade level.

Bridging: Students at this level continue to learn and apply a range of high-level English language skills in wide variety of contexts, including comprehension and production of highly technical texts. The “bridge” alluded to is the transition to full engagement in grade-level academic tasks and activities in a variety of content areas without the need for specialized ELD instruction. However, ELs at all levels of English language proficiency fully participate in grade level tasks in all content areas with varying degrees of scaffolding in order to develop both content knowledge and English.

English learners will continue to be re-evaluated annually using the ELPAC assessment until such time as they have demonstrated that they are able to compete effectively with English-speaking peers in mainstream classrooms and are reclassified as fluent English proficient (RFEP). VLGA will set a demanding reclassification target annually as part of the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) goal setting process. The ELD Coordinator will serve as the

¹⁵⁷ <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/sbeoverviewpld.pdf>

ELPAC testing coordinator and meet periodically with teachers to discuss the progress of English learners toward mastery of the CA ELD standards. The testing coordinator will continue to monitor students who are re-designated as RFEP during a period of two years, by meeting regularly with their teachers and reviewing their benchmark assessments and standardized testing results to ensure that they are able to keep up with their peers.

PROCESS FOR MONITORING PROGRESS AND SUPPORTS FOR LONG TERM ENGLISH LEARNERS (LTELs)

Under California law, Long Term English Learners (LTELs) are defined as those students who are enrolled in grades 6 to 12, have been enrolled in schools in the United States for six years or more, have remained at the same English language proficiency level for two or more consecutive prior years, or have regressed to a lower English language proficiency level, and, for students in grades 6-9, have scored Far Below Basic or Below Basic (or new equivalent) on the state testing in ELA. (Cal. Ed. Code § 313.1) VLGA will closely monitor each EL's progress and any instances in which a student is not making sufficient progress towards reclassification. The ELD Coordinator and classroom teachers will work together to identify the reasons why a student has not acquired English at an expected rate and determine the best support system for that student moving forward. VLGA will prioritize resources (e.g. curriculum for ELD instruction) for students at risk of being identified as LTELs. Students and parents will be made aware of the risks associated with LTEL status, as well as specific barriers to reclassification and ways to address them.

GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS AND STUDENTS ACHIEVING ABOVE GRADE LEVEL

IDENTIFICATION

Gifted and high-achieving students are among the most underserved populations in schools with high levels of economically disadvantaged students. Gifted students in underachieving schools are often misdiagnosed based on behavioral issues and misplaced in Special Education classrooms. At VLGA, we are committed to seeking out and identifying our gifted and high-achieving students (GATE). Research has indicated that approximately 10% of any given school population is gifted. Students will be identified as possible high achievers and/or gifted when demonstrating abilities significantly beyond their peers or developmental stages through teacher observation, internal assessments, and CAASPP/SRI, and ELA course data.

Students must meet at least 4 of the criteria below; one of the criteria must include Cognitive Ability of Standardized Achievement.

Criteria	EO/RFEP	EL
Cognitive (TONI)	Verbal - 85%+	Verbal - 85%+

	Non-Verbal - 85%+	Non-Verbal - 85%+
SBAC	ELA - 4 Math – 4	ELA - 4 Math - 4
Renaissance 360	ELA - 85%+ Math - 85%+	ELA - 85%+ Math - 85%+
Reading Level (Brigance)	2+ grades above	2+ grades above
Report Card	Elementary - 50%+4s in ELA or Math Secondary - GPA 3.5+	Elementary - 50%+ 4s in ELA or Math Secondary - GPA 3.5+
Teacher Recommendation (SRBSS)	Elevated in 2 or more domains	Elevated in 2 or more domains
Environmental	McKinney-Vento, Foster Migrant, SWD	McKinney-Vento, Foster Migrant, SWD
EL Reclassified	By 4th grade	N/A
ELPAC	N/A	+2 levels in one year

Notes: Students with Cognitive ability 90%+ will automatically qualify. Students with high achievement score must also have Cognitive ability of at least 50%. Students who have been identified as possible achievers and/or gifted will be tested for giftedness. VLGA will continually evaluate students' achievement level to ensure that high-achieving students can be quickly identified and served.

PARENT NOTIFICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Just as in the case with low-achieving students, the classroom teacher will contact parents of academically high-achieving students to discuss student performance and strategies for deeper engagement that adequately challenge the gifted or high-achieving learner. Parents will be notified in writing or by phone to set up a conference. Family members provide rich information about their child's strengths, needs, and learning styles– which informs the supports the learner receives at school. The Digital Portfolios will enhance parent involvement, as they have components that involve parents in their student's development, personal aspirations, and specific needs. Family conferences will be held for all students in the fall and spring to discuss student progress and set learning goals. This is just as important for gifted and high-achieving students as it is for low-achieving students. Progress toward these goals will be communicated through regular progress reports, calls and emails home, and in-person meetings with parents, teachers, and administrative staff. Constant communication between the school and families builds stronger partnerships to support youth of all abilities.

MEETING GIFTED AND HIGH ACHIEVING STUDENTS' NEEDS

The VLGA model of instruction and focus on student engagement includes differentiation, student choice and autonomy, all key factors in serving gifted and high-achieving students. The curriculum and programmatic choices at VLGA will provide ample opportunities for high-level thinking and problem solving. Our focus on global outcomes and competencies will provide real-life application and a deep sense of relevance that serves gifted learners.

- All students will have access to a Chromebook or similar device and can access online libraries, supplemental programs, Khan Academy, and other similar programs and apps
- Way of Council leadership opportunities
- Individual and small group projects developed to challenge the academically high-achieving students and extend learning beyond the classroom.
- Guiding students to develop their own learning goals and objectives.

MONITOR PROGRESS OF GIFTED STUDENTS AND STUDENTS ACHIEVING ABOVE GRADE LEVEL

High-achieving and gifted students will be closely monitored by teachers and through family outreach. Students will also be able to articulate their needs and goals when developing their Digital Portfolios. The school will also monitor the percentage of identified students and gauge it against the average of 10% students being gifted or high-achieving at most schools. Student behavioral issues will be identified and looked at as possible identifying markers of gifted or high-achieving students not being sufficiently challenged.

STUDENTS ACHIEVING BELOW GRADE LEVEL

ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION

VLGA anticipates serving a population that traditionally has struggled to bridge the achievement gap and often faces significant challenges to achieve grade-level competency. While students may be achieving at significantly below grade level in some, or all, academic areas, when they enroll at VLGA, it is our responsibility to ensure that each student is properly assessed and supported in rising to his or her potential. We firmly believe that all students have the potential to thrive academically given the right conditions for learning. At VLGA, we will create the conditions for learning through classroom and school environments that are emotionally safe and developmentally appropriate.

Our goal, at VLGA, is to ensure that every student is performing at or above grade-level academically. To ensure that our students meet their goals, our teachers and staff will provide on-going and continuous assessments in our efforts to seek out and support students who are academically low-achieving and might be facing a special learning need or experiencing extenuating circumstances outside of school. We are dedicated to providing the additional academic and social emotional support such students need to succeed.

VLGA will enlist a variety of assessment tools to identify students who are achieving at lower academic levels. All incoming students will take a diagnostic reading and math assessment through Renaissance STAR 360, as well as iReady. Additionally, diagnostic assessment in English Language Arts and mathematics will be administered to all students multiple times each year to track growth and progress.

PARENT/GUARDIAN NOTIFICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

The classroom teacher will contact the parents of academically low-achieving students to discuss student performance and strategies for improvement. Parents will be notified in writing, email or phone to set up a conference. Parents are considered key partners in helping us understand their son/daughter and what strategies might best fit the needs of their child. Family members provide rich information about their child's strengths, needs, and learning styles – which, in turn, shapes the supports that the learner receives at school. The Digital Portfolios will enhance parent involvement, as they have components that allow the parents to be a part of their student's development, personal aspirations, and specific needs. Family conferences will be held for all students in the fall and spring to discuss student progress and to set learning goals. Progress toward these goals will be communicated through regular progress reports each semester and more often as needed, calls and emails home, and in-person meetings with parents, teachers, and administrative staff as needed. Constant communication between the school and families will enable stronger partnerships to support the students.

SUPPORTS AND INTERVENTIONS

Academically low-achieving students will be fully integrated into the entire student body. The engaging and active educational program at VLGA is designed to accommodate the full range of students, including academically low-achieving students. Specific practices that will support academically low-achieving students include the following:

- Hands-on, workshop- and project-based curriculum provides concrete experiences to help students access content through a range of modalities.
- Kagan cooperative strategies are used throughout the day and provide concrete structures that allow all students to engage and be held accountable for their learning in any subject
- Teachers may meet with struggling readers for more time in small groups or individually during workshop. Students will be regularly paired up with stronger readers and writers during workshop, which provides peer support and modeling.
- Advisory/Global Hour will be a flexible intervention/enrichment period during the school day where teachers get to select appropriate skill-based interventions for each specific students' needs. Students may also self-select into intervention or enrichment classes. This will allow for intensive, targeted interventions with reduced class sizes, while also giving students who are displaying mastery the ability to participate in enrichment classes that they would not be able to take otherwise.
- Students who are struggling with math or not mastering standards will receive tiered intervention to support with learning. At the first level of support, teachers will provide differentiated instruction in small groups in the classrooms. These groups will be informed by data as well as the skills and concepts. If students continue to struggle they

will be provided with more intensive interventions such as small group or one-on-one pull out interventions. In these small groups, the support provider would model procedural knowledge and provide time for them to develop conceptual understanding. Students might also engage with web-based adaptive programs for fluency and automaticity (i.e., Khan Academy etc.).

MONITORING PROGRESS

Student progress will be monitored on an ongoing basis through a combination of teacher observation, classroom assessments, and benchmark assessments. If intervention supports do not lead to sufficient progress, as previously stated, a Student Success Team (SST) will convene to consider alternative intervention strategies. Prior to monthly meetings, the case manager will consult with all referring teachers to gather more data and information about the referred student. At the meeting, referrals will be reviewed and next steps to support students are taken based on the data and information collected. Academic supports can include small group pull-out intervention, one-on-one intervention, accommodation of student work, counseling, participating in peer counseling groups, parent consult/involvement, wrap around services if necessary, or referral for evaluation.

Should the SST process fail to yield adequate progress, additional steps, such as a referral for a special education evaluation and/or 504 services will be taken. Additionally, Kagan strategies and Way of Council will provide a framework for continual and ongoing observation and assessment. Teachers at VLGA will meet on a monthly basis to analyze student data and make data-driven decisions to identify student needs and adjust instruction accordingly.

SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED/LOW INCOME STUDENTS

As detailed above, we anticipate that virtually all of our students will come from socio-economically disadvantaged families; in many cases we expect our students will have experienced extreme poverty including homelessness and housing instability and food instability. In order to support these students, our engaging, differentiated instructional program will provide them with support and resources to ensure success. A small school environment, small class sizes, supplemental supports including tutoring and more all ensure these students are well-known and supported. Teachers will receive training on identifying students with significant needs/students in crisis and referrals to appropriate child and family supports.

We will minimize financial challenges for students by offering free uniforms and providing meals, including Friday take-home meals for our neediest students and meals via Blessings in a Backpack on weekends. A comprehensive meal and snack program and free before and after school care will help support working families.

As with all student subgroups, the Principal and Superintendent will monitor subgroup data through state testing, benchmark testing and ongoing monitoring of students' progress.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

As an inclusive model school, VLGA is committed to meeting the needs of all of our students with disabilities, and pledges to work in cooperation with the District and/or a Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) to ensure that a free and appropriate education is provided to all students with exceptional needs. VLGA 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 law enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Furthermore, VLGA will comply with District and SELPA guidelines and all California laws pertaining to students with disabilities.

The following description regarding how special education and related services will be provided and funded is being proposed by VLGA for the sole purpose of providing a reasonably comprehensive description of the special education program in the charter petition, in accordance with Education Code section 47605(b). During any time in which VLGA operates as a school of the district for special education purposes (pursuant to Education Code 47641(b)), the specific manner in which special education and related services will be provided and funded shall be set forth in a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”), delineating the respective responsibilities of VLGA and the District. The language that follows is not meant to preclude alternative arrangements between the District and VLGA as agreed upon in the MOU.

SELPA AFFILIATION

VLGA will be an independent Local Education Agency (LEA) member in the El Dorado Charter SELPA for purposes of special education, pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a). A change in LEA status or SELPA membership shall not require a material revision of this charter.

As an independent LEA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a), VLGA will assume full responsibility for providing special education and related services to eligible charter school students, in accordance with state and federal law.

VLGA will follow policies and procedures of the El Dorado SELPA and shall utilize SELPA forms and information systems necessary to identify and serve students who qualify for special education. VLGA agrees to collaborate with the SELPA to respond to inquiries and request and provide access to information and records, as needed, and shall be responsible for maintaining confidentiality of student records.

CHILD FIND

VLGA understands its responsibility to ensure that all children with disabilities who need special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated, regardless of the severity of the disability. No assessment or evaluation will be used for admission purposes.

As noted above, VLGA will implement a multi-tiered instructional and support framework (MTSS), prior to referring a student for an evaluation under IDEA. However, VLGA shall ensure

that child find identification occurs in a timely manner and that no procedures or practices result in delaying or denying this identification. A parent/guardian or VLGA staff member may request an initial evaluation at any time to determine if the student is a student with a disability, regardless of whether the student has participated in an MTSS framework. Special education referrals shall be made only after general education supports and interventions have been considered and provided, as appropriate. If the Student Study Team finds that the pre-intervention plan is not sufficient to meet the student's needs, they will recommend that student for a formal special education assessment. VLGA may also choose to refer a student for services through the provisions of a Section 504 Plan, if appropriate.

As an independent LEA for special education purposes, VLGA shall be solely responsible for compliance with state and federal Child Find requirements. VLGA shall implement policies and procedures of the SELPA in which it is a member to ensure timely identification and referral of students suspected of having a disability.

REFERRAL FOR ASSESSMENT

The term "assessments" shall have the same meaning as the term "evaluation" in the IDEA, as provided in Section 1414, Title 20 of the United States Code. VLGA's internal method for referral for assessment will be the Student Success Team (SST). Parents/guardians will be informed that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them.

As an independent LEA for special education purposes, in the event that VLGA receives a written request for evaluation, it will be solely responsible for working with the parent/guardian to address the request and shall follow SELPA policies, procedures, and timelines. VLGA shall respond to a written request for assessment within 15 days.

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

ASSESSMENT

As an LEA for special education, VLGA shall be solely responsible for conducting special education assessments deemed necessary and appropriate by VLGA. The Principal will be responsible for gathering all pertinent information and arranging for assessments to be conducted in all areas of suspected disability.

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. The types of assessments that may be used for determining eligibility for specialized instruction and services will include, but not limited to:

- Individual testing;

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

VLGA will follow the following assessment guidelines. If a conflict with SELPA policies and procedures exists, then SELPA policies and procedures will govern.

- Parents or guardians of any student referred for assessment must give their written consent for the school to administer the assessment;
- The assessment will be completed and an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting held within 60 days of receipt of the parent's written consent for assessment;
- The student must be evaluated in all areas related to his/her suspected disability;
- Assessments must be conducted by a person with knowledge of the student's suspected disability, and administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel and in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments. Individually administered tests of intellectual or emotional functioning must be administered by a credentialed school psychologist;
- Assessments will be selected and administered so as not to be racially, culturally, or sexually discriminatory;
- Assessments will be delivered in the student's primary language, and a qualified interpreter will be provided if needed;
- Assessment tools must be used for purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable; and
- 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.

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

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF IEP

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

As an LEA for special education, VLGA shall be solely responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the IEP and school site implementation are maintained. VLGA will provide modifications and accommodations outlined within each individual's IEP and serve each student 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. All decisions concerning the special education programs and services to be provided to a student with a disability are to be made by the IEP team. The IEP team will include all of the following members:

- The parent or guardian of the student for whom the IEP was developed;
- The Student, if appropriate
- The Principal;
- At least one special education teacher;
- A General Education teacher who is familiar with the curriculum appropriate to that student, if the student is, or may be, participating in the general education environment;
- A SELPA Special Education Representative, if appropriate;
- If the student was recently assessed, the individual who conducted the assessment or who is qualified to interpret the assessment results;
- Others familiar with the student may be invited as needed.

VLGA will provide an interpreter if necessary to ensure that all parents and/or guardians understand and can participate in the IEP process. If a parent cannot attend the IEP meeting, the school will ensure his/her participation using other methods, such as conferencing by telephone or meeting at the parent's home.

A copy of the IEP will be given to the parent/guardian in accordance with state and federal laws. Upon the parent or guardian's written consent, the IEP will be implemented by VLGA. The IEP will include all required components and be written on SELPA forms.

The student's IEP will include the following:

- A statement of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance;
- The rationale for placement decisions, including cogent and responsive explanations for the recommendations;
- 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 and appropriately ambitious for his/her circumstances; The goals and objectives will also be linguistically appropriate, as per Ed Code Section 56345(b).
- A description of how the student's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured and monitored and when reports will be provided;
- Accommodations necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the pupil on state and district assessments;
- For students 16 years of age and older, measurable postsecondary goals related to training, education, employment and independent living skills, along with transition services needed to assist the student in reaching those goals
- The IEP shall be reasonably calculated to enable the student to make progress appropriate in light of his/her circumstances.

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 (consistent with state and federal law, IEP meetings will be held within 30 days of a parent's request);
- When an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) is required at the appropriate age;
- When VLGA seeks to suspend or remove the student for a period of 10 days or more for the same behavior, in order to determine if the student's misconduct was a manifestation of his/her disability.

IEP REVIEW

The IEP team will formally review the 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.

As an LEA for special education, VLGA shall be responsible for conducting IEP reviews and determining necessary supports, services, placements, in accordance with SELPA policies and all applicable laws.

Unless otherwise specified on the student's IEP, parents will be informed three times per year (which is the same frequency as progress is reported to all students and parents) 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.

If a parent/guardian 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, VLGA will have thirty days, not including school vacations greater than five days, to hold the IEP meeting.

SPECIAL EDUCATION STRATEGIES FOR INSTRUCTION AND SERVICES

As an independent LEA for special education purposes, VLGA will offer a comprehensive inclusion program that includes co-teaching, individualized instruction with differentiation for all learners, and the myriad other programmatic aspects detailed above that are designed to support diverse learners' needs, including the needs of students with disabilities. Each student's IEP requires different kinds of accommodations and modifications for instruction and services; therefore, the educational strategies of the IEP will be built around the student's needs. If a

student's IEP team determines that the student requires placement outside of a general education classroom, VLGA will provide the necessary placement and/or services. The instruction outlined in each student's IEP will be delivered by personnel qualified to do so.

INTERIM AND INITIAL PLACEMENTS OF NEW CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS

VLGA shall comply with Education Code Section 56325 with regard to students transferring into the Charter School within the academic school year.

As an independent LEA for special education purposes, VLGA shall provide transferring students with free and appropriate public education, including services comparable to those listed in the existing IEP.

For students transferring to the VLGA from another school within the same SELPA, VLGA, pursuant to Education Code Section 56325(a)(2), shall continue to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP, unless parents/guardians and VLGA agree to develop and implement a new IEP.

For students transferring to the VLGA from another school within a different SELPA, VLGA, pursuant to Education Code Section 56325(a)(1), shall continue to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP for a period of up to 30 days, by which time VLGA shall adopt the previous IEP or, in consultation with parents/guardians, develop and implement a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state law.

For students transferring to VLGA from a school outside of California, VLGA shall provide the student with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in their existing IEP, until VLGA conducts an assessment pursuant to Section 1414 of Title 20 of the United States Code, if determined to be necessary by VLGA, and develops a new IEP, if appropriate, in accordance with federal and state law.

ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY

An important development in modern special education is the advent of assistive and adaptive technologies that teachers can use to help their students learn and achieve at the highest levels possible. The vast majority of students with special needs do not have cognitive impairments. Many of these students can learn and perform as well as those without disabilities when given adjustments to certain aspects of their environment to accommodate for various physical disabilities. And educators can make many simple accommodations for students with cognitive disabilities to similarly help maximize their learning in the inclusive classroom. Simple adjustments in the depth of information and how that information is presented can greatly aid a student who has difficulty with traditional teaching and assessment techniques.

Because assistive technologies have become such an important part of special education, VLGA will implement adaptive technologies in classrooms with differentiated instruction practices. Professional development and special education staffing support will help educators understand students' unique needs and how to best accommodate them using assistive technologies.

Adaptive technologies are well suited to accommodate students with special needs by differentiating the way they receive and give information. Adjusting the depth of content to suit their learning needs and the methods used to assess their performance are also straightforward ways of differentiation.

For instance, students who have trouble reading due to a learning disability may excel and process information more effectively if they receive the content in audio form. Additionally, they may have a much easier time showing what they have learned by discussing it in monitored group settings or by giving an oral presentation. But just as visual learners have written materials they can reread until they achieve a deep level of knowledge on the subject, auditory learners should be given audio materials that they can listen to as many times as needed to properly process the information.

In this example, a simple accommodation could be made with assistive technology by providing students with audio players and recordings of content materials. And on the output side, the students could be given audio recorders to record their assessments and show what they have learned.

Similar to auditory learners, some students with special needs respond best to visual engagement with information. Using visual displays, drawings and such has long been a well-utilized method of engaging visual learners. Given the wealth of technologies available currently, this mode of engagement is not only more appropriate but also more successful than ever. Students can design and model science projects with a tablet app. They can proceed through an interactive history lesson on a computer. Such visual assistive technologies can be incorporated into most any subject.

Computers, tablets, and other interactive technologies can help teachers accommodate many other learners' needs as well. The interactive nature of tablet lessons and educational games can be exactly what a tactile learner needs to succeed, literally working their way through learning and information by touch, sound and sight.

There are good reasons why many tactile learners devote so much time to playing video games, often reading and communicating through that medium at much higher grade levels than reflected in their school performance. These games engage their hands, sight and social communication all at the same time, in effect growing their weaker learning skills by synthesizing them with their stronger skills. So, naturally, educational games that strive for this level of holistic engagement can have a similar effect.

Students with learning disabilities often experience a negative cycle of behavioral conditioning in school. They can develop low levels of self-esteem due to difficulties learning, compounded with the perceived negative stigma that learning disabilities can have. In certain situations, this negative cycle of behavioral conditioning and low self-esteem can cause students to develop poor social skills, have trouble with peer interactions, and act out repeatedly in class.

But with new, assistive digital technologies and instantaneous communication, students can learn socially through a virtual medium, which builds their self-esteem in both their own academic abilities as well as their social abilities. With these technologies, teachers can create collaborative, global classroom environments, connecting students with other students around the world, encouraging them to work together across cultural borders.

Becoming a culturally responsive citizen is essential to success in the modern, globalized world. And, as the point of special education is to ready students for college and life after school, engaging them with the global community through assistive technology and positive group interaction can help many aspects of students' cognitive and social development.

A student who is visually impaired but does not have any cognitive disabilities should be able participate fully in the general education classroom, given assistive devices appropriate to that student's level of vision. These can be thought of merely as tools, as with any other writing or reading device. Screen reader software will dictate text on a computer to the student. A host of braille writing and refreshable reading display equipment exists so students can read (and write) silently. Screen and video magnifiers enlarge text to assist students with mild visual impairment. Various adaptive keyboards help students develop hands-free typing skills. Computer programs and apps for tablets come equipped with gesture-based commands and text-to-speech modes to facilitate non-visual use.

Additionally, closed captioning and hearing aids can assist students with hearing impairments. Wheelchairs, prosthetics and other such equipment can help students with mobility impairments. Adaptive interfaces and structural accommodations of many kinds can be used to help students complete everyday activities, from special pencil grips for writing to the ramps, handrails, elevators and automatic door openers found in public buildings. Even adventure education ropes courses can be adapted for use by those with extreme physical disabilities through employing specialized harness-and-pulley systems.

The quantity and quality of content and mediums available to teachers with modern, assistive technologies can allow them to differentiate learning intensively. Combined with myriad adaptive instruction techniques, these technologies can give teachers the opportunity to actively and successfully engage all students. And, most importantly, these technologies can afford students with disabilities of all sorts a full and equal education within the inclusive classroom.

STAFFING

As an LEA for special education purposes, it will assume responsibility for special education staffing and service delivery. VLGA will be responsible for hiring, training, and/or contracting with the staff necessary to provide special education services to its students. VLGA shall ensure that all special education staff hired or contracted by VLGA is qualified to provide services in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and SELPA policies.

VLGA will employ special education teachers with specialization in mild/moderate disabilities and has budgeted to employ a special education teacher with specialization in moderate/severe disabilities (recognizing that some students may require a more intensive resources and services,

VLGA will work with the SELPA to ensure proper placement and delivery of services). In partnership with the Principal, this/these teacher(s) will ensure the implementation of Individualized Education Plans and compliance with all special education policy, monitoring, and compliance procedures. As the school grows, VLGA will continue to employ an appropriate mix of special education teachers as appropriate for the student population it serves as dictated by the needs indicated on student IEPs.

It will be the duty of the Principal to oversee and ensure the following:

- Ensure that all aspects of the IEP are followed;
- Arrange for the teacher of the student to attend the team meetings;
- Communicate with parents about progress made toward attaining the goals stated on the student's IEP, and inform them of due process procedures and rights;
- Consult quarterly with the Principal to ensure that the objectives and goals of students with IEP's are being met;
- Complete the requisite paperwork, updating and filing of necessary information for initial referrals, triennial evaluations, ongoing monitoring of student progress, and appropriate provision of any/all test modifications as stipulated in the IEP;
- Maintain a central file with all special education evaluation material and IEPs in accordance with FERPA and IDEA guidelines; and
- Provide a report of student progress on the same schedule as students in general education)

All teaching staff at VLGA will also be involved in assuring that all IEPs and 504 plans are properly implemented.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CHARTER SCHOOL STAFF

VLGA administrators, general and special education teaching staff, as well as other appropriate faculty and staff members will attend professional development and/or training meetings necessary to comply with state and federal special education laws, including training sponsored by the OCDE and/or SELPA.

As an independent LEA for special education, VLGA shall seek professional development opportunities for its staff through potential trainings facilitated by the OCDE, SELPA, colleges and universities, and private companies or agencies to ensure compliance with state and federal special education laws as well as implementation of best practices for students with disabilities.

REPORTING

VLGA, in collaboration with the District or SELPA where appropriate, 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 Statewide 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 VLGA 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 Principal. The Principal 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 Principal 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.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

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

The school will provide the parent with a written Notice of Procedural Safeguards, which will include information on the procedure to initiate both formal and informal dispute resolutions, at least once per year. VLGA will utilize the Notice of Procedural Safeguards used by the OCDE or SELPA in which it is a member.

As an LEA for special education purposes, concerns or disagreements raised by parents/guardians will be acknowledged by the school within five days. VLGA will work to arrange a meeting with the parents/guardians 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.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

As an LEA for special education purposes, VLGA acknowledges its responsibility to resolve disputes or defend due process complaints arising as a result of VLGA's alleged failure to provide FAPE to students enrolled in the charter school. VLGA may also initiate a due process hearing or request for mediation with respect to a student enrolled in VLGA if it determines such action is legally necessary or advisable.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Parents or guardians also have the right to file a complaint with OCDE and/or California State Department of Education if they believe that the school has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing special education.

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT

VLGA 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 VLGA. 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.

VLGA shall be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. All facilities of the VLGA shall be accessible for all students with disabilities in accordance with the ADA.

VLGA will designate one employee to coordinate the school's compliance with its responsibilities under Section 504. A 504 team will be assembled by the Principal or Principal-designated 504 Coordinator and shall include the parent/guardian, the student, a qualified staff 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 IDEA, 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 is eligible for services under Section 504 must be made by the 504 team. Written notice of the eligibility determination will be provided to the parent or guardian of the student in their primary language, along with notice of the procedural safeguards available to them. If during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information

indicating possible eligibility of the student for special education per the IDEA, a referral for assessment under the IDEA will be made by the 504 team.

If the student is found by the 504 team to qualify for services and supports 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 Principal will ensure that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that he/she review the 504 Plan with a long-term substitute. A copy of the 504 Plan shall be maintained in the student’s file. Each student’s 504 Plan will be reviewed at least once per year to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, needed modifications to the plan, and continued eligibility.

STUDENTS IN OTHER SUBGROUPS

VLGA will offer a variety of support for students with extraordinary needs, such as foster youth and homeless students. The Principal will serve as the designee for foster and homeless youth and monitor their performance and progress. Our extensive intervention program provides several levels of guidance depending on the need of the student, including counseling, and referrals to outside resources.

VLGA will identify homeless youth through initial enrollment forms, as well as drops in grades, hunger, fatigue and other signs of stress. If a parent or student indicates they are living in a situation that would qualify as homeless the school will inform them of their rights under the McKinney-Vento Act. VLGA will adhere to the McKinney-Vento Act and provides all required supports to its homeless youth.

VLGA will screen for foster youth via possible visits from social services; non-parent enrolling student in school; home arrangements (group home) and self-identification. As needed, foster youth can be referred to the SST process to determine the individual supports and interventions needed to help them succeed in their classes. Our foster youth will be provided counseling services or referred to free or reduced cost mental health clinics if signs of emotional concerns present themselves.

As detailed above, our SST process and teacher training ensure that all students with special needs are promptly identified and provided the supports they need, including referrals for students and their families to outside support organizations.

Students in all subgroups will be monitored through performance on state assessments, internal benchmark exams, and grades. Continued support will be provided to students based on their performance on each indicator.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

While the Charter School does not offer an independent study program, it may place students on short term independent study to accommodate temporary disabilities or other student related needs. In all such cases, the Charter School shall operate its independent study programming in compliance with Ed. Code sections 51744 through 51749.6 and any other laws or regulations governing independent study programs.

ELEMENT 2 – MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES AND ELEMENT 3 – METHOD BY WHICH PUPIL PROGRESS TOWARD OUTCOMES WILL BE MEASURED

“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 pupil subgroups served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subdivision (a) of Section 52052. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served by the charter school.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(B).)

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

MEASURABLE GOALS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Charter School shall meet all statewide content and performance standards and targets. (Ed. Code §§ 47605(d)(1), 60605.)

Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (2013) (Local Control Funding Formula) and AB 484 (2013), as they may be amended from time to time, including all requirements pertaining to pupil outcomes.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Charter School agrees to comply with state requirements for participation and administration of all state-mandated tests, including computer-based assessments. Charter School shall submit and maintain complete, accurate, and up-to-date California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) data in accordance with the requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 861. Charter School hereby grants authority to the State of California to provide a copy of all test results directly to the District as well as Charter School. Upon request, Charter School shall submit, in the requested format (e.g., CD), a copy of the results of all state-mandated tests to the District.

VLGA will meet all statewide content and performance standards and targets. Ed. Code §§ 47605(c)(1), 60605. VLGA will comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula) and AB 484, and will continue to as they may be amended from time to time, including all requirements pertaining to pupil outcomes.

MEASURABLE GOALS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Charter School incorporates herein by reference its “LCFF State Priorities” table from Element 1.

MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES: SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT PERFORMANCE TARGETS

PERFORMANCE TARGETS ALIGNED TO STATE PRIORITIES

The Charter School incorporates herein by reference its “LCFF State Priorities” table from Element 1

OTHER PERFORMANCE TARGETS

The Charter School incorporates herein by reference its “LCFF State Priorities” table from Element 1.

METHOD FOR MEASURING PUPIL PROGRESS TOWARD OUTCOMES: FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

VLGA will implement a comprehensive assessment system to measure progress toward our vision for student success, which includes tracking student mastery of grade-level standards and requisite skills in each subject area. We believe strongly that teaching to deep understanding and mastery is complex and that teachers cannot approach this task formulaically. The following chart illustrates the types of assessments that will be administered by subject, grade level, and frequency. VLGA affirms that its methods for measuring pupil outcomes for the Eight State Priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(C).

ASSESSMENT, PURPOSE, GRADE LEVELS AND ADMINISTRATION TIMELINE

Assessment	Purpose	Grade	Administration Timeline
Internally-Created Tests and Rubrics and Performance-Based Tasks	Measure standards mastery in each subject and progress against IIP and IEP goals (as applicable)	TK-12	Daily and /or weekly.

Publisher-Designed Assessments (Online and paper-based)	Assess standards mastery and progress against digital portfolio goals	TK-12	End of each unit
Writing Rubrics	Assess mastery of grade-level writing standards	TK-12	Daily and/or weekly
Basic Phonics Skills Test	Assess phonics skills	K-3	Beginning, middle and end of year
CAASPP	State Criterion-Based Assessment in ELA and Math	3-8, 11	Once a year
California Science Test (CAST)	State Assessment in Science	5, 8, once in grades 9-12	Once a year
California Alternative Assessment (CAA)	Alternative assessment in ELA, Math and Science	3-8, 11	Once a year
CAASPP Interim Assessments (IABs and ICAs)	Determine standards mastery in ELA and Math	3-8, 11	Interim comprehensive administered at beginning and middle of year. The Interim Blocks are used 4 times per year at end of instructional units
Fountas & Pinnell	Reading Assessment for targeted literacy interventions	TK-12	Beginning, middle and end of year
iReady, Renaissance STAR 360, Agile Math	Diagnostic Reading and Math Assessments	TK-12	Beginning, middle and end of year
ELPAC	Measure English language acquisition	TK-12	Upon enrollment and once annually for all ELs
Physical Fitness Test (FitnessGram)	Comprehensive state physical fitness exam	5, 7, 9	Once a year
PSAT10/PSAT/SAT/ACT	Pre-college admittance exams.	10 th -12 th	PSAT: Annual; SAT/ACT annual or repeated as desired

AP Exams	Measure content and skills of AP courses.	10 th -12 th	Once a year
Portfolio Presentations	Presentation of work samples from across the school year.	TK-12	TK through 11 th grades present to their classrooms more informally; 12 th graders present more formally to a panel of VLGA staff and community partners.
Senior Defense Portfolio	The VLGA Senior Defense is an end of the year cumulative assessment of an individual's journey through education, life, and adversity	12	12 th graders present formally to a panel of VLGA staff, and may include additional guests selected by student including family, loved ones and friends

DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

VLGA's teachers and administrators 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 and school-based growth data and authentic assessments to gauge the whole school from year to year. Our data analysis will also include attendance rates and comparative data, as appropriate. School leaders and staff will use this data analysis to address challenges and areas of improvement. All results will be reported to the Board and school community to ensure transparency and accountability.

Access to information and transparency will be key for all stakeholders. Parents/guardians and students will have access to a comprehensive Student Information System (SIS) Power School, to house student and family data, track student growth and learning, and make information available in real-time to all appropriate stakeholders. As such, students and their families may access up-to-date information at school or at home through email and on the school website. Recognizing that not all families have internet access at home, VLGA also sends regular paper communication home to families, makes phone calls home to discuss concerns with families, and regularly discuss learning and growth with students in their classes. The Vista's Superintendent, in collaboration with the Vista's District Data Coordinator (home office) and all school staff, are responsible for maintaining the SIS in accordance with the school's mission and vision.

As part of this inquiry process, teachers and administrators at VLGA will be engaged in an ongoing process of data review, analysis, and evaluation in connection with student learning outcomes. Teachers will analyze data both individually, and do so regularly in teams to build their knowledge and understanding of student needs and progress. Data helps to inform teachers about student performance and to identify areas of focused instruction and potential intervention for individual students and entire classes.

Grade-level teams will meet regularly to discuss data with each other as well. Student achievement data will be disaggregated annually to clearly identify the academic performance of students by subgroups (e.g., ethnicity, gender, English Learners, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities.)

VLGA will compile the necessary data to create a SARC at the end of each school year. State law requires that the SARC contain all of the following information:

- Demographic information
- School safety and climate for learning information
- Academic data
- School completion rates
- Class sizes
- Teacher and staff information, including data about Highly Qualified Teachers
- Curriculum and Instruction descriptions
- Postsecondary preparation information
- Fiscal and expenditure data

GRADING, PROGRESS REPORTING AND PROMOTION/RETENTION

VLGA will commit strongly to creating a two-way dialogue between the school staff and our parents/guardians. Parental involvement and commitment to the school is necessary if their children are to succeed. We will expect, encourage, and train them through parent seminars to be actively involved in supporting their children's education. Dialogue with the teacher and Principal will be ongoing for parents/guardians as they support their child through each academic year. At student-led conferences, parent/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.

PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENTS & STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES

In addition to subject-area specific assessments and state-mandated tests, VLGA will use Portfolio Assessments to assess student learning in content knowledge as well as deeper learning skills and non-cognitive skills. Portfolio Assessments will require students to compile a variety of work products in various subjects throughout the year and then make a presentation of their work: in 12th grade, this is a formal presentation to a panel of VLGA staff and community members, while in TK through 11th grade, the presentations will be more informally made to their classroom. The portfolio work will product represent a sample of students' accomplishments, academic progress, interests, and reflections. In addition to content, portfolio assessments will allow for the assessment of more complex learning skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and agency. They will also allow a teacher to understand the student's growth over time versus their performance on a given day.

VLGA will use an online student portfolio for organizing and archiving student achievements from each grade. At the end of 12th grade, students participate in a Portfolio Defense and choose

work samples from the portfolio that highlight their progress toward the student global outcomes outlined earlier in the petition.

Student-led parent/teacher/student conferences will take place twice a year at the end of each semester, and portfolios are the basis for discussion in each student's conference. Before each conference, students will compile their work for the semester, reflect on their learning successes, challenges, and goals, create new goals moving forward, and prepare to lead their family member(s) and teacher through that work. Class instruction will allow preparation time for student-led conferences, so students are ready for the conference and derive meaningful learning from the experience.

SENIOR DEFENSE

The VLGA Senior Defense is an end of the year cumulative assessment of an individual's journey through education, life, and adversity. Satisfactory completion of the defense will often be the final requisite a Vista Senior clear to allow them to walk the stage at graduation.

Seniors will begin preparation for the defense at the end of the Fall semester, following the application period for Cal State and UC schools. Students will receive an assignment rubric with clear grading guidelines and instructions, free to construct their arguments to best reflect their growth and personal narrative. They must include three pieces of work to best reflect their change over time, one of which must be drawn from their pathway concentration.

The defense will be delivered to a panel of three adults, and may include guests selected by the student. We will invite students to ask their parents, loved ones, and (when possible) friends to be in attendance to provide support and encouragement.

REPORT CARDS

Twice annual student report cards summarize student performance, progress, and assessment at the end of each semester. VLGA report cards are designed to give meaningful feedback to students and capture their progress regularly. They capture content-specific mastery, as well as skills and dispositions aligned to the VLGA Global Competencies: (1) Investigate and research the world, (2) Recognize and weigh different perspectives, (3) Effectively communicate ideas, (4) take action to make a difference, and (5) Apply learning to real and relevant situations.

Report cards contain numerical scores (1 to 4) based on key measurable outcomes:

Indicates student *progress* towards achievement of grade-level California content standards thus far in the school year.

4 = Exceeds grade-level standards

3 = Meets grade-level standards

2 = Progressing toward meeting grade-level standards

1 = Minimal progress toward grade-level standards

N/A = Not assessed in current reporting period*

✓ = Assessed during reporting period

They also contain narrative sections where teachers detail examples of a student's level of development and mastery based on observations, student-work, portfolio submissions, project rubrics, and/or various classroom-based and school-wide assessments. Report cards act as a teacher's commentary on a student's holistic accomplishments, performance, and growth areas for a given semester, and students have an opportunity to comment and reflect on them during their student-led conference.

VLGA will meet with families during orientation each year to share the school's assessment philosophy and to show families how to access information independently. Families will have access to standardized testing data and ongoing formative assessment and portfolio assessment results through the SIS. Additionally, they will receive formal updates regarding SARC data and be consulted regarding the development of the annual LCAP update, as required by Education Code Section 47606.5. Families will also have regular and meaningful contact with their child's teacher through phone calls, emails, and by receiving materials their children.

Honors/AP/Dual enrollment courses will be weighted an extra grade point.

RETENTION

Despite various interventions and extra supports, if scholars are still far below grade level, another possible intervention is retention. Parents will be an integral part of the decision-making process for retaining their child through the Student Success Team meetings and in written reports of scholar progress and the possibility of retention by the end of March). Although parents will be informed throughout the process, the final decision for retention rests with the administration.

ELEMENT 4 – GOVERNANCE

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

GENERAL PROVISIONS

As an independent charter school, Charter School, operated as or by its nonprofit public benefit corporation, is a separate legal entity and shall be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of Charter School.

Charter School shall not be operated as, or be operated by, a for-profit corporation, a for-profit educational management organization, or a for-profit charter management organization. (Ed. Code § 47604.)

Charter School shall ensure that, at all times throughout the term of the Charter, the bylaws of its governing board and/or nonprofit corporation are and remain consistent with the provisions of this Charter. In the event that the governing board and/or nonprofit corporation operating Charter School amends the bylaws, Charter School shall provide a copy of the amended bylaws to District within 30 days of adoption.

Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act (“Brown Act”). All meetings of the Charter School’s governing board shall be called, held and conducted in accordance with the terms and provisions of Education Code section 47604.1 and the Brown Act including, but not limited to, those related to meeting access and recording, notice, agenda preparation, posting and reporting.

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

The District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the Charter School governing board pursuant to Education Code section 47604(c).

LEGAL AND POLICY COMPLIANCE

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and District policies as it relates to charter schools adopted through Board action.

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal and state reporting requirements, including but not limited to the requirements of CBEDS, CALPADS, the Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999, and Education Code section 47604.33.

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

The Charter School shall comply with Government Code Section 1090, et seq., as set forth in Education Code section 47604.1.

Charter School shall comply with the Political Reform Act of 1974. (Gov. Code § 81000 et seq.)

Charter School and all employees and representatives of Charter School, including members of Charter School's governing board, members of Charter School or governing board committees and councils, Charter School administrators, and managers, shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards, and the District charter school policy, regarding ethics and conflicts of interest. Charter School shall enter into all transactions and conduct business with all persons and entities at arm's length or, in the case of otherwise permissible related party transactions, in a manner equivalent to arm's length.

Charter School shall notify parents, guardians, and teachers in writing within 72 hours of the issuance of a Notice of Violation, Notice of Intent to Revoke, Final Decision to Revoke, Notice of Non-Renewal, or equivalent notice, by the the District's Board of Education.

TITLE IX, SECTION 504, AND UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Charter School shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), including any investigation of any complaint filed with Charter School alleging its noncompliance with these laws or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by these laws. Charter School shall notify all of its students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated employee or employees.

Charter School shall adopt and publish complaint procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX or Section 504.

Charter School shall adopt and implement specific and continuing procedures for notifying applicants for admission and employment, students and parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with Charter School, that Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of sex or mental or physical disability in the educational programs or activities which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and Section 504 not to discriminate on any such basis.

Charter School shall establish and provide a uniform complaint procedure in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including but not limited to all applicable requirements of *California Code of Regulations*, title 5, section 4600 et seq. The Charter School shall review and update its Uniform Compliant policies and procedures annually to ensure that said policies and procedures conform to the requirements of the law.

Charter School shall adhere to all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding pupil fees, including Education Code sections 49010 - 49013, and extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints filed pursuant to Education Code section 49013.

Charter School shall extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints filed pursuant to the Local Control Funding Formula legislation provisions set forth in Education Code section 52075.

RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES

Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation shall promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries, including but not limited to inquiries regarding financial records from the District, and shall cooperate with the District regarding any inquiries. Charter School acknowledges that Charter School, including but not limited to its nonprofit corporation, is subject to audit by the District, including, without limitation, audit by the District Office of the Inspector General. Charter School shall provide the District with current, complete, and accurate contact information for Charter School, Charter School administrators, and Board members.

If an allegation or other evidence of waste, fraud, abuse, or other material violation of law related to Charter School's operations, or breach of the Charter, is received or discovered by the District, Charter School, including but not limited to its nonprofit corporation, employees, and representatives, shall cooperate with any resulting inquiry and/or investigation undertaken by the District and/or the Office of the Inspector General Investigations Unit.

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that persons and entities that directly exercise control over the expenditure of Charter School's public funds shall be subject to all necessary and appropriate District charter school oversight.

NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT

Charter School shall notify the District in writing of any citations or notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside governmental regulatory or investigative agencies, lawsuits, changes in corporate or legal status (e.g., loss of IRS 501(c)(3) status), or other formal complaints or notices, within one week of receipt of such notices by Charter School. Unless prohibited by law, Charter School shall notify the District in writing of any internal investigations within one week of commencing investigation. Charter School shall notify the District within 24 hours of any dire emergency or serious threat to the health and safety of students or staff.

STUDENT RECORDS

Upon receipt of a student records request from a receiving school/school district, Charter School shall transfer a copy of the student's complete cumulative record within ten (10) school days in accordance with Education Code section 49068 and all student confidentiality and privacy laws including compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Charter School shall comply with the requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 3024, regarding the transfer of student special education records. In the event Charter School

closes, Charter School shall comply with the student records transfer provisions in Element 15. Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 49060 et seq., which include provisions regarding rights to access student records and transfer of records for youth in foster care.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Charter School shall not require a parent or legal guardian of a prospective or enrolled student to perform volunteer service hours, or make payment of fees or other monies, goods, or services in lieu of performing volunteer service, as a condition of his/her child's admission, continued enrollment, attendance, or participation in the school's educational activities, or otherwise discriminate against a student in any manner because his/her parent cannot, has not, or will not provide volunteer service to Charter School.

The Charter School may encourage parental involvement, but shall notify the parents and guardians of applicant students and currently enrolled students that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the Charter School. (Ed. Code § 47605(n).)

FEDERAL PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

As a recipient of federal funds, Charter School has agreed to meet all applicable programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)) and other applicable federal programs. Charter School understands that it is a local educational agency (LEA) for purposes of federal compliance and reporting purposes. Charter School agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of ESEA and other applicable federal programs. Charter School also acknowledges that, as part of its oversight of Charter School, the District may conduct program review for federal as well as state compliance.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

VLGA will be a directly-funded independent Charter School operated by Vista Charter Public Schools, Inc. (VCPS or the Corporation) a California non-profit public benefit corporation, pursuant to California law. VLGA will be governed by the VCPS Board of Directors ("Board") in accordance with the Charter Schools Act, California law, the VCPS Bylaws, and the terms of this charter. VCPS shall comply with the Brown Act (Government Code §54950 et seq.), the Public Records Act (Government Code 6250 et seq.), the Political Reform Act (Govt. Code §81000 et seq.) and Govt. Code §1090 et seq. Copies of the VCPS Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and Conflict of Interest Code are in Appendix 5.

VLGA 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 VLGA.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c), the District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of VLGA, nor will the District be liable for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by VLGA as long as the District has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

Pursuant to Ed. Code section 47605(n), the charter school may encourage parental involvement but shall notify the parents and guardians of applicant pupils and currently enrolled pupils that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the charter school.

All of the VCPS corporate officers shall serve in a volunteer capacity and shall not be compensated for their services as an officer. The VCPS Superintendent shall serve as the President of the corporation, but no other VCPS employees shall serve as corporate officers. All of the other officer positions may be filled either by members of the Board or other volunteers, with a preference for non-Board members in order to ensure that the Board has oversight over the officers. The roles and duties of the officers are as established in the Bylaws and in any resolutions adopted by the Board of Directors.

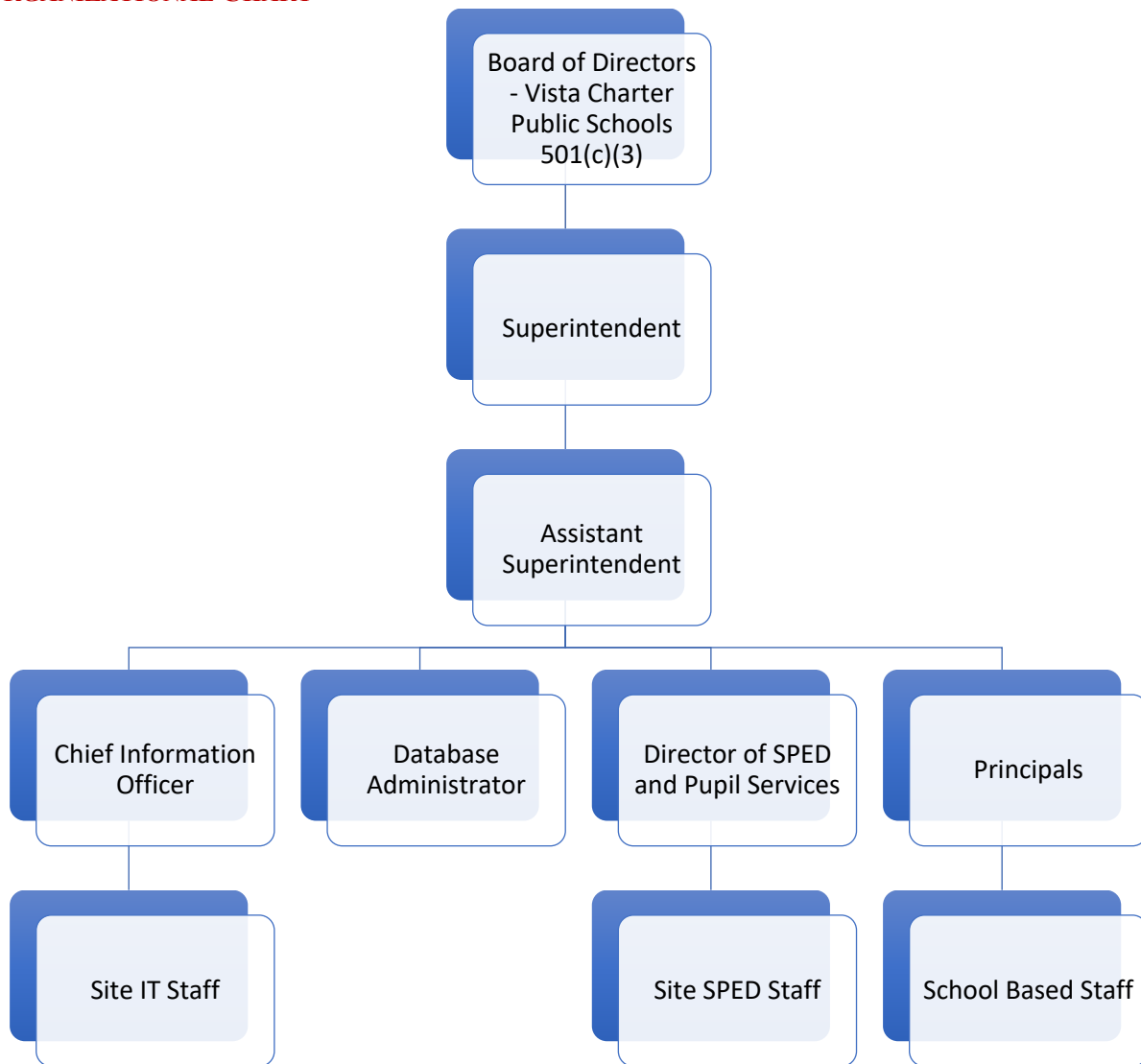
VCPS and its Board of Directors shall comply with the Charter, the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and the California Corporations Code, and all laws controlling charter schools. VCPS, its Board of Directors, administrators, managers and employees, and any other committees of the Board, shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws and nonprofit integrity standards regarding ethics and conflicts of interest, including the Public Records Act (Government Code section 6250 et seq.), the Political Reform Act of 1974 (Gov. Code Section 81000 et seq.), the Brown Act (Government Code sections 54950 et seq.), and the requirements described at Government Code Section 1090 et seq. and any attendant regulations as they may be amended from time to time, and any other applicable conflict of interest prohibitions. VCPS shall not have any employees on its Board of Directors. By the terms of its Charter, VLGA is obligated to comply with the requirements of the Public Records Act, the Brown Act, Government Code Section 1090 et seq. and the Political Reform Act to the same extent as if VLGA were a non-charter California public school district, regardless of any arguments regarding the applicability of those laws to California charter schools. However, should a law, regulation, or applicable court decision clarify which conflicts of interest laws apply to charter schools, the LEUSD and Charter School agree to comply with the updated law or decision.

VCPS has adopted a Conflict of Interest Code, pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 2, Section 18730, including the formal designation of reporters and reporting categories and the forms to be filed thereunder. VCPS shall review, revise and maintain that Code as current throughout the term of the Charter, and shall require all affected VCPS officers, employees, representatives, consultants, and governing board members to comply therewith.

VLGA shall comply with the provisions of Education Code Section 52176(b) for the establishment and operation of an English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC), as applicable to the Charter School.

In the case of a conflict between the requirements of this Charter and provisions of the Articles of Incorporation and/or Bylaws, action taken in accordance with such Articles or Bylaws which conflicts with or is inconsistent with the requirements of the Charter shall be deemed a violation of this Charter. Should the provisions of the Charter conflict with the policies, practices, or terms of any collective bargaining agreement or other agreement of VCPS, the provisions of the Charter shall prevail.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



MAJOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board Responsibilities

The VCPS Board of Directors (“Board”) is fully responsible for the operation and fiscal affairs of VLGA including, but not limited to, the following:

- Hire and evaluate the Superintendent

- Approve all contractual agreements and purchases over \$25,000. The Superintendent approves invoices and purchases for \$25,000 or less.
- Approve and monitor the implementation of general policies of VLGA.
- Approve and monitor VLGA's annual budget.
- Act as a fiscal agent. This includes the receipt of funds for the operation of Charter School in accordance with its laws and the receipt of grants and donations consistent with the mission of VLGA and the establishment of investment procedures.
- Contract with an external auditor to produce an annual financial audit according to generally accepted accounting practices. An Audit Committee may be convened for this purpose.
- Regularly review progress of both student and staff performance. Develop, review, or revise VLGA's accountability and mission.
- Approve the school calendar and schedule of Board meetings.
- Develop Board of Directors policies and procedures.
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and complaint procedures when necessary.
- Approve charter amendments.
- Approve annual fiscal audit and performance report.
- Appoint an administrative panel to act as a hearing and determining body on recommended student expulsions.
- Execute all other responsibilities provided for in the California Corporations Code.

The Board may initiate and carry on any program or activity or may otherwise act in a manner which is not in conflict with or inconsistent with or preempted by any law and which is not in conflict with the purposes for which VLGA is established.

The VCPS Board of Directors attends an annual in-service for the purposes of training individual Board members on their responsibilities, including compliance with the Brown Act, Conflicts of Interest, and fiscal and academic oversight.

The implementation of the Board's decisions is carried out by the Superintendent and Principal.

The Superintendent reports to the Board and is specifically responsible for:

- Recruit, hire, prepare and support school leaders meeting all state and federal requirements
- Oversee HR practices
- Develop and maintain a cohesive culture
- Develop clear decision-making guidelines to support the administrative team and the Board in securing focused and well-informed decisions
- Assist in student recruitment and community outreach
- Evaluate school administrators
- Develop annual budgets with school site stakeholders for Board approval, oversee finance, payroll and other fiscal operations
- Support annual audit
- Negotiate all service providers' contracts (with Board approval over \$25,000)
- Oversee compliance including special education, insurance, HR and more

- Oversee securing and maintaining facilities
- Charter advocacy
- Serve as SELPA liaison
- Lead organizational PR/Media and partnerships with community members, stakeholders and organizations
- WASC Accreditation support
- Develop and manage strong business functions (finance, operations, budgeting, compliance, human resources, facilities management, marketing, IT)
- Develop and manage school programs, procedures, and policies in alignment with organizational mission
- Build and manage a growing team of staff and school leaders

The Principal's primary responsibility will be the strategic development, implementation, and management of all aspects of the Charter School's performance and operations.

The Principal reports to the Superintendent and is responsible for:

- Implementing, motivating, leading and mentoring teachers to better instructional practices and increase content expertise, performance and rigor or lesson implementation
- Providing teachers professional and instructional support through reviewing instructional documents, observing and providing feedback for classroom observations, designing and reviewing professional growth plans and facilitating weekly professional development/staff meetings
- Developing and implementing a plan that ensures student achievement which is supported by evidence through assessments such as benchmarks, classroom data, parent and student feedback and a plan to address students who are struggling
- Collaborating with the Assistant Principal and Committee Chairs to use appropriate data to establish rigorous and concrete goals in the context of student achievement and instructional programs.
- Providing individual student support by designing and evaluating student intervention plans, attending IEPs and designing a process for measuring and evaluating student growth
- Working to build and maintain a strong, positive, results-oriented school culture
- Developing a plan that fosters the relationships and ensure all stakeholders are addressed based on the clear vision of the desired culture for the school
- Planning, facilitating and attending school functions such as parent meetings, open house, parent teacher conferences, fundraisers, etc.

Full job descriptions and Qualifications for each position are included in Element 5, below.

GOVERNING BOARD COMPOSITION AND MEMBER SELECTION

The Board of Directors are composed of highly qualified individuals who, first and foremost, actively support and promote VCPS and who are dedicated to its educational outcomes. The Board includes individuals with diverse expertise, experience and ethnic backgrounds. Each

year, the Board participates in training on fiscal oversight and legal compliance issues (Brown Act, Conflicts of Interest, any changes in relevant laws, etc.).

Officers are elected by the Board of Directors. Neither the secretary nor the treasurer may serve concurrently as the president.

The VCPS Board consists of 5-9 directors, each serving a two-year term; terms are staggered in alternating years. In addition, the District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the VCPS governing board pursuant to Education Code section 47604(b). No employees of VCPS will serve on the Board and no persons serving on the Board may be an “interested person” as specified in the bylaws. All directors shall have full voting rights, including any representative appointed by the District as consistent with Education Code Section 47604(b). If the District appoints a representative to serve on the Board of Directors, the Board may appoint an additional director to ensure that the Board is maintained with an odd number of directors. All directors, except for the representative appointed by the District, shall be designated by the existing Board of Directors.

VCPS Board of Directors

Board Member	Position	Professional Expertise
Paul Vieyra	Board President	Real estate, commercial banking
Michele Bauer-Bean	Secretary	Elementary Education and Lawyer
Mimi Kim	Treasurer	Entrepreneur, Finance
Judy Molodow	Member	Special education
Geronimo Gaytan	Member	Parent

Directors shall be selected at an annual meeting of the Board of Directors. When a vacancy occurs, as detailed in the VCPS Bylaws, a Nominating Committee, comprised of two or more directors, will be appointed by the Chairman of the Board at least thirty days prior to the election date, to identify qualified candidates from the community. Any member of the community may recommend a candidate for consideration to the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall review the qualifications of candidates, interview them, and determine if the candidate’s qualifications meet the current needs of the Board. The Nominating Committee will present a report to the Board with qualifying candidates no later than seven days prior to the Board election. Directors shall hold office for terms prescribed in the Corporation’s Bylaws, or

until a successor has been elected, unless the director has been removed from office. Additional information on the Board Member Selection is found in the VCPS Bylaws.

The qualifications for directors are generally: the ability to attend Board meetings, a willingness to actively support and promote VCPS, and a dedication to the VCPS educational goals. Board members must also bring a desired strength to the Board, which the Board of Directors may identify (i.e. experience in educational leadership, a background in law, finance or business, organizational management or experience with non-profit organizations).

GOVERNANCE PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS

Board meetings shall be held using real-time video communication at each of the VCPS charter school sites to ensure community, stakeholder and parent participation and attendance at the meetings. This technology allows participants at all school sites to see, hear and speak to each other.

All meetings (regular and special) of the Board and its committees shall be called, noticed, and held in compliance with the Brown Act. The Board sets its regular calendar of meetings at the Board's annual meeting. The regular board meeting dates are posted on the Charter School's website, as well as in the Charter School's main office. The Board's regular meeting shall occur on the last Monday of each month, unless otherwise specified in the Board's annual calendar. As such, the following takes place prior to a Board meeting:

1. An agenda is created and reviewed by the Superintendent and Board President, generally one week prior to the scheduled board meeting.
2. The agenda is prepared in full compliance with the Brown Act and includes, but is not limited to, a brief description of each item the Board will consider for action or discussion, the location address for the public meeting, instructions regarding how to request any special accommodations, and a notice whether any member will participate by teleconference. Teleconference participation by any board member will be conducted in full compliance with the Brown Act.

The agenda shall be posted at least 72 hours prior to any regular board meeting at **VLGA and each VCPS school site** (in locations, including each school's main office, where it is visible to parents, visitors, students, and staff), and on the school's web site.

1. An e-mail with the agenda and all pertinent attachments is sent to all VCPS Board Members and all VLGA employees. Hard copies of the agenda and meeting materials are made available at the meeting location.
2. The specific procedure for calling a Special Board meeting with 24-hours advance notice is outlined in VCPS's Bylaws and is in compliance with the Brown Act.

BOARD DECISION MAKING PROCESS

A majority of the board members in office shall constitute a quorum. Every decision made by a majority of the board members present at a meeting, duly held, at which a quorum is present is an act of the Board. Board members may take action by voting yes, no, or abstaining from voting.

To the extent permitted under the Brown Act, members of the Board may participate in a meeting through the use of conference telephone, electronic video screen communication, or other communications equipment. Participation in a meeting through use of conference telephone constitutes presence in person at that meeting, so long as all members participating in the meeting are able to hear one another. Teleconference participation complies with all requirements of the Brown Act (i.e., agendas specifying location of teleconference participants and providing opportunity for the public to address the Board, posted at publicly accessible location with teleconference capabilities, at least a quorum of directors must participate from within the District boundaries, all votes must be by roll call).

BOARD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Board members receive training during the board recruitment and orientation process, as well as annual refresher training in the following topics:

- The Ralph M. Brown Act
- California State Accountability Dashboard
- School budget and compliance
- Reading and understanding financial reports
- Roles and responsibilities of board members and school staff

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

VLGA believes that parent involvement translates into increased student achievement. VLGA will encourage, honor, and respect parent voice. Parent involvement and the inclusion of the parent voice are essential and will be ensured in the following ways:

School Site Council

The School Site Council (SSC) will be composed of:

- 3 students
- 3 Parents
- 3 Teachers
- VLGA Principal
- 1 out-of-classroom staff member
- 1 community member

VLGA's SSC will assist in developing, reviewing and making annual updates to the Charter Schools' Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA). The SSC will participate in developing recommendations for school policies and share in efforts to engage the support of the community. The SSC will make recommendations about issues related to the school and

participate in reviewing parental and community concerns, especially as it relates to categorical funding as described in the SPSA. The Principal will be responsible for submitting the minutes of each SSC meeting to the VCPS Board. All SSC members, along with all employees and community members, will be encouraged to attend and voice their desires and opinions at the school's governing board meetings.

School Site Council teacher representatives will be selected by the teaching staff on an annual basis. The classified representative and the parent representatives will be selected on an annual basis by vote of their respective peers.

School Site Council meetings will be scheduled in advance for the entire year, and will be held monthly.

Each year, the Site Administrator will also engage parents, teachers and staff in formulating the school's annual LCAP updates and goal setting through focus groups, surveys and open meetings in which stakeholders are invited to participate in reviewing the school's annual progress and establishing goals – and allocating resources – for the coming years. The Charter School will solicit feedback from parents, teachers and staff via annual surveys, meetings regarding the LCAP, SARC and other reports of progress, and a variety of web-based applications like PowerSchool. The Charter School website will house all-important documents (LCAP, SARC etc.) providing 24/7 access.

English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC)

State law mandates each school site with 21 or more students of Limited English Proficiency in attendance, regardless of language, to form a functioning English Learner Advisory Committee. The ELAC will be formed at VLGA when the site has 21 or more students of LEP. The ELAC membership will include: Parents of ELs (at least the same percentage of the ELAC membership as ELs constitute of the Charter School's total student population), Charter School staff, and /or community members as long as the minimum percentage requirement for EL parents is maintained. The ELAC will advise the Principal and staff on programs and services for English Learners, and participate in annual goal setting and evaluation of EL achievement and needs (including the LCAP).

Parent Meetings

School-parent meetings will be held regularly while the school is in session, and more frequently, as necessary, in order to facilitate the communication process between parents and the governing board. We will have monthly standing Coffee with the Principal meetings and hold additional meetings, as necessary.

Parents will meet with staff and administrators for report card conferences three times throughout the year (November, February, June). Parents will be advised that the administrators and teaching staff are available for additional conferences as needed or as requested by parents. Parents will be encouraged to serve on the School Site Council. Parents will be consulted and

advised through meetings and informational bulletins regarding the school's educational programs and student progress on an ongoing basis.

Workshops

VLGA will provide parent workshops and education classes in English and Spanish to help parents feel connected to the school community. The content of these workshops are designed to assist parents in the educational development of their children. The Principal, teachers, and staff will maintain open lines of communication at all times with all parents.

Workshop topics may include the following:

- English as a Second Language
- Helping Your Teenager Engage in Healthy Online Habits
- Child Psychology and Behavior
- Cultivating Strong Study Habits at Home
- Transitioning to College for Parents of High School Students with IEPs College Admissions 101 for Parents & Guardians
- FAFSA Workshop for Senior Parents & Guardians

Surveys

An annual parent survey will be sent home and collected to inform the development of VLGA programs for the Local Control Accountability Plan and to obtain a sense of parent and student satisfaction. The results of this survey will be made available to all VLGA stakeholders including: students, parents, VLGA staff, the School Site Council, and the Board of Directors.

Volunteer Opportunities

No parent or guardian of a VLGA student will ever be required to perform volunteer hours as a condition of their student's attendance at VLGA. Parents, however, will be provided many opportunities for volunteering at VLGA. Service opportunities will include but will not be limited to clerical support, supervision of student field trips, and supporting and organizing parent meetings. Parents can determine the type of service they contribute to VLGA based on their particular interests, strengths, and availability.

VLGA will comply with the requirements of Ed. Code section 52064.1 that requires all charter schools to provide a local control funding formula budget overview for parents based on the State Superintendent's template.

Local Control and Accountability Plans

VLGA shall, on or before July 1 or each year, adopt a local control and accountability plan to update the goals and annual actions to achieve those goals identified in the charter petition. Charter schools must develop, adopt and meet the transparency requirements for local control

and accountability plans and the updates to those plans in the same manner as governing boards of school districts, superintendents of school districts, and county superintendents of schools.

Ethics Training

Effective January 1, 2023, board members and other employees designated by the board must now complete the “AB 1234 Ethics Training” every two years commencing on or before January 1, 2026.

VLGA shall keep a record of training completion for five years and make it available for public inspection.

Safe Place to Learn Act

VLGA shall comply Education Code sections 234.1, 1240, 35186, 51204.5, 51501, 60040, and 60119, as amended, and Sections 202, 242, 243, 60040.5 and 60150, when determining as required by law the sufficiency of instructional materials.–

All- Gender Restrooms

VLGA shall comply with Education Code section 35292.5, as amended, and Section 17585, by ensuring that, on or before July 1, 2026, it shall provide and maintain at least one all-gender restroom for voluntary pupil use at each of its schoolsites that meet specified criteria as required by law.

Complaints

For complaints other than Title IX or Uniform Complaints, the Charter School maintains board policies and procedures regarding complaints by third parties about employees or an internal issue or complaints by employees about an internal issue. These board policies are not included in the petition but are board adopted and can be revisited by the board at any time.

ELEMENT 5 – EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS

“The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the charter school.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(E).)

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. Charter School shall not discriminate against applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, military and veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by California or federal law. Equal employment opportunity shall be extended to all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including but not limited to recruitment, selection, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall, and dismissal from employment.

ESEA/ESSA AND CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS

Charter School shall adhere to all requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)) that are applicable to teachers and paraprofessional employees. Charter School shall ensure that all teachers are appropriately assigned and fully credentialed in accordance with applicable state requirements for certificated employment, including but not limited to the provisions of Education Code section 47605(l). Charter School shall maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and make them readily available for inspection.

Teachers and all paraprofessionals will meet the requirements for employment of California Education Code section 47605(l) and the applicable provisions of federal law. All teachers at VLGA will be required to have credentials equivalent to those required by the District as applicable and required by law for Core and College-preparatory courses.

VLGA prohibits discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, national origin, immigration status, 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. VLGA is a School of Choice and no employee will be forced to work at the Charter School. VLGA will comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding background checks and clearance of all personnel and will comply with all State and federal laws concerning the maintenance and disclosure of employee records. VLGA will comply with all State and federal mandates and legal guidelines relative to ESSA.

Notwithstanding Ed. Code section 47605(l), teachers employed by charter schools during the 2019–20 school year shall have until July 1, 2025, to obtain the certificate required for the teacher’s certificated assignment. By July 1, 2020, all teachers in charter schools shall obtain a certificate of clearance and satisfy the requirements for professional fitness pursuant to Sections 44339, 44340, and 44341.

EMPLOYEE POSITIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Staffing Plan

School-site staff will further be supported and overseen by the VCPS Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Chief Information Officer, Director of SPED and Pupil Services, and Database Administrator along with additional contracted services such as a speech therapist, physical therapist, etc.

Superintendent (Certificated)

The Superintendent's primary responsibility is the strategic development, implementation, and management of all aspects of the Charter School performance and operations including the administration of the Charter School. The Superintendent fosters a collaborative and stimulating community culture for a diverse group of stakeholders including students, parents, faculty members, board members, and community partners.

Responsibilities:

Leadership and Human Resources

- Recruit, hire, prepare and support school leaders
- Develop and maintain a cohesive culture which reflects VCPS's Values
- Develop clear decision-making guidelines to support the administrative team and the Board in making focused and well-informed decisions.
- Oversee Student Recruitment
- Evaluate the on-site administrator (Principal)

External Responsibilities

- Oversee Budget development and school finance
- Oversee Audit Procedures
- Negotiate all service provider contracts; secure Board Approval as required
- Manage Legal matters (District/Authorizer, Personnel, Special Education, Insurance, etc.)
- Oversee maintenance of facilities
- Implement Charter advocacy & policy legislation
- Oversee PR-Media for VLGA
- Oversee Payroll
- Develop relationship with media to support strong, positive local presence in the community

Strategic Planning

- Provide support through WASC Accreditation processes
- Develop partnerships with community organizations
- Develop strong partnerships to ensure sustainability
- Develop and manage strong business functions (finance, operations, budgeting,

- compliance, human resources, facilities management, marketing, IT)
- Develop and manage school programs, procedures, and policies in alignment with organizational mission
- Build and manage a growing team of staff and school leadership

Qualifications:

- 5 years of experience as a senior leader in a charter school or in an educational organization
- Experience in guiding school processes and procedures
- Experience in creating and delivering compelling presentations to diverse groups of stakeholders.
- Experience in leading an organization through strategic planning
- Entrepreneurial, positive problem-solving, ability to see opportunity in challenges
- Clear judgment, a mature interpersonal style and the ability to drive collaborative decision-making process

Assistant Superintendent (Certificated)

As a Leader within the Executive Team, the Assistant Superintendent leads and supports the implementation of the Vista's Signature Practices focusing on Educational Excellence and Innovation for Learning, Professional Development, Assessment, and Improved Student Achievement.

Reports to: Superintendent

Responsibilities

- Oversees the development of a clear vision for the Curriculum and Instruction department to work collaboratively and productively toward the achievement of Academic Excellence for students and in fulfillment of the District's Blueprint for Educational Excellence and Innovation, the LCAP, Board Goals, and the District's Vision, Mission, and Values.
- Ensures for the implementation of the California Common Core State Standards.
- Ensures appropriate resources are provided to support the implementation of the Common Core State Standards.
- Ensures appropriate, high-quality professional development is offered to support certificated and classified efforts to ensure students are proficient in the Common Core State Standards.
- Supports a district culture of college and career preparedness.
- Supports student success through formative and summative assessment practices and programs that are in alignment with the Common Core State Standards.
- Prepares for and present progress reports to the Board of Directors.
- Facilitates Task Force teams and report progress to the Board of Directors.
- Supports, through vision, resources, and professional development, enrichment programs, and intervention programs, including but not limited to Global Education, Mastery Learning, Reader's and Writer's Workshop, STEAM, Career Technical Education (CTE), Project-Based Learning, Way of Council, and Kagan Structures.

- Partners with universities and organizations that have been approved to collaborate with the District in support of learning initiatives.
- Visits school sites and classrooms, engaging with certificated and classified employees and students, on a regular basis.
- Supports the implementation of technology that improves student achievement.
- Develops and coordinates community partnerships that actively promote the District's vision, mission and values.
- Evaluates effectiveness of programs on a regular basis to ensure allocated resources and practices are resulting in student achievement.
- Oversees the development of Single Plans for Student Achievement (SPSA) and Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAP).
- Oversees charter school compliance in the District pursuant to state law and Board Policy.
- Oversees and supports secondary schools with accreditation (WASC).
- Collaborates with the Back Office to ensure budgetary resources and highly qualified staff appropriately support student achievement.
- Oversees all after-school programs, including AM/PM, ASES, intersession, and summer school.
- Supports Site Administrators with recruitment and enrollment strategies.
- Performs other related duties as assigned by the Superintendent.

Minimum Qualifications

- At least ten (10) years of increasing responsibility in teaching and administrative experiences in education
- Experience as a site principal and/or district-level leader experience preferred
- Knowledge of National, State, and local educational goals, initiatives, and objectives
- Experience supervising, evaluating, and supporting employees, certificated and classified
- Experience as a collaborative effective communicator (writing, speaking, listening) public speaker, facilitator, and presenter
- Knowledge and Experience using California Common Core State Standards and formative and summative assessment systems
- Experience using data to inform curricular program decisions
- Ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Federal, State, and County laws pertaining to LCAP and charter schools
- Valid Clear Administrative Credential and Master's Degree required
- Recognized as a school administrator with high personal integrity and superior communication skills

Knowledge of

- California Education Code, California Administrative Code, policies and regulations of the district
- Relevant educational research and an understanding of research and design related to curriculum and instructional services
- Strategies and goals toward achievement of state grade level standards, curriculum development strategies, instructional delivery systems, and program evaluation processes
- Principles and methods of modern finance and budget administration, as they apply to funding

- and reporting of curriculum and instructional programs
- Selection, training, supervision, and performance evaluation
- Interpersonal skills using tact, patience, and courtesy

Ability to

- Communicate effectively orally and in writing
- Work in a diverse socio-economic and multicultural community
- Maintain consistent, punctual and regular attendance
- Select, train, supervise and evaluate the performance of assigned staff
- Maintain current knowledge of trends and developments in innovation
- Develop and monitor a program budget including the LCAP
- Prepare and present a variety of financial reports and program summaries
- Analyze complex problems, develop solutions and make effective decisions and recommendations
- Develop and maintain appropriate internal program evaluation and reporting mechanisms
- Establish and maintain effective and collaborative working relationships with a variety of groups, individuals and community agencies

Chief Information Officer

The Chief Information Officer (CIO) will lead the ongoing commitment to support and promote the strategic use of information technology that advances the overall mission and vision of Vista Charter Public Schools. Reporting to the Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent, the CIO will lead and manage the Information Technology team, including academic and administrative computing, networking, support services, classroom and instructional technology, programming services, and telecommunications. The CIO serves as the principal technology leader for VCPS providing the vision and leadership for developing and implementing information technology strategies and initiatives district wide. The position scope is inclusive of all district campuses. This necessitates a high level of familiarity with the various constituents and a commitment to meeting the diverse information and communications needs that exist across all departments. The CIO is responsible for anticipating and maintaining a vision for the future technology needs at VCPS, and for recommending strategies, priorities, and projects that will best achieve the district's strategic goals and objectives.

QUALIFICATIONS, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILL REQUIREMENTS:

The qualifications and skill requirements for this position include:

- Minimum qualification is a Master's Degree in an educational/technology area, Business Administration, Educational Technology, or other field of study, with significant relevant educational technology and IT work experience;
- Significant professional experience in education;
- Extensive experience with IT strategic planning, budgeting, and personal management;
- Demonstrated knowledge of the ways and methods by which technology supports the teaching learning environment;
- Significant experience in all aspects of information technology planning, development and implementation, including but not limited to enterprise resource planning, systems architecture,

telecommunications, database administration, web and social media development and security and compliance issues;

- Broad technical knowledge and skills, with the ability to demonstrate this thorough knowledge and understanding of current computing, telecommunications and emerging technologies;
- Practical experience with recent developments in campus technology issues;
- Effective oral and written communication capabilities, a commitment to customer service, and excellent presentation skills;
- Excellent analytical and organizational skills, with an attention to detail;
- Ability to handle multiple tasks simultaneously;
- Demonstrated experience and skill in negotiating with vendors, contractors, and others;
- Excellent interpersonal and leadership skill with the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with faculty, staff, and students;
- High energy level, enjoyment of challenges and a fast-paced environment, and a record of self-motivation and personal initiative.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The essential job functions and responsibilities include:

- Responsible for developing collaborations among the district's academic and administrative constituents to advance the district's mission;
- Leadership in the development of a strategic direction for information technology services, gauging and anticipating the diverse needs of district constituents, monitoring trends and innovations in the industry to meet those needs; developing and implementing strategic long and short-term technology plans; and making actionable recommendations to leadership;
- Ensure IT data security, risk management, disaster recovery and business continuity planning processes are in place and receive regular review for currency and adequacy;
- Exercise diligent evaluation and careful budgetary management, including budget preparation and the ability to analyze and resolve complex issues;
- Develop and organize technology talent that is structured to efficiently deliver services across the organization;
- Develop, successfully implement, and oversee strategic technology policies throughout the district;
- Works with the student body to advance the student experience with creative technology integration in areas where students live, work, and play.

ROUTINE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Conducts ongoing assessment, planning and oversight of the proper management of all academic and administrative technology and daily service delivery;
- Provides leadership, guidance and supervision of technology to leadership through direct reports;
- Participates in annual budget process for institutional technology needs, develops annual IT operational and capital budgets, develops and maintains the institution's IT plan;
- Maintain the integrity and strategic development of the district's information and communications infrastructure, and the systems infrastructure for mission critical functions;
- Participates in strategic and operational planning committees;
- Maintains strong vendor relationships and manages contract and service agreements;
- Establishes and/or collaborates with direct reports to establish IT department goals, objectives

and operating procedures;

- Develops and maintains an IT organizational structure designed to meet institutional needs and demands, assessing and identifying the most cost effective investment of financial resources

DIRECTOR OF COUNSELING, COLLEGE, AND CAREERS

The Director of Counseling, College & Careers promotes Vista's mission of creating a college-going culture by leveraging relationships within the local and national community to ensure that all students, including those with alternative educational needs have the means, opportunity and preparation to attend college. The Director of Counseling, College & Careers will support and lead the development of District-wide articulation plans that ensure equity and access to a rigorous course sequence for all students. The Director of Counseling, College & Careers is a management position that is accountable for assigned functions and activities related to career readiness for students.

MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Manage, develop, continuously monitor and improve Vista's college readiness programs and services.
2. Develop short and long-range implementation plans designed to provide timely delivery of high quality services to students, families, sites and the community in support of college and career readiness.
3. Developing and fostering relationships with colleges and universities.
4. Communicate and collaborate with other administrators, counselors, district personnel and community-based organizations to coordinate activities and programs and exchange information.
5. Coordinate professional development for K-12 staff involving topics such as college-going culture specifics and support for students and families in academic preparation, college application and locating financial aid for post-secondary education and training.
6. Collaborate with community colleges in the implementation of any available grant funding.
7. Work with staff at institutes of higher education to create and disseminate information for middle school and high school communities to build a college and career culture in schools.
8. Develop resources and training to promote college and career readiness.
9. Provide increased accountability by capturing and analyzing data to track student success and participation in the college-going culture, while increasing access to A-G college admission requirements and counseling to students and families.
10. Collaborate, communicate, train and support counselors with implementation of the college and career readiness focus and initiatives.
11. Supervise and apply for career educational programs related to grant funding for students (i.e. K-12 SWP, CTEIG).
12. Oversee K-12 CTE Pathway development.
13. Support Principals with implementation of PLTW programs and mastery-based learning programs.
14. Maintain the District A-G course lists on the UC Doorways site.

15. Oversee and maintain clearinghouse data for Vista alumni.
16. Organize, facilitate and/or attend a variety of meetings; represent the district in collaborative/partnerships/task forces with a variety of stakeholders; i.e. institutions of higher education, business/industry partners and human services agencies.
17. Write or assist in writing grants and applications for funding of assigned programs and support services.
18. Support the development of a district-wide and local pathways roadmap that provides adult learners' access to support from High School Completion and General Education through Career Technical Education to local workforce opportunities.
19. Support recruitment support to schools to highlight college and career-related programs.
20. Perform other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

- Valid California teaching credential or pupil personnel services credential.
- Valid California administrative credential.
- Bachelor's degree and five years of experience in program development or similar area.
- Master's degree preferred.
- Site based leadership experience preferred.
- Need to pass a TB test and background check at time of offer.
- Knowledge of philosophy and curriculum of school-to-career programs, current applicable laws, codes, regulations, policies and objectives.
- Knowledge of curriculum frameworks, interpersonal skills using tact, patience and courtesy, operation of a computer to enter and analyze data, maintain records and generate reports.
- Oral and written communication skills and the ability to effectively communicate with all college and career readiness stakeholder groups.
- Knowledge of the master scheduling process as it relates to equity.
- Ability to design efficient practices to ensure clearly articulated pathways to encourage and support college bound students.
- Ability to coordinate curriculum in accordance with District-wide articulation that engages teachers, administrators and partners to articulate students to post-secondary and workforce opportunities.
- Ability to develop and support long-term impactful partnerships.

DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND PUPIL SERVICES

JOB DESCRIPTION: To coordinate services provided to students district-wide for all school-aged children in grades kindergarten through 12. Programs include special education programs, health services, counseling services, school psychological services, school social work services, homeless and migrant student services, gifted education services.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Plans for, directs, and supports professional and non- professional staff by developing, coordinating and ensuring implementation of effective system-wide special education programs, health services,

counseling services, school psychological services, school social work services, homeless and migrant student services, gifted education services.

- In conjunction with building principals and department members, evaluates programs and supervises the revisions of pupil services programs and services to meet the ongoing needs of the District.
- Monitors and ensures the district's compliance with students' special education rights. Stays up-to-date with and ensures changes are communicated regarding federal and state special education laws, regulations, standards, guidance, forms and related matters.
- Directs and supervises the placement of students with identified exceptionalities upon request or referral; determines the appropriate organization of special education services throughout the District annually and makes recommendations for professional and nonprofessional special education staff assignments.
- Supervises the coordination with early intervention service providers, parents, and District personnel to ensure all students transitioning to school-age receive appropriate supports and services as well as assists in providing transitional services for students completing special education programs.
- Determines staff needs; participates in the recruitment, screening, selection, assignments, and supervision of the special education staff; assists building principals in the evaluation of special education staff by providing, when appropriate, documentation of IEPs; and supervises pertinent in-service training.
- Participates in and contributes to District-level curricular and administrative meetings; provides periodic updates legal issues in special education to appropriate administrative and instructional staff; facilitates staff participation in psychiatric staffing and treatment plan (mental health) meetings; works with department chairpersons to conduct meetings designed to promote efficient functioning of special education services; and serves as a member of the administrative team.
- Monitors new or amended legislation, regulations, and guidelines related to pupil services.
- Participates in and contributes to District-level curricular and administrative meetings; provides periodic updates legal issues in pupil services to appropriate administrative and instructional staff; works with principals to conduct meetings designed to promote efficient functioning of special education services; and serves as a member of the administrative team.

Desired Characteristics

- Instructional Expertise
- Vision and Strategy Implementation
- High Expectations
- Personal Leadership
- Systems Thinking
- Relationship Building & Networking

Qualifications

- Clear California Special Education teaching credential to teach children with moderate to severe and/or mild to moderate disabilities; or Related Service Provider License.
- 5+ years of successful special education experience;

- Leadership experience, including instructional coaching and leading team meetings, is preferred;
- Master's Degree with emphasis on specialized training in special education curriculum and instruction or related field is preferred
- Knowledge of special education laws and regulations; general education curriculum; alternative dispute methods and techniques; disabilities and appropriate curriculum; behavior management systems;
- Demonstrated success in teaching students from educationally underserved areas;
- Valid CA Administrative Credential or comparable out of state, transferable credential
- Bilingual, English/Spanish is highly desirable
- Experience with Kagan Cooperative Structures, Way of Council and Workshop Model a plus
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and writing skills

Database Administrator (Classified)

The Database Administrator reports to the Superintendent. The Database Administrator's primary responsibility is the strategic development, implementation, and management of all aspects of the charter school's data and informational systems. The Database Administrator is passionate about the mission and commitments of VCPS and exhibits this through his/her execution of all their responsibilities and relations with all stakeholders. The Database Administrator fosters a collaborative and stimulating community culture for a diverse group of stakeholders, including administration, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:

- Assist in the installation and testing and operational maintenance of the student information system for the purpose of ensuring expected results. This includes the management of CALPADS: SSID, Students Enrollments and information, Courses, Staff, Reports, Certifications
- Communicate with district personnel, outside software vendors and contractors for the purpose of serving as a main point of contact for obtaining information, resolving problems and ensuring accurate management of student demographic data for the completion and submission of various mandated reports and information requests.
- Coordinate with district staff and departments for the purpose of ensuring the integrity and accuracy of student demographic data.
- Work with administration to meet testing and assessment compliance requirements for the purpose of ensuring appropriate and safe testing protocols.
- Work with administration to meet master schedule requirements for the purpose of ensuring appropriate student scheduling.
- Work with office staff to provide an efficient and accurate enrollment process for incoming and outgoing students.
- Develop a variety of user support materials for the purpose of providing unified protocols.
- Maintain and manage user security for student demographic data to ensure security and data integrity.

- Maintain student attendance data collection in coordination with the District to ensure compliance with state attendance regulations.
- Manage student information system database (e.g. integrate data systems, update system design, complete dataset extraction, etc.) to achieve optimal use of student data and maintaining data integrity.
- Manage user accounts and access privileges for the student information system for the purpose of establishing security of data.
- Research trends, products, equipment, etc. in order to recommend procedures and/or purchases.
- Remain current in state and federal student data reporting requirements and district testing and assessment data requirements to ensure accurate and compliant data submission.
- Work with administration to ensure proper and efficient system usage and system changes.
- Works with IT staff on system integrity and maintenance functions to ensure student data security and access.
- Performs other related duties as assigned to ensure the efficient and effective functioning of optimal learning conditions.

Qualifications:

- B.A./B.S. degree preferred
- Must have knowledge in the use of a copier and fax machine
- Ability to communicate effectively (verbal and written)
- Must be computer literate and have extensive experience with various information systems specific to the school site.
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred
- Must have excellent organizational skills and a positive attitude

IT Coordinator (Classified)

The IT Coordinator is responsible for supervising school site IT coordinators and school site IT operations. Ensure stability of site networks and educational software – hosted licensed applications and on-site purchased applications as well as ensuring all IT equipment is in excellent working condition. Address various site issues as directed by School Site Principals/Superintendent and assist educational staff as needed to implement and administer software programs.

Responsibilities:

- Supervise School Site IT Coordinators in their job of supporting site IT operations
- Ensure all site Principal and educational staff issues are addressed
- Ensures consistency and stability of all working IT services at school sites and district office
- Work with community partners to create school site collaborations and partnerships
- Assist school site coordinators in creating parent and student classes, clubs, field trips, and educational opportunities
- Assist in district website updates
- Co-chair VCPs Technology Committee and assist with strategic planning

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree preferred
- Working knowledge of Microsoft Windows operating system
- Working knowledge of MS Office products and applications as applies to education
- Working knowledge of Google domain and all related applications
- Knowledge of internal network operations & Microsoft Windows Server Operating system
- Classroom and instructional experience beneficial
- Comfortable in educational environment
- Clear communications ability to both classified and certificated staff
- Supervisory experience preferred
- Google and Microsoft certifications beneficial

Principal (Certificated)

The Principal reports to the Superintendent and his/her primary responsibility is the strategic development, implementation, and management of all aspects of the Charter Schools' performance and operations. The Principal is passionate about the mission and commitments of VCPS and exhibits this through his/her leadership and execution of school culture, staff development, student rigor, and operational responsibilities. The Principal fosters a collaborative and stimulating community culture for a diverse group of stakeholders, including students, parents, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:*Staff Leadership & Development*

The Principal implements, motivates, leads, and mentors teachers to strengthen instructional practices and increase content expertise, performance, and rigor.

The Principal provides teachers professional and instructional support. The Principal:

- Reviews instructional documents
- Observes and provide feedback for classroom observations
- Designs and review professional growth plan goals
- Facilitates weekly professional development/staff meetings.

Academic Rigor

The Principal:

- Develops and implements a plan that ensures high levels of student achievement for all students and includes: benchmarks, assessments, classroom data, parent and student feedback.
- Develops and implement a plan to address students who are struggling.
- Collaborates with others to use appropriate data to establish rigorous, concrete goals in the context of student achievement and instructional programs.
- Provides individual student support by designing and evaluating student intervention plans, attending IEP's, and designing a process for measuring and monitoring individual

student growth.

School Culture

The Principal:

- Works to build and maintain a strong, positive, results-oriented school culture where teachers believe and reflect in action that all students can achieve.
- Leads via assessing and developing processes for improving the VLGA school climate and culture.
- Develops a plan based on the vision of the desired culture of VLGA that fosters strong relationships and meets the needs of all stakeholders (students, parents, and teachers) as it pertains to the VLGA culture.
- Plans, facilitates, and attends school functions such as parent meetings, open house, parent teacher conferences, sporting events, fundraisers, etc.

Qualifications:

- 5 years' teaching experience
- Proven record of improving urban schools by increasing student achievement
- A current California teaching credential. Master's degree, and an Administrative credential are desired
- Previous leadership experience (department chair, assistant principal, dean, etc.).
- Proven leadership and team building skills.
- Excellent interpersonal communication and writing skills.

Assistant Principal (Certificated)

The Assistant Principal reports to the Principal and Superintendent. His/her primary responsibility is to aid the Principal in the strategic development, implementation, and management of all aspects of the Charter School's performance and operations. The Assistant Principal is passionate about the mission and commitments of VCPS and exhibits this through his/her leadership and execution of school culture, staff development, student rigor, and operational responsibilities. The Assistant Principal helps foster a collaborative and stimulating community culture for a diverse group of stakeholders, including students, parents, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:

- Implement, motivate, lead and mentor teachers to better instructional practices and increase content expertise to improve student performance and rigorous expectations.
- Provide teachers professional and instructional support through reviewing instructional documents, observing and providing feedback for classroom observations, designing and reviewing professional growth plan goals and facilitate weekly PD/staff meetings.
- Implement a plan that ensures student achievement, which is supported by evidence through assessments such as benchmarks, classroom data, parent and student feedback and a plan to address students who are struggling.
- Collaborate with others to use appropriate data to establish rigorous, concrete goals for student achievement.

- Provide individual student support by designing and evaluating student intervention plans, attending IEP's and designing a process for measuring and monitoring individual student growth.
- Work to build and maintain a strong, positive, results- oriented school culture where teachers believe and promote that all students can achieve by providing leadership for assessing and developing processes for improving climate and culture.
- Develop a plan that fosters the relationships and ensure all stakeholders (students, parents, and teachers) are addressed based on the clear vision of the desired culture for the school.
- Plan, facilitate and attend school functions such as parent meetings, open house, parent teacher conferences, sporting events, fundraisers, etc.

Qualifications:

- 5 years' teaching experience with a history of improving urban schools, increasing student achievement and demonstrating a passion for education reform.
- Must have a current California credential.
- Master's degree & an Administrative credential preferred
- Previous leadership experience (e.g., department chair, assistant principal, dean).
- Proven leadership and team building skills.
- Detail-oriented, multi-tasking and problem-solving skills.

School Psychologist (Certificated)

The School Psychologist reports to the Principal and provides psychological services to general education students and students with disabilities; develops individual case studies of students to determine eligibility for special programs; assists in the development of behavior support plans and functional behavior assessments; consults with school personnel, parents, and others concerned with the progress of students; and provides both individual and group counseling as well as case management for counseling services. The School Psychologist integrates the educational program to fit a fully inclusive special education program.

Responsibilities:

- Conduct psychological assessments and develop case studies of individual students to determine educational needs, learning characteristics, and social behavior relevant to educational placement and instructional planning.
- Interpret the findings of individual case studies to the IEP team.
- Participate in the process required by federal, state, and local regulations for the identification, placement, and review/re-evaluation of students with special needs.
- Assist in developing a written individual educational plan for students who are determined eligible for special education placement and/or service; assist in developing recommendations regarding eligibility and program placement.
- Assist in developing behavioral objectives for individual students and special class groups; suggest implementation strategies as appropriate; confer with teachers and parents regarding strategies for the solution or amelioration of individual learning or adjustment problems of students.

- Counsel students individually and in groups to assist them in educational achievement and personal or social adjustment. Assist with implementing school-wide social emotional programs (Way of Council).
- Assist with the organization of, and serve as a leader in, staff development activities in the field of psychological services.
- Participate in Student Study Team meetings and the MTSS process as needed.
- Other duties as assigned

Qualifications:

- An earned Bachelor's degree from an accredited university, and
- An earned Master's degree in School Psychology from a regionally accredited university, OR
- Current enrollment in a School Psychology Master's degree program in a regionally accredited university with Internship eligibility.
- One of the following California credentials or combination of credentials authorizing K-12 service must be in force and on file:
 - o General Pupil Personnel Services Credential authorizing service as a school psychologist;
 - o Service Credential with a specialization in pupil personnel services designating service as a school psychologist;
- Knowledge of the growth and development of youth and adolescents, learning theory, and mental health concepts.
- Sensitivity to, and understanding of, the unique differences and needs of disabled students and their parents.
- Knowledge of uses and limitations of standardized individual and group tests, and semi-projective devices.
- Ability to assume leadership in teacher/staff development activities.
- Understanding of the relationship between the total education program as well as counseling and psychological services.
- Facility in oral and written communication.
- Appropriate manner including poise, tact, good judgment, and ability to work effectively with VCPS personnel, community representatives, and students.

College and Career Counselor

The College and Career Counselor oversees the college office for the Charter School and leads all work to foster a strong college-going culture across all grade levels and all facets of the Charter School.

Leadership of Program

Build and operate best-in-class systems and protocols for various facets of the School's college awareness/application/enrollment, dual enrollment and pathways programs:

- Leveraging research-proven best practices for college access work nationally, develop and implement a comprehensive college counseling and financial aid program for the

school to ensure that 100% of VLGA's students match at selective or highly selective colleges and/or universities

- Develop and support partnerships with college and university partners including dual enrollment/pathways relationships and student support for success in enrolling in and completing college courses while still enrolled at VLGA
- Oversee ongoing tracking and communication with students and their parents/guardians of graduation requirements and progress towards completion, and credit recovery options;
- Support school-wide culture initiatives (lead assemblies, discipline meetings, academic intervention meetings, etc.)
- Monitor scholar achievement and culture data and develop and implement a data-driven process for setting grade level and whole-school culture and achievement goals
- Design, oversee, and implement the school's alumni support initiatives to track and support high levels of college persistence and graduation among all VGMA alumni

Qualifications

- At least 2 years of college/career counseling experience with a track record of success supporting first generation students' admission to selective and highly selective colleges and universities
- Demonstrated passion for and commitment to VLGA's mission and educational model
- Comfort level with helping families navigate college financial aid
- Willingness to work autonomously, collaboratively, and/or under as needed
- Acute attention to detail coupled with the ability to think and act strategically
- Flexible and able to multi-task; can work within an ambiguous, fast-moving environment, while also driving toward clarity and solutions
- Demonstrated resourcefulness in setting priorities and guiding investment in people and systems
- Personal qualities of maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor, and a "roll-up-my-sleeves attitude"
- Bachelor's degree
- Strong written and oral Spanish language skills preferred

Classroom Teachers (Certificated)

The teacher reports to the site administrator and is responsible for the development and performance of the courses they instruct. The teacher fosters a collaborative and stimulating classroom environment for a diverse group of students, as well as foster a strong collaboration between parents, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:

- Foster a safe and nurturing learning environment
- Organize classroom systems/procedures and manage student behavior to ensure that all students are fully engaged in learning
- Establish an environment where students are excited about learning
- Develop lesson plans according to the CA CCSS and CA State Content Standards

- Build strong relationships with students and parents
- Identify students' areas for improvement and be able to work with students, families, and internal resources to suggest options for improvement
- Provide continual assessment of student progress, maintain student records, and complete assigned paperwork in provided timeframes
- Collaborate with the Resource Specialist to meet the needs of all students
- Attend and implement professional development training throughout and beyond the school year
- Demonstrate support and knowledge of school's goals and mission
- Attend and participate in school-based meetings and activities

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university
- Master's degree in subject matter field or Education (strongly preferred)
- Must possess, or be in the process of completing, a current California teaching credential

Skills:

- Solid knowledge of subject matter, including CA CCSS, CA State Content Standards and subject-specific frameworks and assessments
- Ability to analyze qualitative and quantitative student data
- Ability to communicate effectively (verbal and written)
- Must be computer literate

Educational Specialist

The Educational Specialist reports to the site administrator and is responsible for the development and performance of the students they serve by upholding and abiding by the special educational laws and regulations in the state of California. The Educational Specialist aides in fostering a collaborative and stimulating classroom environment for a diverse group of students, as well as foster a strong collaboration between parents, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:

- Maintain SWD program that is in place including calendar of meetings, staff trainings, deadlines and program needs
- Organize and maintain service provider services, services for all students identified or in the process of being identified; Maintains compliance to records, documenting, SWD timelines and program deadlines
- Function as the case manager for all students in process of being established as a Special Education Student and current Special Education Students
- Participate in the SST Processes by developing and maintaining organization of services to pupils
- Provide information to staff and parents to facilitate student success with their specific needs
- Utilize strong communication and multitasking skills; build relationships; problem solve effectively

- Coordinate special education services with the regular school programs for Students with Disabilities enrolled in the resource program.
- Provide or coordinate classroom supports that include (but are not limited to): behavior support, basic academic skills, organization and study skills, social skills, use of cognitive strategies and fostering a safe and nurturing learning environment
- Demonstrate strong organization and management in
 - Preparing for all student and staff meetings related to student services or professional development
 - Student Service minutes, change of services, change of placement, ESY, etc.
 - Student assessment for annual, triannual, or other student assessment designated by the IEP team
 - All SWD timelines as aligned to FAPE or IDEA
- Participate as a collaborative member of the faculty and in ongoing staff development and trainings

Qualifications:

- Candidate must possess a current California credential in Special Education appropriate to program needs
- Solid knowledge of State and Federal guidelines for Special Education
- Bachelor's degree; Master's degree is preferred
- Must be flexible and team-oriented
- Excellent written and communication skills
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred

Teacher's Aide (TA)

The Teacher's Aide reports to an administrator and is responsible for assisting in the development and performance of the classes they assist in. The TA foster a collaborative and stimulating classroom environment for a diverse group of students, as well as foster a strong collaboration between parents, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:

- Foster a safe and nurturing learning environment
- Assist the teacher in maintaining classroom systems/procedures and manage student behavior to ensure all students are fully engaged in learning
- Support differentiation or other instructional strategies implemented to ensure that needs of all learners are met
- Establish an environment where students are excited about learning
- Support teachers with data tracking and progress monitoring
- Build strong relationships with students and parents and teachers
- Demonstrate support and knowledge of school's goals and mission
- Attend and participate in school-based meetings and activities
- Develop or assist in the development of lesson plans according to the CA CCSS and CA State Content Standards

- Identify student areas for improvement and be able to work with the student and family and internal resources to suggest options for improvement
- Provide continual assessment of student progress, maintain student records and complete assigned paperwork in provided timeframes.
- Collaborate with the Educational Specialist and other staff to meet the needs of all students
- Attend and implement professional development training throughout and beyond the school year
- Demonstrate support and knowledge of school's goals and mission
- Participate, attend and plan field trips
- Participate in school events during, before and after school
- Attend and participate in school-based meetings and activities

Qualifications:

- Prior experience working with students in a learning environment
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred
- Intermediate proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, and Outlook
- Must be flexible, positive, detail-oriented, a team player, patient and willing to learn.
- Must be able to work in a fast-paced work environment with flexibility and dedication

Culture and Community Coordinator

The Culture and Community Coordinator's primary responsibility is to support the School Community through community outreach, parent engagement and school culture development.

Responsibilities:

School Culture is the foundation of academic and social success. The Parent and Community Coordinator will support with the development and management of:

- School Safety Plan
- Supervision staff schedules, responsibilities, shift assignments
- Professional Development of Supervision Staff
- Support with implementation of school-wide signature practice: Way of Council and Restorative Conferences
- Support with implementation of schoolwide behavior policy
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention
- Participate in School Advisory Council/Committees

A School Community cannot be successful in isolation. The Parent and Community Coordinator will ensure community outreach:

- Sports program development and participation
- Collaboration with community partners
- Alumni engagement and outreach

Establish meaningful communication between the school and the community to ensure academic achievement of all students through:

- Parent workshops
- Parent engagement
- School-to-Parent Communication
- Family Councils
- Active Recruitment

Qualifications:

- Be prepared to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the school, surrounding community and target client populations
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Active listening skills
- Interpersonal and human relation skills and the ability to develop positive working relationships with target demographic and community partners
- MS Word, Google Suite, Electronic Communication

Office Manager

The Office Manager reports to the Site Administrator. The Office Manager's primary responsibility is the aide and support of all functions of the charter school site with direction given by the site administrator. The Office Manager is passionate about the mission and commitments of VCPS and exhibits this through his/her execution of all their responsibilities and relations with all stakeholders. The Office Manager fosters a collaborative and stimulating community culture for a diverse group of stakeholders, including administration, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:

- Greet and assist parents, students, and visitors to the school in a friendly and professional manner.
- Answer the phone in a professional and courteous manner.
- Coordinate substitute teacher coverage as needed and in communication with teachers.
- Supervise and delegate duties to Office Assistants.
- Manage quotes and relationships with vendors.
- Maintain accurate records of all distributed school assets such as keys, technology or other equipment.
- Ensure accurate financial records as needed including: Credit Card Logs, Purchase Orders, Teacher Check Requests and Paid Time Off Forms.
- Sort through mail and distribute accordingly.
- Work with site administrators and teachers regarding any projects or special requests.
- Oversee parent correspondence and mailings.
- Maintain, store and secure all student files ensuring confidentiality.
- Manage student meal applications.
- Track student attendance and tardies using SIS (PowerSchool).

Qualifications:

- B.A./B.S. degree preferred

- Must have 3-5 years of Management experience
- Must be proficient in operating a copy machine and fax machine
- Ability to communicate effectively (verbal and written)
- Must be computer literate and have demonstrated proficiency with: MS Office, Word & Excel
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred
- Must have excellent management and organizational skills and a positive attitude

Office Clerk (Classified)

The Office Clerk reports to the Office Manager. The Office Clerk's primary responsibility is the aide and support of all functions of the charter school Office Manager in conjunction with the needs and directions given by the site administrator. The Office Clerk is passionate about the mission and commitments of VCPS and exhibits this through his/her execution of all their responsibilities and relations with all stakeholders. The Office Clerk fosters a collaborative and stimulating community culture for a diverse group of stakeholders, including administration, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:

- Provide excellent customer service
- Greet and assist staff, parents, students, and visitors to the school in a friendly and professional manner.
- Answer phones using a professional and courteous manner.
- Route calls appropriately.
- Take messages and distribute in a timely manner.
- Reply to general information requests with the accurate information
- Assist with proper documentation and accuracy of attendance
- Fax and make copies
- Assist with typing and composing correspondence and letters
- Responsible for making phone calls to parents.
- Assist with collecting the lunch count.
- Assist with the preparation of parent meetings.
- Translate for teachers, parents and counselors.
- Make student files.
- Organize cumulative student files.
- Other duties as assignment by site administrator

Qualifications:

- BA/BS degree preferred
- Prior experience working with students in a learning environment
- Strong Math skills is strongly preferred
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred
- Intermediate proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, and Outlook
- Must be flexible, positive, detail-oriented, team player patient and willing to learn.
- Must be able to work in a fast-paced work environment with flexibility and dedication

Plant Manager (Classified)

The Plant Manager reports to the Site Administrator. The Plant Manager is responsible for ensuring that the facility is well maintained and running appropriately to maintenance standards. The Plant Manager helps maintain a school environment and culture by being able to communicate and work with a diverse group of students, parents, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:

- Maintaining the quality of school facilities.
- Supervise and evaluate all non-instructional classified staff at the site responsible for maintaining the quality of school facilities.
- Manage all school scheduling, special events, cafeteria, maintenance, playgrounds and cleaning.
- Manage community use of school site.
- Assist in the school safety plan: disaster preparation, fire drills, student, staff and public safety, and student health.
- Maintain equipment, textbook and supply inventories.
- Coordinate with administration to maintain a positive, safe learning environment for students.
- Assist with school public relations and communications plan: promote the school and district through positive relations with community, businesses, parents and students.
- Perform other duties as assigned.
- Maintain regular attendance.
- Coordinate and work with Site Administrator (s) and Office Assistant/Manager for orders for campus facilities and maintenance
- Maintain on-going communication with community partners/ leaseholders where shared occupancy space is occurring
- Coordinate and communicate with after school groups or outside vendors who use the school
- Must understand and follow practices, policies and procedures regarding:
 - o Laws, rules and regulations related to assigned activities.
 - o District operations policies, procedures and objectives
 - o Health and safety regulations.

Qualifications:

- Must have prior experience working with students in a learning environment
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred
- Intermediate proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, and Outlook
- Must be flexible, positive, detail-oriented, a team player, patient and willing to learn.
- Assist in maintaining standards of school safety and civility and ensuring the observance of rules and procedures by students and staff on a school campus at the direction of the school administrator.

Custodian (Classified)

The custodian reports to the Plant Manager and/or Site Administrator. Custodians are responsible for ensuring that the facility is well maintained and running appropriately to maintenance standards. Custodians help maintain a school environment and culture by being able to communicate and work with a diverse group of students, parents, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:

- Maintain the quality of school facilities.
- Assist Plant Manager with all school scheduling, special events, cafeteria, maintenance, playgrounds and cleaning.
- Assist in equipment maintenance and textbook and supply inventories.
- Coordinate with administration to assist in maintaining a positive, safe learning environment for students.
- Perform other duties as assigned.
- Maintain regular attendance.
- Maintain ongoing communication with community partners/ leaseholders where shared occupancy space is occurring
- Assist with the coordination and communication with after school groups or outside vendors who use the school
- Must understand and follow practices, policies and procedures regarding:
 - o Laws, rules and regulations related to assigned activities.
 - o District operations policies, procedures and objectives
 - o Health and safety regulations.

Qualifications:

- Must have prior experience working with students in a learning environment
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred
- Intermediate proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, and Outlook
- Must be flexible, positive, detail-oriented, team player patient and willing to learn.
- Assists in maintaining standards of school safety and civility and ensuring the observance of rules and procedures by students and staff on a school campus at the direction of the school administrator.

Supervision Aide (Classified)

The Supervision Aide reports to the Site Administrator or his/her designee and is responsible for ensuring the observance of the rules and procedures by students and others on a school campus. The Supervision Aide fosters a collaborative and stimulating school environment for a diverse group of students, as well as foster a strong collaboration between parents, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:

- Supervise non-classroom areas: in hallways, indoor assembly areas, outdoor eating areas, restrooms, playground and other areas as assigned
- Enforce Charter School rules and expectations
- Report problems of serious nature, including recurring behavioral problems and safety hazards, to site administrators
- Collaborate with school staff to alleviate behavioral problems occurring during supervision periods
- Assume responsibilities in inclement weather as assigned by site administrators
- Conduct campus safety checks during breaks, lunch, before and after school
- Maintain constant movement and active supervision throughout campus
- Communicate to school administrators regarding causes and effects of campus and community tension.
- May assist in record-keeping regarding student discipline (ex: BIFs, 30 Day Contracts, Class Dojo Reports, PowerSchool Logs).
- Provide supervision personnel in inclement weather as assigned by site administrators
- May direct students and others and take action, as necessary, to prevent injury to persons or damage to property.
- May assist a certificated employee in supervising students during field trips and special events.
- May deliver, set up, lay out, or collect equipment and other materials.
- May assist school administrators in contacting parents regarding students with behavioral problems and in discussing campus security with parent and community groups.
- May work with groups authorized to be on the campus before and after school and keep the campus free of unauthorized persons.

Qualifications:

- Prior experience working with students in a learning environment is preferred
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred
- Must be flexible, positive, detail-oriented, a team player, patient and willing to learn in a fast-paced environment
- Understand and follow oral and written directions

Other Certificated Staff

A list of day-to-day and qualified substitutes are established and maintained.

ELEMENT 6 – HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

“The procedures that the charter school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall require all of the following:

(i) That each employee of the charter school furnish it with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237

(ii) The development of a school safety plan, which shall include the safety topics listed in subparagraphs (A) to (J), inclusive, of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 32282.

(iii) That the school safety plan be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year by the charter school.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(F).)

HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local requirements related to school and student health, safety, and emergency preparedness.

If Charter School occupies and/or operates on a District facility, Charter School shall comply with all District health, safety, and emergency procedures and requirements applicable to District facilities and related operations, and shall be subject to inspection by the District’s Facilities Services Division, Office of Environmental Health and Safety, and other District offices in the same manner as other District campuses.

Charter School shall adopt, implement, and maintain at all times a current, comprehensive, and site-specific Health, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Plan (“Plan”), which must include but is not limited to provisions for building and site emergency evacuation, the acquisition and maintenance of adequate onsite emergency supplies. The Plan must include Charter School’s requirements and procedures for protecting student health and safety during off-campus school-sponsored activities, including but not limited to field trips and transportation. Charter School shall ensure that all staff members receive annual training on Charter School’s health, safety, and emergency procedures, including but not limited to training on bloodborne pathogens, and shall maintain a calendar for, and conduct, emergency response drills for students and staff.

Charter School shall periodically review, and update and/or modify as necessary, its Health, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Plan, and keep it readily available for on-site use. Charter School shall provide a copy of the Health, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Plan for review upon District request.

Comprehensive School Safety Plan

The Charter School shall adopt a Comprehensive School Safety Plan, to be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year, which shall include, but not be limited to: (1) an assessment of the current status of school crime committed on Charter School facilities and at Charter School-related functions; and (2) identifying appropriate strategies and programs that will provide or maintain a high level of school safety and address the Charter School’s procedures for complying with applicable laws related to school safety, which shall include the development of all of the following pursuant to Education Code section 32282(a)(2)(A)-(J):

- Child abuse reporting procedures

- Routine and emergency disaster procedures
- Policies for students who committed an act under Section 48915 and other Charter School-designated serious acts leading to suspension, expulsion, or mandatory expulsion recommendations
- Procedures to notify teachers of dangerous students pursuant to Education Code section 49079
- A discrimination and harassment policy consistent with Education Code section 200
- Provisions of any schoolwide dress code that prohibits students from wearing “gang-related apparel” if applicable
- Procedures for safe ingress and egress of pupils, parents, and employees to and from the Charter School
- A safe and orderly environment conducive to learning at the Charter School
- The rules and procedures on Charter School discipline
- Procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents, including procedures related to individuals with guns on Charter School campus(es) and at school-related functions.

As required by Education Code sections 32280, 32281, 32282, 32288, 47605, and 47605.6, the Charter School shall develop its comprehensive school safety plan pursuant to the requirements of the relevant Education Code and shall review and update the plan annually by March 1.

Pursuant to the requirements of Ed. Code section 49390, the school safety plan shall include content developed by the California Department of Education, on or by July 1, 2023, that includes, at minimum:

- Parent/guardian annual notice regarding California’s firearms child access prevention laws and laws relating to the safe storage of firearms;
- Require school officials whose duties involve regular contact with pupils in grades 6 to 12, and who is alerted to or observes any firearm threat or perceived threat, to immediately report the threat or perceived threat to law enforcement;
- Law enforcement must immediately conduct an investigation and threat assessment, including a review of the firearm registry of the Department of Justice and, if justified by a reasonable suspicion that it would produce evidence related to the threat or perceived threat, a schoolsite search.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT MANDATED REPORTER TRAINING

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

Medication in School

The Charter School will adhere to Education Code section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school. Charter School shall stock and maintain the required number and type of

emergency epinephrine auto-injectors onsite and provide training to employee volunteers in the storage and use of the epinephrine auto-injector as required by Education Code section 49414 and section 4119.2 of the Business and Professions Code, as they may be amended from time to time.

ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

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

If the Charter School offers an interscholastic athletic program, it shall develop and post a written emergency action plan that describes procedures to be followed in the event of sudden cardiac arrest and other medical emergencies, acquire and regularly test and maintain at least one automated external defibrillator (AED) for the Charter School, and make the AED available at on-campus athletic activities or events according to the requirements of Education Code sections 35179.4 and 35179.6.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

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

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CLEARANCES AND FINGERPRINTING

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

Charter School shall maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that (1) Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for employment all employees prior to employment; (2) Charter School has obtained certification from each of its contracting entities/independent contractors that the entity/contractor has conducted required criminal background clearances for its employees prior to provision of school site services and/or any contact with students, and has requested subsequent arrest notification service; and (3) Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for service all volunteers not directly supervised by staff and who may have contact with students. Charter School shall also ensure that it requests and receives subsequent arrest notifications from the California Department of Justice for all employees and volunteers not directly supervised by staff. Upon request, Charter School shall provide a copy of Department of Justice confirmation of Custodian of Records status for each Custodian of Records. Charter School, including its administrators and officers, shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 44030.5.

All teachers in Charter School shall obtain a certificate of clearance and satisfy the requirements for professional fitness pursuant to Education Code sections 44339, 44340, and 44341.

IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

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

Charter School shall comply with all federal and state legal requirements related to student immunization, health examination, and health screening, including but not limited to screening for vision, hearing, and scoliosis pursuant to Education Code section 49450 et seq, to the same extent as would be required if the students were attending a non-charter public school. Charter School shall maintain student immunization, health examination, and health screening records on file.

SAFE PLACE TO LEARN ACT

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

SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

If Charter School serves students in any grades Transitional Kindergarten/Kindergarten through 12, Charter School shall comply with the requirements of AB 2246 (2016) and AB 1767, codified in Education Code section 215, including but not limited to the requirement that the school's pupil suicide prevention policy shall be developed in consultation with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts and adopted at a regular public hearing. The Charter School shall review, at a minimum every fifth year, its policy on pupil suicide prevention and, if necessary, update its policy. Charter School shall provide the District with a copy of its pupil suicide prevention policy for review upon request.

The policy will be developed in consultation with school and community stakeholders, the county mental health plan, school-employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts and, at a minimum, address procedures relating to suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention.

The policy for pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 6 will be age appropriate and delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of young pupils.

The policy for pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 6 is written to ensure proper coordination and consultation with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a pupil who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary.

The policy will be written to ensure that a school employee acts only within the authorization and scope of the employee's credential or license. Nothing in the policy shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging a school employee to diagnose or treat mental illness unless the employee is specifically licensed and employed to do so. The policy shall be modeled after the CDE's model policy.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION RESOURCES

If the Charter School serves students in any grades 6-12, it shall identify and implement the most appropriate methods of informing parents/guardians of human trafficking prevention resources as required by Education Code section 49381.

FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS

If the Charter School maintains any combination of classes in grades 6-12 that meets the 40% pupil poverty threshold required to operate a schoolwide program pursuant to Section 6314(a)(1)(A) of Title 20 of the United States Code, then it shall stock at least 50% of its restrooms with feminine hygiene products at all times, and shall not charge students for these products, as required by Education Code section 35292.6.

Pursuant to the Menstrual Equity for All Act of 2021, as codified in Ed. Code section 35292.6 and 66027.7, the charter school, if it serves grades 6 to 12, shall stock the school's restrooms with an adequate supply of free menstrual products in all women's restrooms and all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men's restroom, at all times, and post a designated notice on or before the start of each school year in these restrooms in a "conspicuous" location.

The Charter School shall not charge for any menstrual products provided to pupils, including, but not limited to, "menstrual products" as that term is defined in Ed. Code §35292.6(dc).

NUTRITIONALLY ADEQUATE FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEAL

The Charter School shall provide each needy student, as defined in Education Code section 49552, with one nutritionally adequate free or reduced-price meal, as defined in Education Code section 49553(a), during each school day.

CALIFORNIA HEALTHY YOUTH ACT

The Charter School shall teach sexual health education and human immunodeficiency virus ("HIV") prevention education to students in grades 7-12, at least once in middle school and at least once in high school, pursuant to the California Healthy Youth Act. (Ed. Code § 51930, et seq.)

BULLYING PREVENTION

Charter School shall adopt procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying, and shall annually make available the online training module developed by the California

Department of Education pursuant to Education Code section 32283.5(a) to certificated school site employees and all other school site employees who have regular interaction with pupils.

LGBTQ RESOURCES TRAINING

Charter School recognizes that it is encouraged to use school site and community resources developed by the State Department of Education for the support of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) pupils to provide training at least once every 2 years to teachers and other certificated employees at each Charter School site that serves pupils in grades 7 to 12, to increase support for LGBTQ pupils and thereby improve overall school climate. (Ed. Code § 218.)

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PLAN

The Charter School shall develop and maintain a transportation safety plan that includes procedures to ensure that a student is not left unattended on a school bus, student activity bus, youth bus, or child care motor vehicle and procedures and standards for designating an adult chaperone, other than the driver, to accompany students on a school activity bus. In addition, the Charter School shall ensure that each school bus, student activity bus, youth bus, or child care motor vehicle is equipped with a child safety alert system that requires the driver to either manually contact or scan the device, thereby prompting the driver to inspect the entirety of the interior of the vehicle before exiting, unless the student activity bus is exempted by law. (Ed. Code § 39831.3; Veh. Code § 28160.)

SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

The health and safety of VLGA staff and students is the highest priority for the Charter School.

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 806, VLGA shall develop its comprehensive school safety plan pursuant to the requirements of AB 806 and the relevant Education Code requirements and shall review and update the plan annually by March 1.

PROCEDURES FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS

All employees of VLGA, all volunteers who will be performing services that are not under the direct supervision of a credentialed VLGA employee, and any onsite independent contractors or vendors having unsupervised contact with students, will be required to submit to criminal background checks and fingerprinting in accordance with Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1. All non-credentialed applicants for employment must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Charter School shall not hire any person, in either a certificated or classified position, who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony except as otherwise provided by law, pursuant to Education Code Sections 44830.1 and 45122.1. Volunteers who will be outside the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering on campus. The Superintendent of VCPS shall monitor compliance with

this policy (the Board President shall monitor fingerprinting and background clearance of the Superintendent) and make quarterly reports to the Board. VLGA will maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that the school has performed criminal background checks for all employees and documentation that vendors have conducted required criminal background checks for their employees prior to any unsupervised contact with students. VLGA shall also ensure that the Principal receives subsequent arrest notifications of all individuals subject to background checks from the Department of Justice to ensure the ongoing safety of its students.

DIABETES

VLGA will provide an information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes to the parent or guardian of incoming 9th grade students, pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.7. The information sheet shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:

1. A description of type 2 diabetes.
2. A description of the risk factors and warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes.
3. A recommendation that students displaying or possibly suffering from risk factors or warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes should be screened for type 2 diabetes.
4. A description of treatments and prevention methods of type 2 diabetes.
5. A description of the different types of diabetes screening tests available.

SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

VLGA shall maintain a policy on student suicide prevention in accordance with Education Code Section 215.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

VLGA shall adhere to an Emergency Preparedness Handbook containing procedures for safety, drafted specifically to the needs of the school facility. This handbook shall include but not be limited to the following responses: fire, flood, earthquake, terrorist threats, and hostage situations. All staff members will receive detailed training on emergency procedures. The handbook shall be kept on file for review.

Staff shall receive training in emergency response, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent.

CUSTODIAN OF RECORDS

In accordance with California Department of Justice requirements, the Superintendent and Principal shall serve as VLGA's Custodians of Records.

IMMIGRATION POLICY

VLGA will comply with the requirements of AB 699 by adopting policies consistent with the guidance and model policies issued by the California Attorney General.

CALIFORNIA HEALTHY YOUTH ACT

VLGA will comply with the California Healthy Youth Act, which requires charter schools to teach sexual education and HIV prevention to students in grades 7 to 12 at least once in junior high or middle school and at least once in high school.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

VLGA shall provide information to students about how social media and mobile device applications are used for human trafficking in compliance with Assembly Bill 1861 and Senate Bill 1104.

STUDENT DEBTS

The Public School Fair Debt Collection Act (Education Code section 49014) mandates that a pupil can never owe or be billed for a debt owed to a charter school. As such, VLGA school shall comply with all provisions of the Public Schools Fair Debt Collection Act, including the prohibition on taking any negative actions against a pupil because of a debt, prohibiting a debt collector from making a negative credit report for such a debt and prohibiting a charter school from selling debt to debt collector.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

As required by Education Code section 49428, the Charter School will notify pupils and parents or guardians of pupils no less than twice during the school year on how to initiate access to available pupil mental health services on campus or in the community, or both, as provided and shall comply with all other applicable provisions of the Act.

As required by Education Code section 51925, if the Charter School offers one or more courses in health education to pupils in middle school or high school, those courses must include instruction in mental health that meets the requirements of Education Code section 51925 et seq., including, among other things, reasonably designed instruction on the overarching themes and core principles of mental health, instruction and related materials that are appropriate for use with pupils of all races, genders, sexual orientations, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds, pupils with disabilities, and English learners.

Beginning in the 2023–24 school year, schools serving any grades from 6 to 12 must:

- Create a poster that identifies approaches and shares resources regarding pupil mental health, and
- Prominently and conspicuously display the poster in public areas that are accessible to, and commonly frequented by, pupils.

As required by Education Code sections 48205 and 49428.15, the Charter School shall excuse (an “excused absence”) a student between the ages of 6 and 18 for behavioral or mental health services.

In addition, as required by Education Code section 51925, the Charter School offers one or more courses in health education to pupils in middle school or high school that includes in those courses reasonably designed instruction on the overarching themes and core principles of mental health.

The instructional and related materials must be appropriate for use with pupils of all races, genders, sexual orientations, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds, pupils with disabilities, and English learners.

The CDE must also develop a plan to expand mental health instruction in California public schools on or before January 1, 2024, and Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements.

Pursuant to the requirements of Ed. Code section 49428.5, the charter school has created a poster that identifies approaches and shares resources regarding pupil mental health, and prominently and conspicuously displays that poster in public areas that are accessible to, and commonly frequented by, pupils.

As required by Education Code section 49428.5, the Charter School offers one or more courses in health education to pupils in middle school or high school that include reasonably designed instruction on the overarching themes and core principles of mental health. The instructional and related materials are appropriate for use with pupils of all races, genders, sexual orientations, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds, pupils with disabilities, and English learners.

PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS

VLGA shall comply with all the requirements of Education Code sections 221.5, 221.51, 222.5, 46015, 48205 and 48980 providing required protections for pregnant and parenting students, including but not limited to an annual notice to students about their rights regarding pregnancy or when parenting.

BULLYING

VLGA shall adopt procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying, and shall make available to certificated school site employees and all other school site employees who have regular interaction with pupils an online training module developed by the California Department of Education regarding bullying and bullying prevention in compliance with Education Code section 32283.5.

SEXUAL HEALTH AND HIV PREVENTION

VLGA shall provide “age appropriate” comprehensive sexual health and HIV prevention education in grades 7 to 12 (at least once in middle school and once in high school).

SAFE PLACE TO LEARN ACT

VLGA shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Safe Place to Learn Act, Ed. Code section 234 et seq.

TRIBAL REGALIA/OBJECTS OF RELIGIOUS OR CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Allows students to wear traditional tribal regalia or items of religious, cultural and tribal significance to school graduation ceremonies held by VLGA and would allow the school, under specific circumstances as set forth in the law, to limit items that would create a substantial disruption of, or material interference with, the school ceremony.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Pursuant to the requirements of Education Code sections 49381 and 51934, shall provide information to its students about how social media and mobile device applications are used for human trafficking and, by January 1, 2020, shall identify the most appropriate methods of informing parents and guardians of pupils in grades 6-12 of human trafficking prevention resources and implement these methods by January 1, 2020 if the school has enrolled any students in those grades by that date; otherwise, the school shall implement these methods for pupil in grades 6-12 immediately upon enrollment of pupils in those grades.

HOTLINES

Existing law requires a public school, including a charter school, or a private school, that serves pupils in any of grades 7 to 12, inclusive, that issues pupil identification cards, and a public or private institution of higher education that issues student identification cards, to have printed on the identification cards the telephone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, and authorizes those schools to have printed on the identification cards certain other suicide-prevention and emergency-response telephone numbers.

Commencing October 1, 2020, if VLGA issues pupil identification cards VLGA will have printed on the identification cards the telephone number for the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

MIGRATORY CHILDREN

VLGA will allow a pupil who is a migratory child to continue attending their school of origin regardless of any change of residence of the pupil. VLGA will inform a pupil who is a migratory child and that pupil’s parent or guardian of the impact of remaining in the school of origin on the eligibility of that pupil to receive migrant education services.

CHILD HUNGER PREVENTION AND FAIR TREATMENT ACT

VLGA shall comply with the requirements of the Child Hunger Prevention and Fair Treatment Act of 2017 (Education Code section 49557.5), and ensure that a pupil whose parent or guardian has unpaid school meal fees is not denied a reimbursable meal of the pupil's choice because of the fact that the pupil's parent or guardian has unpaid meal fees and ensure that the pupil is not shamed or treated differently from other pupils.

Pursuant to Education Code section 49501.5, the charter school will provide two nutritiously adequate school meals free of charge during each school day to any pupil who requests a meal without consideration of the pupil's eligibility for a federally funded free or reduced-price meal, with a maximum of one free meal for each meal service period.

CPR

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 1214 [2019-2020], charter schools must offer a course in CPR for purposes of allowing school staff and teachers to participate in CPR training that includes certain instruction, including, but not limited to, an individual program of professional growth that includes a basic course in CPR that includes certain instruction. If the charter school elects to offer any interscholastic athletic program, the charter school is required to ensure that certain personnel with a valid certification of CPR training are present at the athletic program's on-campus activities or events at all times.

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 1719 [2016], a charter school that requires a course in health education for graduation from high school must include instruction in performing compression-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The law encourages those entities to provide to pupils' general information on the use and importance of an automated external defibrillator. The law also requires the State Department of Education to provide guidance on how to implement these provisions, including, but not limited to, who may provide instruction.

The law also states that a charter school that sponsors, authorizes, supports, finances, or supervises, and a public employee who provides or facilitates, the instruction of pupils in compression-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation or the use of an automated external defibrillator pursuant to this law shall not be liable for any civil damages alleged to result from the acts or omissions of an individual who received such instruction, except as provided in the law.

DIABETES INFORMATION

The CDE must develop type 1 diabetes informational materials for parents and guardians of pupils and make these materials available to charter schools through the CDE's web site. Charter School must make these materials available to the parent or guardian of a pupil when the pupil is first enrolled in elementary school and as part of its annual notifications.

BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS

Charter School has implemented policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens and meets state and federal standards for dealing with blood-borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace. Whenever exposed to blood or other body fluids through injury or accident, students and staff are required to follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

ATHLETICS

If the Charter School offers an athletic program, it shall annually provide information sheets about concussions/head injuries and sudden cardiac arrest to athletes and their parents/guardians, which must be signed and returned to the school before the athlete initiates practice or competition. In the event that an athlete is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury, passes out, or faints during or immediately after participation in an athletic activity, the student shall be immediately removed from the activity for the remainder of the day and shall not be permitted to return to the activity until the student is evaluated by a licensed health care provider and receives written clearance to do so.

If the Charter School offers an interscholastic athletic program, it shall develop and post a written emergency action plan that describes procedures to be followed in the event of sudden cardiac arrest and other medical emergencies, acquire at least one automated external defibrillator (AED) for the school, and make the AED available at on-campus athletic activities or events.

SEIZURE SAFE SCHOOLS ACT

The Charter School shall comply with the requirements of the Seizure Safe Schools Act. (Ed. Code, §§ 49468 et seq.) Charter School, upon the request of the parent/guardian of any student diagnosed with seizures, a seizure disorder, or epilepsy who has been prescribed an emergency anti-seizure medication (as described in Education Code section 49468.2(a)(1)), must distribute a notice at least once, but no more than twice, per school year to all staff with the following information:

1. A description of the request for volunteers to be trained to administer emergency anti-seizure medication to a student diagnosed with seizures, a seizure disorder, or epilepsy if the pupil is suffering from a seizure;
3. A description of the training that the volunteer will receive;
4. The right of an employee to rescind their offer to volunteer; and
5. A statement that there will be no retaliation against any individual for rescinding an offer to volunteer.

Upon receipt of the request, and again if there are no volunteers at the school of the pupil who suffers from seizures, the Charter School shall notify the parent or guardian of the pupil's right to be assessed for services and accommodations under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and assist the parent/guardian in exploring that option.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PLAN

If the Charter School provides transportation to or from a school or school activity it shall prepare a transportation safety plan prior to such activities (and revise the plan as required) containing procedures for school personnel to follow to ensure the safe transport of pupils.

The plan shall address all of the following: a) determining if pupils require escort pursuant to Vehicle Code section 22112(d)(1); b) procedures for all pupils in prekindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 8, inclusive, to follow as they board and exit the appropriate school bus at each pupil's school bus stop; c) boarding and exiting a school bus at a school or other trip destination; d) procedures to ensure that a pupil is not left unattended on a school bus, school pupil activity bus, or youth bus; e) procedures and standards for designating an adult chaperone, other than the driver, to accompany pupils on a school pupil activity bus. The plan shall be retained and made available upon request to an officer of the California Highway Patrol.

SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS ACT

Commencing with the 2025–26 school year and ending with the completion of the 2029–30 school year, VLGA shall comply with the requirements of Ed. Code section 218 and use the online training delivery platform and curriculum, or an in-service alternative, to provide at least one hour of required LGBTQ cultural competency training annually to teachers and other certificated employees at those schools, as required by law. VLGA shall maintain records documenting the training.

ELEMENT 7 – MEANS TO ACHIEVE RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

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

VLGA will make every effort to recruit students of various racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, English Learners (and RFEP students), in order to achieve a 70/30 or 60/40 balance reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the District. In our efforts to serve all students, admissions outreach is designed to attract a diverse student population. Parents should have options to best meet the needs of their children. As a result, it is our responsibility to make families aware of the educational options for their children. VLGA is committed to serving all students. We therefore will recruit a racially/ethnically, linguistically and academically diverse population from the area immediately surrounding the school. Additionally, we will recruit students and families through outreach efforts with local non-profit organizations who serve homeless youth, students in the foster-care system, students with disabilities, and other students whose circumstances put them at risk for school failure. These organizations will be encouraged to refer families to VLGA via flyers and phone conversations with local community-based organizations. All community recruitment outreach is conducted throughout the year on an ongoing basis.

VLGA will ensure racial and ethnic balance through a number of additional areas. First, VLGA has and will continue to conduct diverse outreach strategies, including but not limited to town halls at local schools and community centers, presentations at meetings such as a local Black Student Union, tabling at local community events and festivals, distributing flyers at local businesses and churches, and targeted social media campaigns. All VLGA flyers and social media posts will be translated into Spanish to ensure parents and families can access the information. Also, in addition to its academic programs, VLGA will promote its free after school program and free transportation for families in need to and from school. Lastly, VLGA is intending to locate its campus in the lowest income area, which also happens to be the region with the highest need from an academic standpoint. Once operational, VLGA plans to facilitate activities to support the community, such as parent classes, community health fairs, and food banks.

VCPS works very closely with the non-profit Blessings in a Backpack to feed homeless, foster, and at-risk students during the weekend. Our efforts currently provide 150 students at VCPS food for 38 weekends each year. VCPS works closely with Blessings in a Backpack to gather referrals of potential at-risk students who are not yet enrolled in our schools. VLGA will offer information on enrollment procedures to these at-risk students and encourage them to submit a Lottery Application Form, or join the existing wait list for the current school year if one exists. VCPS also works with PATH, People Assisting the Homeless, to identify and seek out homeless and foster youth to enroll at VCPS. In addition, VLGA’s community outreach team will create a media packet and on-going press releases will be distributed to local media outlets for media placements. The team will send news releases, reports, recruitment updates, and will pitch them to magazines, newspapers, and city newsletters. VLGA will also distribute invitations to

community meetings and events. All press releases will be translated into Spanish or other home language, if required.

- The Press Enterprise
- The Patch
- La Prensa

VLGA will notify parents and students in the community through the following methods:

1. Information handouts provided to businesses frequented by local community members. The flyers will include the VLGA enrollment period and lottery information (location, date, time).
2. Community outreach efforts including communication with local public libraries, park and recreation centers, community-based organizations, and churches.
3. Flyers in Spanish and English distributed to local middle and high schools. The flyers will include enrollment period and lottery information (location, date, time).
4. VLGA's web site contain current information about the school. The website will include enrollment period and lottery information (location, date, time).

All outreach is done in both English and Spanish.

VLGA will maintain an accurate accounting of the ethnic and racial balance of students, as well as EL and SWD, enrolled in the school. VLGA will also document the efforts made to achieve racial and ethnic balance and recruit ELs and SWD in accordance with the charter petition and standards of charter legislation.

Meeting	Location	Date
Meeting with Parents and community	VLGA	Monthly - December through March (Recruitment efforts are secured and aligned to budgets, hiring of staff, etc.)
Outreach to local middle and high schools	Local middle and high schools, foster and homeless youth organizations.	January, February, March: Review posted available dates and provide flyers, information and presence.

Community Organizations	Neighboring organization: • Local Libraries • Parks & Rec programs • After-School programs • Organizations including faith- based organizations • Local Businesses including laundromats, health clinics, shops, restaurants	January, February, March: Review posted available dates and provide flyers, information and presence.
Residents within the zip code surrounding the school location	Mailings, door-to-door contacts (canvassing)	January, February, March: Review posted available dates and provide flyers, information and presence.

ELEMENT 8 – ADMISSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

“Admission policies and procedures, consistent with subdivision (e).” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(H).)

DOCUMENTATION OF ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT PROCESSES

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

HOMELESS AND FOSTER YOUTH

Charter School shall adhere to the provisions of the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. Pursuant to the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.) and Ed. Code section 48850(a)(3)(A), the Charter school shall immediately enroll a homeless child or youth seeking enrollment except where the enrollment would conflict with Ed. Code section 47605(e). Charter School shall provide specific information, in its outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings, that notifies parents that Charter School will enroll and provide services for all students, and provides a standard District contact number for access to additional information regarding enrollment.

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws regarding homeless and foster youth, including but not limited to the provisions of AB 379 (2015) and Chapter 5.5 (commencing with Section 48850) of Part 27 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code, as amended from time to time. Charter School shall extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints filed pursuant to the applicable provisions of AB 379.

Pursuant to the requirements of Education Code section 48850 et seq., the Charter School shall: Identify all homeless youth enrolled at the school; Annually administer a housing questionnaire, to be developed by the CDE, to identify homeless youth; Post on its web site the name and contact information for the homeless youth liaison and the educational rights and resources available to homeless youth.

Annually, the Charter School will administer a housing questionnaire to all parent/guardians and all unaccompanied youths. The questionnaire will provide an explanation of the rights and protections a student has as a homeless child or youth. The questionnaire will be available in paper form. The questionnaire must be made available in the primary language other than English spoken by 15 percent or more of the pupils enrolled in Charter School and must be translated into other languages upon request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth. Charter School will collect the questionnaire and, at least annually, update information about homeless and unidentified youth enrollment in CALPADS. (Ed. Code § 48851.)

The Charter School will ensure that its Liaison(s) for Homeless Children and Youth and any personnel who provide services to homeless youth receive training in meeting the requirements of McKinney Vento. (Ed. Code § 48851.3.)

The Liaison shall do both of the following:

1. Ensure and facilitate the proper educational placement, enrollment in school, and checkout from school of foster children.
2. Assist foster children when transferring from one school to another school or from one school district to another school district in ensuring proper transfer of credits, records, and grades.

In accordance with Education Code section 48852.6, the following items be posted on the charter school's website:

1. A list of the Homeless Youth Liaison(s) in the charter school;
2. Specific information on homelessness, including information regarding the educational rights and resources available to persons experiencing homelessness. This can be satisfied by posting Charter School's Education of Homeless Children and Youth Policy; and
3. Contact information for the liaison(s) and any employee/contracted person who will also implement liaison duties.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Charter School shall not require a parent/legal guardian/student to provide information regarding a student's disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, legal or economic status, primary language or English Learner status, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or any other information that would violate federal or state law, prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment. Charter School may request, at the time of, and as part of, conducting its lottery process, the provision of information necessary to apply specific admissions preferences set forth in this Charter.

Charter School shall not request or require submission of a student's IEP, Section 504 Plan, or any other record or related information prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment.

Charter School shall not discourage a student from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the Charter School, nor encourage a current student from disenrolling, for any reason, including, but not limited to, the student's academic performance, nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation or because the student is a student with disabilities, academically low achieving, an English learner, neglected or delinquent, homeless, economically disadvantaged, or a foster youth. The Charter School shall not request or require a student's records to be submitted before enrollment. The Charter School shall post on its web site the California Department of Education notice of these requirements and shall provide the notice to parents/guardians or students age 18 and older

when the parent/guardian or student inquiries about enrollment, before conducting an enrollment lottery, and before disenrollment of a student. (Ed. Code §§ 47605, 47605.6)

Charter School shall adopt policy that is consistent with the model policy developed by the California Attorney General addressing the Charter School's response to immigration enforcement, notify parents/guardians of their children's right to a free public education regardless of immigration status or religious beliefs, prohibit the collection of information or documents regarding the immigration status of students or their family members, and fulfill other requirements of Education Code section 234.7.

PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS

Charter School shall provide specified accommodations to pregnant and parenting students, including, but not limited to, the provision of parental leave and reasonable accommodations on campus to a lactating student to express breast milk, breastfeed an infant child, or address other needs related to breastfeeding. The Charter School shall notify pregnant and parenting students and parents/guardians of the rights and options available to pregnant and parenting students. (Ed. Code §§ 222, 222.5, 46015.)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY NOTICE

The Charter School shall create a poster that notifies students of the applicable policy on sexual harassment in accordance with Education Code section 231.6, and shall prominently and conspicuously display the poster in each bathroom and locker room at each school site and in public areas at each school site.

If the charter school offers competitive athletics, annually post on the school's web site or on the web site of the charter operator the total enrollment of the school classified by gender, the number of students who participate in competitive athletics classified by gender, and the number of boys' and girls' teams classified by sport and by competition level. If Charter School operates multiple school sites, this information shall be disaggregated by school site. (Ed. Code § 221.9.)

ADMISSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

VLGA will admit all pupils who wish to attend the school as outlined in Education Code 47605 (d)(2)(A) up to enrollment capacity. There are no admission requirements for the Charter School (e.g., minimum grade point average, test scores, discipline records, etc.). Parents and students admitted to the Charter School will be requested to attend an orientation session to review school policies and procedures and learn about the opportunities provided by the school, but their attendance or lack of attendance does not impact their student's admission. The Principal will work to ensure that all families understand these expectations and that they are aware of the different ways they can be involved in the school.

Pursuant to the requirements of Ed. Code sections 49076.7, the Charter School shall not collect or solicit social security numbers or the last four digits of social security numbers from students or their parents or guardians unless otherwise required to do so by state or federal law.

The Charter School may disclose directory information, as defined in Ed. Code section 49061(c), without consent only if it has notified parents/guardians and eligible students of the: a) types of information the Charter School has designated as directory information; and, b) right of parents/guardians and eligible students to opt out of disclosure of directory information. Pursuant to Ed. Code section 49073.2, except when required by law or judicial order, the Charter School shall not include directory information or personal information of a pupil or pupil's parent/guardian in the board's meeting minutes if it has received a written request from the adult student or parent/guardian to exclude such information.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

As detailed in Element 7, VLGA, in order to recruit low-achieving, economically disadvantaged students, ELs and students with disabilities, will do the following:

- Recruit students from the surrounding community where the public schools are characterized by low achievement and a predominantly Title 1 population.
- Distribute flyers in Spanish and English to the local middle and high schools with the consent of that school's administration. The flyers include enrollment period and lottery information (location, date, time).
- Ensure potential students and families understand there are no qualifications required for admission to VLGA and encourage all students to apply.

LOTTERY PREFERENCES AND PROCEDURES

VLGA 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 Charter School shall be open to any resident of the State of California. VLGA will admit all pupils who wish to attend VLGA to the extent that space allows. CA Ed. Code § 47605(d)(2)(A).

Lottery Application Forms will be accepted during a publicly advertised open enrollment period. An explanation of the enrollment process and the rules to be followed during the lottery will be available at all times on our web site in English and Spanish and in the office (and additional languages if needed). The process will also be verbally explained to any families who call, or hand-deliver a paper Lottery Application form in-person. Parents can also apply on-line.

Following the open enrollment period each year, and after accounting for existing students who are guaranteed enrollment in the following school year, applications shall be counted to determine whether the Charter School has received more applications than availability. If the number of students applying for enrollment exceeds the Charter School's capacity, admission shall be determined by random public drawing (lottery).

Public notice will be posted at the Charter School location, on the Charter School web site and on distributed informational flyers regarding the application deadline and the date, time and location of the public drawing (typically at the end of January), encouraging people to attend (time will be a weekday evening to maximize attendance; the location will be at the school site). If the lottery cannot reasonably be held at the VLGA site (or one of our sister school sites), it will be held in a large community center, church, auditorium, or any public venue capable of seating all applicants comfortably. Parents will be notified on the Lottery Application Form of the date and time of the public drawing, and invited to attend, though parent attendance at the lottery is not required in order to secure enrollment for a student. VLGA will include details on the Charter School website and in promotional materials about the enrollment timeline, rules, and procedures to be followed during the open enrollment and lottery processes.

Preference shall be extended to pupils currently attending the charter school and pupils who reside in the Lake Elsinore Unified School District except as provided for in Section 47614.5. A preference for siblings of already enrolled students shall also be extended.

The lottery preference shall be given to the siblings of admitted students.

Lottery preference will be given to residents of the District in accordance with state law and District policy.

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

In accordance with Section 49011, preferences shall not require mandatory parental volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment.

The lottery will be conducted by a non-interested member of the staff who draws the pupil names and verifies lottery procedures are fairly executed. Application Forms, the manual record of all lottery participants and their assigned lottery numbers, and other lottery-related documents are physically filed on campus, and lottery results and waiting lists (determined in the order names are drawn in the lottery) will be readily available in the Charter 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 lottery application.

Those who apply after the lottery deadline will be added to the end of the lottery waitlist in the order they are received. 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 waitlist for the current school year will remain active until the end of the school year and will not "roll over"; applicants must reapply for the lottery annually if the Charter School is

unable to offer them admission for the current year. Once the drawing is at Charter School's capacity, applications will continue to be drawn for position on a wait list. Students who are not granted admission for that school year will remain on the waiting list until the end of the school year for which the lottery was conducted unless otherwise requested by the parent to be taken off. Students must reapply for the following year.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Within two weeks of the lottery, families will be notified in writing by the Principal of their enrollment status (offered enrollment or placement on waiting list). Each student offered a space in the following year will be required to complete an enrollment packet within two weeks of receiving the letter indicating that a spot is available for the student. The Charter School will hold a Pre-Enrollment informational session after the lottery and before the registration date to supply additional information and to assist families in filling out forms.

The enrollment packet is comprised of the following:

- Student Enrollment Form
- Proof of Immunizations
- Home Language Survey
- Emergency Medical Information Form

The waiting list will include contact information of the families not admitted through the lottery. If a position opens during the course of the year, the VLGA Office Manager will contact the family of the student on the top of the waiting list by phone or email to offer their student admission to the Charter School. If a family is notified by phone or email prior to August 1st, the family will have ten (10) days to confirm enrollment and return a completed enrollment packet. If a student is notified after August 1st, they will have 72 hours to confirm enrollment via phone call or email, and submit an application by mail or email to the Office Manager. Should the family decline the position, the next family on the list is contacted until the open position is filled.

A copy of all enrollment forms, waiting lists, and lottery results will be kept on file in the VLGA administrative office and will be readily available for inspection by District representatives.

ELEMENT 9 – ANNUAL 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.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(I).)

Charter School shall provide for an annual audit that shall be conducted in compliance with applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to the requirements of Education Code sections 47605(b)(c)(I) and 41020 as they may be amended from time to time. Charter School shall ensure compliance with the requirements of section 41020(f)(2), which makes it unlawful, absent an Education Audits Appeal Panel waiver, for a public accounting firm to provide audit services to a local educational agency if the lead audit partner, or coordinating audit partner, having primary responsibility for the audit, or the audit partner responsible for reviewing the audit, has performed audit services for that local educational agency in each of the six previous years.

An annual independent financial audit of the books and records of VLGA shall be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(b)(5)(I) and 47605(m). The books and records of VLGA shall be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and as required by applicable law, the audit will employ generally accepted accounting procedures. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller’s K-12 Audit Guide.

ANNUAL AUDIT PROCEDURES

Each fiscal year an independent auditor will conduct an audit of the financial affairs of VLGA to verify the accuracy of the Charter School’s financial statements, attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and internal controls.

Procedures:

- The Board of Directors appoints an Audit Committee by January 1 of each year.
- The Audit Committee may include persons who are not members of the board, but may not include any VLGA staff, including the Superintendent. In addition, any person with expenditure authorization or recording responsibilities within the organization may not serve on the committee.
- The Audit Committee is responsible for contracting with an audit firm from the State Controller’s list of approved charter school auditors by March 1 of each year, unless the existing contract is a multi-year contract. The Superintendent is responsible for working with the auditor to complete the audit.
- The Audit Committee is responsible for reviewing the results of the annual audit and developing a corrective action plan to address all relevant findings noted by the auditor.
- The Board of Directors reviews and approve the audit no later than December 15.
- The Superintendent is responsible for submitting the audit to all required agencies no later than December 15.

The audit committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report recommendations on resolution to the Board of Directors. The Board will report to the District regarding how exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved. It is understood that exceptions and deficiencies will be resolved to the satisfaction of the District.

ELEMENT 10 – SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES

Governing Law: The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled from the charter school for disciplinary reasons or otherwise involuntarily removed from the charter school for any reason. These procedures, at a minimum, shall include an explanation of how the charter school will comply with federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements that is consistent with all of the following:

(i) For suspensions of fewer than 10 days, provide oral or written notice of the charges against the pupil and, if the pupil denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges and an opportunity for the pupil to present the pupil's side of the story.

(ii) For suspensions of 10 days or more and all other expulsions for disciplinary reasons, both of the following:

(I) Provide timely, written notice of the charges against the pupil and an explanation of the pupil's basic rights.

(II) Provide a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer within a reasonable number of days at which the pupil has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the pupil has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate.

(iii) Contain a clear statement that no pupil shall be involuntarily removed by the charter school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the pupil has been provided written notice of intent to remove the pupil no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian, or, if the pupil is a homeless child or youth, or a foster child or youth, in the native language of the homeless or foster child's educational rights holder. In the case of a foster child or youth, the written notice shall also be provided to the foster child's attorney and county social worker. If the pupil is a Indian child, as defined in Section 224.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the written notice shall also be provided to the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker. The written notice shall inform the pupil, the pupil's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, or the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker of the right to initiate the procedures specified in clause (ii) before the effective date of the action. If the pupil's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, or county social worker, or the Indian child's tribal social worker or, if applicable, county social worker initiates the procedures specified in clause (ii), the pupil shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. For purposes of this clause, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions specified in clauses (i) and (ii).

(iv) A foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker and an Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker shall have the same rights a parent or guardian of a child has to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, and other documents and related information." (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(J).)

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND STUDENT DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

Positive behaviors have been associated with positive academic outcomes (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Feshbach & Feshbach, 1987; Wentzel, 1993), while negative behaviors (e.g., inattention, distractibility, and withdrawn behaviors) have been associated with negative academic outcomes (Akey, 2006; Kane, 2004). VLGA will cultivate a positive school environment that is characterized by mutual respect. Students will be introduced to the school's expectations during the student orientation days, and they will also be reviewed on the first day of school.

At VLGA we believe that high, clearly defined, and consistent expectations support students' self-confidence and that their efforts lead to success in school. Research demonstrates that schools in which students achieve high levels of performance tend to set high expectations and standards (Marzano, 2011). VLGA will take a proactive school-wide approach to behavior management. As a Character Counts school, VLGA will focus on the Six Pillars of Character (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, Citizenship). These pillars will apply to most behavioral situations and will be shared with students and families. The Six Pillars of Character will be proactively taught and consistently reinforced throughout the school.

VLGA's discipline policy combined with our GEAR Core Values (Grit, Empathy, Accountability and Respect) require every school within VCPS to adopt and implement a school-wide positive behavior support discipline plan. Under the VCPS policy, "all school level plans will include: teaching school rules and social emotional skills; reinforcing appropriate student behavior; using effective classroom management and positive behavior support strategies by providing early intervention for misconduct and appropriate use of consequences."

School-wide Discipline Plan

Shift into GEAR

Philosophical Foundation

- We want our students to grow and develop characteristics such as: Responsibility, Respect, Caring, Fairness, Trustworthiness, and Citizenship.
- **The Tipping Point:** "the moment when something small, or even obscure, changes into something big." (Malcolm Gladwell)

Key Elements to a School-wide Program

To have a successful program, we must have:

- Teacher Collaboration and Coherence
- Clarity and Consistency for Students
- Parent Communication and Documentation

Our System

Character, College, Community

Students build **character** that drives them to be **college** and career-bound and develop into effective citizens of their **communities**.

School-wide Proactive Interventions

Restorative Justice Practices and Way of Council

VLGA is committed to a holistic approach to student discipline and development. First and foremost, we apply restorative practice and Way of Council to address social emotional development and any disciplinary actions as outlined earlier in this petition.

Right Tickets

Tickets rewarded for doing what is examples of GEAR/modeling GEAR. Students are going above and beyond to encompass the Six Pillars of Character.

- Students earn Right Tickets for the following positive behaviors:
 - Grit: persevering on difficult assignments, assessing their own learning and identifying next steps
 - Empathy: being a good friend, helping others, being kind
 - Accountability: task completion
 - Respect: being respectful of self, others and our school community

Examples of positive praise that could earn a Right Ticket:

“I noticed...

- that you did all of your homework this week.”
- that your materials are organized.”
- that you motivated your neighbor to participate in the group project.”
- that you raised your hand more this week.”

Class Dojo is used to track positive behavior.

- Students earn 1 Right Ticket an identified act or behavior.
- This is logged digitally in Class Dojo and the parent is notified immediately

Right Ticket Events

Students with high percentages of Right Tickets on Class Dojo (70% or above) get to participate in Right Ticket Events. These are fun student and staff events that promote our Core Values. Examples of Right Ticket Events include Staff vs. Student Water Balloon Toss, Ice Cream Sundae Party, Movie and Popcorn Party.

Interventions

- Verbal/written reprimand
- Community beautification (classroom or yard)
- Time-out activity (sent outside room or to another teacher)
- Written Reflection
- Changing seats
- Meaningful public or private apology
- + Choice / - Choice (Love and Logic)
 - Example: You can either choose to be quiet and work with the class or work outside on your own
- Students who do not have the qualifying amount for Right Ticket Events spend the time reflecting through Way of Council.

These policies will be distributed in the Charter School’s student handbook and describe the school’s expectations regarding mutual respect, safety, personal responsibility, work habits, attendance, and more. Each family will receive a copy of these policies and be required to verify

that they have reviewed them with their children at the time of enrollment or at the beginning of the school year.

The discipline policy is not discriminatory or arbitrary. The process follows general principles of due process. Students will sign agreements related to their understanding of and responsibility to the standards set forth in the discipline policy within the handbook. Students who do not live up to their responsibilities and who violate the school rules may expect some consequences for their behavior, such as:

a. Alternatives to Suspension:

1. Warning
2. Loss of Privileges
3. Notices to parents by telephone or letter
4. Referral to the administrator
5. Request for parent conference
6. Way of Council
7. Harm Circle- restorative

Should the previous interventions not be successful, suspension or expulsion may occur.

- In-school suspension
- Suspension
- Expulsion

VLGA will monitor student behavior in a variety of means such as such as classroom observations, data gathered using the system presented in this petition, analysis of suspension and expulsion data, and Power School.

VLGA is exempt from Education Code requirements and procedures related to student suspension and expulsion; however, VLGA is committed to the student discipline, suspension, and expulsion policies as outlined in this petition. Therefore, references in this charter to the Education Code are used as a guideline.

JURISDICTION

A student may be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated in Education Code § 48900, except for willful defiance and/or disruption, 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 coming from school.
- While using school-owned computers and servers.
- During the lunch period whether on or off the campus.
- During, or while going to or coming from, a school-sponsored activity.

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.

For students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from assigned school activities, alternatives to suspension or expulsion will be attempted first.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

In-school suspensions will be given as an alternative to out of school suspensions and be held in the Principal's office or other location designated by the Principal. A certificated/credentialed staff member will supervise the student during the in-school suspension. During in-school suspensions, teachers will provide the students with assignments to complete by the end of the school day. If the student has questions about the assignments, the teachers will provide support. During the day of the suspension, the student's teachers will address behaviors that may have contributed to the student's in-school suspension. In addition to completing assigned work, the student will be required to complete a reflection addressing why the behavior occurred and what can be done in the future to ensure that the offense is not repeated. Parents/guardians will be notified of the in-school suspension in writing by the Principal or his/her designee in the parent/guardian's native language. The notice will contain the reason for the in-school suspension, as well as the length of time for the in-school suspension. The maximum number of days of in-school suspension per incident in one academic year is 6, and the maximum number of consecutive days is 3. In-school suspensions would always be subject to an administrative decision regarding the severity and nature of the underlying offense. In the case of a student who causes or attempts to cause hate violence, engages in harassment or threats or intimidation against students or staff, or who makes terrorist threats against school officials or school property, the administration would review the facts to determine if in school suspension would pose a threat to the safety of students, staff and visitors to the school. In many situations, in school suspension may not be an appropriate disciplinary option if a credible threat to school safety exists.

SECLUSION AND BEHAVIORAL RESTRAINT

The Charter School prohibits seclusion and behavioral restraint of students as a means of discipline, and only uses such methods to control student behavior that poses a clear and present danger of serious physical harm to a student or others that cannot be immediately prevented by a less restrictive response.

GROUND FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

A single suspension may not be issued for more than 5 consecutive school days. The total number of days for which a student, including students with a 504 Plan, may be suspended from school shall not exceed 20 days. Students with an IEP shall not be suspended for more than 10 school days in any school year.

VLGA shall not suspend a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 8, inclusive, nor recommend the expulsion of a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive,

for disrupting school activities or otherwise willfully defying the valid authority of those school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.

ENUMERATED OFFENSES

Discretionary Suspension Offenses: Students *may* be suspended for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

- a. Causing, attempting to cause or threatening to cause serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense.
- b. A pupil in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive, may be suspended from school or recommended for expulsion if the principal determines that the pupil has caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of, hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233.
- c. Unlawfully possessed, used, or was under the influence of any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- d. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5.
- e. Using tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, et al.
- f. Harassed, threatened or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- g. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e., a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a responsible person to conclude that the replica is a firearm unless, in the case of possession of any object of the type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certified school employee, with the administrator's or designee's concurrence.
- h. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- i. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- j. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- k. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- l. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing as defined in Education Code Section 32050.
- m. Aided or abetted the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person.
- n. Engaged in sexual harassment as defined in Education Code Section 48900.2.
- o. Engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation directed against school district personnel or pupils as defined in Education Code Section 48900.4. The harassment, threats, or intimidation directed at school personnel or pupils must be on the bases of:
 - a. Race/color/national origin
 - b. Disability
 - c. Other factor

- d. Against school district personnel.
- p. Made terrorist threats against school officials, school property or both as defined in Section 48900.7.
- q. 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.

RECOMMEND FOR EXPULSION OFFENSES

The Principal or Designee must recommend the expulsion of a pupil for any of the following acts committed at school or at a school activity off school grounds, unless the Principal or Designee determines that expulsion is inappropriate or that an alternative means of correction would address the conduct:

- 1) Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense.
- 2) Possession of any knife or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the pupil.
- 3) Unlawful possession of any controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code section 11053 et seq. (except one ounce of marijuana or over the counter medications or medication prescribed to student).
- 4) Robbery or extortion.
- 5) Assault or battery (as defined in Penal Code section 240 and 242) upon any school employee.

IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION AND MANDATORY RECOMMENDATION FOR EXPULSION OFFENSES

Principal shall immediately suspend and recommend expulsion when the following occur at school or at a school activity off campus:

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. In accordance with California Education Code § 48915, the following reasons shall constitute mandatory grounds for immediate suspension and recommended expulsion:

- 1. Causing serious physical injury to another person
- 2. Brandishing a knife
- 3. Possession, selling, or furnishing of a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object
- 4. Robbery or extortion, offering, negotiating a sale or selling a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind.
- 5. Violation of the Federal Guns Free School Act
- 6. Pupil has committed sexual harassment as defined in Section 212.5. The conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall not

apply to pupils enrolled in kindergarten and grades 1 to 3, inclusive.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

A student may receive an out-of-school suspension if it is determined that the student's presence would be a danger to others at school and their removal from school is necessary.

VLGA shall, upon the request of a parent or pupil, provide homework that would otherwise have been assigned, to a pupil who has been suspended for two or more schooldays. If a homework assignment that is requested and turned in to a teacher, within the prescribed timeframe, is not graded before the end of the academic term, VLGA shall not include the assignment in the calculation of the student's overall grade in the class.

SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

Suspensions (whether in-school or out-of-school) shall be initiated according to the following procedures. The Principal, Assistant Principal, and Superintendent are authorized to suspend students, the procedures for investigating incidents and collecting evidence shall be fair and thorough.

CONFERENCE

Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Principal with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Principal.

The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines 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 a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense. This conference shall be held within two school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization. No penalties may be imposed on a pupil for failure of the pupil's parent or guardian to attend a conference with school administration. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil's parent or guardian at the conference.

NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

With regard to any notice of suspension or expulsion provided to a Student, the Charter School shall ensure that the notice contains a clear statement that no pupil shall be involuntarily removed by the charter school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the pupil has been provided written notice of intent to remove the pupil no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the

pupil's parent or guardian, or, if the pupil is a homeless child or youth, or a foster child or youth, in the native language of the homeless or foster child's educational rights holder. In the case of a foster child or youth, the written notice shall also be provided to the foster child's attorney and county social worker. If the pupil is an Indian child, as defined in Section 224.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the written notice shall also be provided to the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker. The written notice shall inform the pupil, the pupil's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, or the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker of the right to initiate the hearing procedures specified for suspensions of greater than 10 days before the effective date of the action. If the pupil's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, or county social worker, or the Indian child's tribal social worker or, if applicable, county social worker initiates the hearing procedures specified above, the pupil shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. For purposes of this petition, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions.

At the time of suspension, the Principal or Assistant Principal shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing by the Principal or Assistant Principal of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense(s) committed by the student. In addition, the notice also states the date and time when the student may return to school. If the Principal or Assistant Principal wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice requests that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

More specifically, pursuant to Ed. Code §47605(c)(5)(J), the Charter School will comply with federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements that is consistent with all of the following:

1. For suspensions of fewer than 10 days, the Charter School shall provide oral or written notice of the charges against the pupil and, if the pupil denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges and an opportunity for the pupil to present the pupil's side of the story.
2. For suspensions of 10 days or more and all other expulsions for disciplinary reasons, the Charter School shall ensure that the student is provided both of the following:
 - 2.a. Timely, written notice of the charges against the pupil and an explanation of the pupil's basic rights.
 - 2.b. A hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer within a reasonable number of days at which the pupil has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the pupil has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate.

(iv) A foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker and an Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker shall have the same rights a parent or guardian of a child has to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, and other documents and related information.”.)

LENGTH OF SUSPENSION

The length of suspension for students shall not exceed a period of 5 consecutive days unless an expulsion is recommended. If a student is recommended for a period of suspension exceeding 5 consecutive days, a second conference is scheduled between the parent/guardian and the Principal to discuss the progress of the suspension upon the completion of the 10th day of suspension. The total number of days for which a pupil may be suspended from school shall not exceed a total of 20 school days in any school year, unless a pupil enrolls in or is transferred to another regular school, in which case the total number of schooldays for which the pupil may be suspended shall not exceed 30 days in any school year. During suspensions, teachers provide the students with assignments to complete by the end of the duration of the suspension. If the student has questions about the assignments, the teacher provides support.

Students with disabilities who are suspended shall continue to receive services so as to provide FAPE and enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's IEP/504. Any discipline that includes removal from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days constitutes a change in placement and a manifestation determination shall be conducted.

An IEP or 504 meeting is required within ten (10) days of initial suspension or placement 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 student with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the student's IEP/504, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:

- If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability; or
- If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP/504.

WILLFUL DEFIANCE

The Charter School shall not recommend the expulsion of a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, for disrupting school activities or otherwise willfully defying the valid authority of those school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.

ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION

Suspension shall be imposed only when other means of correction fail to bring about proper conduct. The Charter School may document the other means of correction used and place that documentation in the pupil's record. However, a pupil, including an individual with exceptional needs, as defined in Ed. Code section 56026, may be suspended, subject to Section 1415 of Title 20 of the United States Code, upon a first offense if the principal or principal's designee determines that the pupil's presence causes a danger to persons or that the pupil committed any of the following acts:

- 1) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- 2) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
- 3) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of an object of this type, the pupil had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the principal or the designee of the principal.
- 4) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, a 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.
- 5) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell a 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 a person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
- 6) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.

Other means of correction include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) A conference between school personnel, the pupil's parent or guardian, and the pupil.
- 2) Referrals to the school counselor, psychologist, social worker, child welfare attendance personnel, or other school support service personnel for case management and counseling.
- 3) Study teams, guidance teams, resource panel teams, or other intervention-related teams that assess the behavior, and develop and implement individualized plans to address the behavior in partnership with the pupil and his or her parents.
- 4) Referral for a comprehensive psychosocial or psychoeducational assessment, including for purposes of creating an individualized education program, or a plan adopted pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794(a)).
- 5) Enrollment in a program for teaching prosocial behavior or anger management.
- 6) Participation in a restorative justice program.
- 7) A positive behavior support approach with tiered interventions that occur during the school day on campus.
- 8) After-school programs that address specific behavioral issues or expose pupils to positive activities and behaviors, including, but not limited to, those operated in collaboration with local parent and community groups.

- 9) Performing community service on school grounds or, with written permission of the parent or guardian of the pupil, off school grounds, during the pupil's non-school hours. "Community service" may include, but is not limited to, work performed in the community or on school grounds in the areas of outdoor beautification, community or campus betterment, and teacher, peer, or youth assistance programs. Community service may not be assigned if a pupil has been suspended, pending expulsion, for any of the acts enumerated in the "Shall Recommend for Expulsion Offenses" or the "Immediate Suspension and Mandatory Recommendation for Expulsion Offenses." However, if the recommended expulsion is not implemented or is, itself, suspended by stipulation or other administrative action then community service may be assigned.

SUSPENSION APPEALS

Parents are notified by the Principal or Assistant Principal in writing regarding the right and procedures to appeal a student's suspension. A suspension appeal may be made to the Superintendent within ten days of the suspension. Following due consideration of the facts and safety of students, a decision by the Superintendent regarding student suspension are considered final.

EXPULSION PROCEDURES

Students will be recommended for expulsion after the Principal or Designee conducts an investigation process by gathering written statements, meeting with witnesses, and conducting a pre-expulsion conference with the student and family.

In cases where a finding is made that a student has 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 a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object; unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, a 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 a 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 a person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant; or committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion, a decision for expulsion by the Principal (or designee) will be based on one or both of the following findings:

1. Other means of conduct support and correction are not feasible and have repeatedly failed to bring about an improvement in conduct.
2. Due to the nature of the violation, the presence of the student causes a continuing danger to the health and/or safety of the student, other students in the schools, and/or faculty.

Upon this determination, the student will be suspended, pending the results of an expulsion hearing. The Principal's or Designee's recommendation to expel the student will satisfy all the procedural requirements stated herein.

EXPULSION HEARING – RULES AND REGULATIONS

The family of a student who has been recommended for expulsion will be notified of the student's right to request a hearing to determine whether the expulsion recommendation was justified and whether the expulsion will be upheld. The hearing will be held, if requested, within 30 school days from the original expulsion decision. The hearing will be presided over by an administrative panel (three to five impartial individuals) appointed by the Executive Director/Principal. A document will be prepared by the Executive Director/Principal or Designee that includes a full description of the reasons for the expulsion, including dates, previous conferences and actions taken, and events.

The Charter School's governing board shall establish rules and regulations governing procedures for the expulsion of pupils. These procedures shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, all of the following:

- 1) The pupil shall be entitled to a hearing to determine whether the pupil should be expelled. An expulsion hearing shall be held within 30 schooldays after the date the principal determines that the pupil has committed any of the acts enumerated herein, unless the pupil requests, in writing, that the hearing be postponed. The adopted rules and regulations shall specify that the pupil is entitled to at least one postponement of an expulsion hearing, for a period of not more than 30 calendar days. Any additional postponement may be granted at the discretion of the principal. The administrative panel shall make its decision to expel within 3 school days after the hearing's conclusion, unless the pupil requests in writing that the decision be postponed.
- 2) If compliance by the administrative panel with the time requirements for the conducting of an expulsion hearing and a decision to expel is impracticable during the regular school year, the principal or the principal's designee may, for good cause, extend the time period for the holding of the expulsion hearing for an additional five schooldays. If compliance by the administrative panel with the time requirements for the conducting of an expulsion hearing is impractical due to a summer recess of more than two weeks, the days during the recess period shall not be counted as schooldays in meeting the time requirements. The days not counted as schooldays in meeting the time requirements for an expulsion hearing because of a summer recess shall not exceed 20 school days, and unless the pupil requests in writing that the expulsion hearing be postponed, the hearing shall be held not later than 20 calendar days before the first day of school for the school year. Reasons for the extension of the time for the hearing shall be included as a part of the record at the time the expulsion hearing is conducted. Upon the commencement of the hearing, all matters shall be pursued and conducted with reasonable diligence and shall be concluded without any unnecessary delay.
 - a. Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the pupil at least 10 calendar days before the date of the hearing. The notice shall include all of the following:
 - i. The date and place of the hearing.

- ii. A statement of the specific facts and charges upon which the proposed expulsion is based.
- iii. A copy of the disciplinary rules of the school that relate to the alleged violation.
- iv. A notice of the parent, guardian, or pupil's obligations pursuant to Ed. Code section 48915.1(b).
- v. Notice of the opportunity for the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian to appear in person or to be represented by legal counsel or by a nonattorney adviser, to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing, to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing, to question all other evidence presented, and to present oral and documentary evidence on the pupil's behalf, including witnesses. In a hearing in which a pupil is alleged to have committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as specified in subdivision (n) of Section 48900 or to have committed a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 48900, a complaining witness shall be given five days' notice before being called to testify, and shall be entitled to have up to two adult support persons, including, but not limited to, a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, present during his or her testimony. Before a complaining witness testifies, support persons shall be admonished that the hearing is confidential. This subdivision shall not preclude the person presiding over an expulsion hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, the provisions of Section 868.5 of the Penal Code shall be followed for the hearing. The pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian is not required to be represented by legal counsel or by a nonattorney adviser at the hearing.

“Legal counsel” means an attorney or lawyer who is admitted to the practice of law in California and is an active member of the State Bar of California

“Nonattorney adviser” means an individual who is not an attorney or lawyer, but who is familiar with the facts of the case, and has been selected by the pupil or pupil's parent or guardian to provide assistance at the hearing.

- vi. At least 10 days prior to a hearing to determine if a student who is a foster youth as defined under Education Code 48853.5 should be expelled for an offense not requiring a mandatory recommendation for expulsion, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the student's attorney and a representative of an appropriate county child welfare agency. If the hearing is pursuant to an offense requiring a mandatory expulsion recommendation, the Superintendent or designee may provide the same notification. The notice shall be provided by the most cost-effective method possible, including by email or a telephone call.

- 3) The administrative panel shall conduct a hearing to consider the expulsion of a pupil in a session closed to the public, unless the pupil requests, in writing, at least five days before the date of the hearing, that the hearing be conducted at a public meeting. Regardless of whether the expulsion hearing is conducted in a closed or public session, the administrative panel may meet in closed session for the purpose of deliberating and determining whether the pupil should be expelled.
 - a. If the administrative panel admits any other person to a closed deliberation session, the parent or guardian of the pupil, the pupil, and the counsel of the pupil also shall be allowed to attend the closed deliberations.
 - b. If the hearing is to be conducted at a public meeting, and there is a charge of committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in subdivision (n) of Ed. Code section 48900 or to commit a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of Ed. Code section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm, including, but not limited to, videotaped deposition or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by means of closed-circuit television.
- 4) If the administrative panel decides not to expel, the expulsion proceedings shall be terminated, and the pupil immediately shall be reinstated and permitted to return to the classroom instructional program from which the expulsion referral was made. The decision not to recommend expulsion shall be final.
- 5) If the administrative panel determines to expel, findings of fact in support of the recommendation shall be prepared. All findings of fact and recommendations shall be based solely on the evidence adduced at the hearing.
- 6) The decision of the administrative panel to expel a pupil shall be based upon substantial evidence relevant to the charges adduced at the expulsion hearing or hearings. Except as provided herein, no evidence to expel shall be based solely upon hearsay evidence. The administrative panel may, upon a finding that good cause exists, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of a witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations that shall be examined only by the administrative panel. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.
- 7) A record of the hearing shall be made. The record may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, so long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.
- 8) A record of the hearing shall be made. The record may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, so long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.
- 9) Technical rules of evidence shall not apply to the hearing, but relevant evidence may be admitted and given probative effect only if it is the kind of evidence upon which reasonable persons are accustomed to rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A

- decision of the administrative panel to expel shall be supported by substantial evidence showing that the pupil committed any of the acts enumerated herein.
- 10) In hearings that include an allegation of committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in subdivision (n) of Ed. Code section 48900 or to commit a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of Ed. Code section 48900, evidence of specific instances, of a complaining witness's prior sexual conduct is to be presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before the person conducting the hearing makes the determination on whether extraordinary circumstances exist requiring that specific instances of a complaining witness's prior sexual conduct be heard, the complaining witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, guardian, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.
 - 11) Before the hearing has commenced, the administrative panel may issue subpoenas at the request of either the principal or principal's designee or the pupil, for the personal appearance of percipient witnesses at the hearing. After the hearing has commenced, the administrative panel may, upon request of either the principal or principal's designee or the pupil, issue subpoenas. All subpoenas shall be issued in accordance with Sections 1985, 1985.1, and 1985.2 of the Code of Civil Procedure. Enforcement of subpoenas shall be done in accordance with Section 11455.20 of the Government Code.
 - a. Any objection raised by the principal or principal's designee or the pupil to the issuance of subpoenas may be considered by the administrative panel in closed session, or in open session, if so requested by the pupil before the meeting. Any decision by the administrative panel in response to an objection to the issuance of subpoenas shall be final and binding.
 - b. If the administrative panel determines that a percipient witness would be subject to an unreasonable risk of harm by testifying at the hearing, a subpoena shall not be issued to compel the personal attendance of that witness at the hearing. However, that witness may be compelled to testify by means of a sworn declaration as provided for herein.
 - c. Service of process shall be extended to all parts of the state and shall be served in accordance with Section 1987 of the Code of Civil Procedure. All witnesses appearing pursuant to subpoena, other than the parties or officers or employees of the state or any political subdivision of the state, shall receive fees, and all witnesses appearing pursuant to subpoena, except the parties, shall receive mileage in the same amount and under the same circumstances as prescribed for witnesses in civil actions in a superior court. Fees and mileage shall be paid by the party at whose request the witness is subpoenaed.
 - 12) The administrative panel shall deliberate and make its decision in a closed session. Written notice of any decision to expel or to suspend the enforcement of an expulsion order during a period of probation shall be sent by the principal or his or her designee

to the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian and shall be accompanied by all of the following:

- a. Notice of the right to appeal the expulsion to the Charter School Governing Board.
 - b. Notice of the education alternative placement to be provided to the pupil during the time of expulsion, if applicable.
 - c. Notice of the obligation of the parent, guardian, or pupil, upon the pupil's enrollment in a new school district, to inform that school district of the pupil's expulsion.
- 13) The governing board of the Charter School shall maintain a record of each expulsion, including the cause for the expulsion. Records of expulsions shall be nonprivileged, disclosable public records.
- a. The expulsion order and the causes for the expulsion shall be recorded in the pupil's mandatory interim record and shall be forwarded to any school in which the pupil subsequently enrolls upon receipt of a request from the admitting school for the pupil's school records.

DECISION OF THE PANEL

The final decision by the administrative panel will be made within 3 school days following the conclusion of the hearing, unless the pupil requests in writing that the decision be postponed.

The administrative panel will make one of two determinations:

- 1) Uphold the expulsion.
- 2) Determine the expulsion was not within the Charter School's guidelines, overturn it, and order that records and documents regarding the proceedings be destroyed and removed from student's record.

Following the final decision of the administrative panel, the administrative panel will send written Findings of Fact to the parent that contain the following information:

- 1) The outcome of the hearing and the decision of the administrative panel
- 2) The specific offenses committed by the student for any of the acts listed in the above "Reasons for Suspension and/or Expulsion" section (if expulsion is decided)
- 3) Notification of the family's responsibility to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with the Charter School (if expulsion is decided)
- 4) Reinstatement eligibility review date (if expulsion is decided)
- 5) A copy of the rehabilitation plan (if expulsion is decided)
- 6) The type of educational placement during the period of expulsion (if expulsion is decided)
- 7) Pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the County for their school district of residence.

The school shall work cooperatively with parents/guardians as requested by parents/guardians or by the school district of residence to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion.

REHABILITATION PLANS

Students who are expelled from the Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the administrative panel at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to the Charter School for readmission.

READMISSION

The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Charter School Board following a meeting with the CEO or designee and the pupil and guardian or representative to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The CEO or designee shall make a recommendation to the Charter School Board following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon the Charter School enrollment capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

NOTICE OF EXPULSION TO LAST KNOWN DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE

The Charter School shall, in accordance with Education Code § 47605(d)(3), notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days of expulsion, and shall, upon request of the district, provide the district with a copy of the student's cumulative record, including a transcript of grades or report card and health information.

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR EXPULSION HEARINGS INVOLVING SEXUAL ASSAULT OR BATTERY OFFENSES

The Charter School may, upon a finding of good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations that shall be examined only by the Charter School or the hearing officer. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.

1. The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days' notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
2. the Charter School must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness's use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the person or panel conducting the hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.

4. The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.
5. The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.
6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The person conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.
7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, the Charter School must present evidence that the witness's presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to the school. The person presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.
8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness, and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.
9. Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in the public at the request of the pupil being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are not alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing by means of closed-circuit television.
10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness's prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstances can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.
11. If the pupil being expelled requests a public hearing, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session or alternative methods videotaped, etc.

PROBATION

The administrative panel, upon voting to expel a pupil, may suspend the enforcement of the expulsion order for a period of not more than one calendar year and may, as a condition of the suspension of enforcement, assign the pupil to a school, class, or program that is deemed appropriate for the rehabilitation of the pupil. The rehabilitation program to which the pupil is assigned may provide for the involvement of the pupil's parent or guardian in his or her child's

education in ways that are specified in the rehabilitation program. A parent or guardian's refusal to participate in the rehabilitation program shall not be considered in the administrative panel's determination as to whether the pupil has satisfactorily completed the rehabilitation program. The administrative panel shall apply the criteria for suspending the enforcement of the expulsion order equally to all pupils, including individuals with exceptional needs as defined in Cal. Ed. Code section 56026.

During the period of the suspension of the expulsion order, the pupil is deemed to be on probationary status.

The administrative panel may revoke the suspension of an expulsion order if the pupil commits any of the acts enumerated in Ed. Code section 48900 or violates any of the school's rules and regulations governing pupil conduct. When the administrative panel revokes the suspension of an expulsion order, a pupil may be expelled under the terms of the original expulsion order. Upon satisfactory completion of the rehabilitation assignment of a pupil, the administrative panel shall reinstate the pupil in the school and may also order the expungement of any or all records of the expulsion proceedings.

A decision of the administrative panel to suspend an expulsion order does not affect the time period and requirements for the filing of an appeal of the expulsion order with the Governing Board of the Charter School.

EXPULSION APPEALS

If a pupil is expelled from the Charter School, the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian may, within 30 days following the decision of the administrative panel to expel, file an appeal to the Governing Board of the Charter School, which shall hold a hearing thereon and render its decision.

The Governing Board shall hold the hearing within 20 schooldays following the filing of a formal request.

The Governing Board shall hear an appeal of an expulsion order in closed session, unless the pupil requests, in writing, at least five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing, that the hearing be conducted in a public meeting. Upon the timely submission of a request for a public meeting, the Governing Board shall be required to honor the request. Whether the hearing is conducted in closed or public session, the Governing Board may meet in closed session for the purpose of deliberations. If the Governing Board admits any representative of the pupil or the school district, the board shall, at the same time, admit representatives from the opposing party. The Governing Board shall render a decision within three schooldays of the hearing unless the pupil requests a postponement.

The period within which an appeal is to be filed shall be determined from the date the student is provided notice of the decision of the administrative panel to expel, even if enforcement of the expulsion action is suspended and the pupil is placed on probation. A pupil who fails to appeal the original action of the panel within the prescribed time may not subsequently appeal a decision of the panel to revoke probation and impose the original order of expulsion.

TRANSCRIPTS

The pupil shall submit a written request for a copy of the written transcripts and supporting documents from the administrative panel simultaneously with the filing of the notice of appeal with the Governing Board. the Charter School shall provide the pupil with the transcripts, supporting documents, and records within 10 schooldays following the pupil's written request. The Governing Board shall determine the appeal from a pupil expulsion upon the record of the hearing before the administrative panel, together with such applicable documentation or regulations as may be ordered. No evidence other than that contained in the record of the proceedings of the administrative panel may be heard unless a de novo proceeding is granted as provided herein.

It shall be the responsibility of the pupil to request a written transcription from the Charter School for review by the Charter School Governing Board. The cost of the transcript, if any, shall be borne by the pupil except in either of the following situations:

- (1) Where the pupil's parent or guardian certifies to the Charter School that he or she cannot reasonably afford the cost of the transcript because of limited income or exceptional necessary expenses, or both.
- (2) In a case in which the Governing Board reverses the decision of the administrative panel, the Governing Board shall require that the Charter School reimburse the pupil for the cost of such transcription.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

The review by the Governing Board of the decision of the administrative panel shall be limited to the following questions:

- (1) Whether the administrative panel acted without or in excess of its jurisdiction.
- (2) Whether there was a fair hearing before the administrative panel.
- (3) Whether there was a prejudicial abuse of discretion in the hearing.
- (4) Whether there is relevant and material evidence which, in the exercise of reasonable diligence, could not have been produced or which was improperly excluded at the hearing before the administrative panel.

As used herein, a proceeding "without or in excess of jurisdiction" includes, but is not limited to, a situation where an expulsion hearing is not commenced within the time periods prescribed by this article, a situation where an expulsion order is not based upon the acts enumerated herein, or a situation involving acts not related to school activity or attendance.

As used herein, an "abuse of discretion" is established in any of the following situations:

- (1) If school officials have not met the procedural requirements of this article.

(2) If the decision to expel a pupil is not supported by the findings prescribed herein as grounds for expulsion.

(3) If the findings are not supported by the evidence.

The Governing Board may not reverse the decision of the administrative panel to expel a pupil based upon a finding of an abuse of discretion unless the Governing Board also determines that the abuse of discretion was prejudicial.

DECISION ON APPEAL

The decision of the Governing Board shall be limited as follows:

If the Governing Board finds that relevant and material evidence exists which, in the exercise of reasonable diligence, could not have been produced or which was improperly excluded at the hearing before the administrative panel, it may do either of the following:

A. Remand the matter to the administrative panel for reconsideration and may in addition order the pupil reinstated pending the reconsideration.

B. Grant a hearing de novo upon reasonable notice thereof to the pupil and to the administrative panel. The hearing shall be conducted in conformance with the rules and regulations stated herein.

If the Governing Board determines that the decision of the administrative panel is not supported by the findings required to be made herein, but evidence supporting the required findings exists in the record of the proceedings, the Governing Board shall remand the matter to the administrative panel for adoption of the required findings. This remand for the adoption and inclusion of the required findings shall not result in an additional hearing, except that final action to expel the pupil based on the revised findings of fact shall meet all of the following requirements:

A. Final action to expel a pupil shall be taken only by the administrative panel in a public session. Written notice of any decision to expel or to suspend the enforcement of an expulsion order during a period of probation shall be sent by the administrative panel to the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian and shall be accompanied by all of the following: 1) Notice of the right to appeal the expulsion to the Governing Board; 2) Notice of the education alternative placement to be provided to the pupil during the time of expulsion, if applicable; 3) Notice of the obligation of the parent, guardian, or pupil, upon the pupil's enrollment in a new school district, to inform that school district of the pupil's expulsion.

B. the Charter School shall maintain a record of each expulsion, including the cause for the expulsion. Records of expulsions shall be nonprivileged, disclosable public records.

In all other cases, the Governing Board shall enter an order either affirming or reversing the decision of the administrative panel. In any case in which the Governing Board enters a decision

reversing the administrative panel, the Governing Board may direct the administrative panel to expunge the record of the pupil and the records of the school of any references to the expulsion action and the expulsion shall be deemed not to have occurred.

The decision of the Governing Board shall be final and binding upon the pupil and upon the administrative panel. The pupil and the administrative panel shall be notified of the final order of the Governing Board, in writing, either by personal service or by certified mail. The order shall become final when rendered.

The Principal or Designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the school district of student's last known residence, within thirty (30) days.

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

As an independent LEA member of a SELPA, the Charter School shall immediately notify the SELPA and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the SELPA of the discipline of any student with a disability or student who the Charter School or SELPA would be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability.

1. Services During Suspension

Students with disabilities suspended and/or placed in an interim alternative setting shall continue to receive services so as to provide FAPE and enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP/504. Any discipline that includes removal from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, including placement in an interim alternative educational setting, constitutes a change in placement and a manifestation determination shall be conducted.

An IEP or 504 meeting is required within ten (10) days of initial suspension or placement in an interim alternative educational setting.

2. 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/504 Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP/504, 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/504.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 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/504 Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP/504 Team shall:

- a. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis 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/504 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/504, 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.

3. 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 a hearing. A hearing officer shall make a determination regarding an appeal requested under 20 USC 1415(k)(3)(A).

The hearing officer may order a change in placement of the child and either return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, or order a change in placement of a child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement of such child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

When an appeal has been requested by either the parent or the Charter School, the child shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for in 20 USC 1415(k)(1)(C), whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the State or local educational agency agree otherwise, and the State or Charter School shall arrange for an expedited hearing, which shall occur within 20 school days of the date the hearing is requested and shall result in a determination within 10 school days after

the hearing. In effect, this would allow for a maximum placement in an interim alternative educational setting pending a decision for no more than 30 school days.

4. Special Circumstances

The 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 Principal 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.

5. Interim Alternative Educational Setting

The student's interim alternative educational setting or change of placement shall be determined by the student's IEP/504 team. A change of placement is a removal from education for more than ten (10) consecutive days or a pattern of removal, even if for less than ten (10) days. For effective change of placement, there first need be:

- a. Notice
- b. Manifestation determination
- c. Continued receipt of special education services

6. 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 District's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under these procedures 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:

1. 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 the 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; or

2. The parent has requested an evaluation of the child; or
3. The child's teacher, or other the Charter School personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the director of special education 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 – EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

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

Charter School shall comply in a timely manner with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, as they may change from time to time, including but not limited to Internal Revenue Code section 414(d) and related regulations, governing Charter School’s participation in, and/or coverage of its staff members by, the State Teachers’ Retirement System (CalSTRS), the Public Employees’ Retirement System (CalPERS), and/or federal social security.

If Charter School participates in, or otherwise covers its staff members by enrolling or continuing their enrollment in, a “government plan” governed by section 414(d) (e.g., CalPERS), upon dissolution or final liquidation of Charter School, and/or its nonprofit public benefit corporation, notwithstanding any provision in Element 15 to the contrary, Charter School shall distribute its net assets in accordance with section 414(d), related regulations, and the government plan’s requirements.

If Charter School participates in CalSTRS and/or CalPERS, Charter School shall continue such participation for the duration of Charter School’s existence under the same CDS code, if mandated by applicable legal and retirement plan requirements.

VLGA will make participation in State Teachers’ Retirement System (STRS) available to teachers. VLGA will make a 403b available to classified persons working at the Charter School. VLGA will make any contribution that is legally required of the employer, including social security, and unemployment insurance. All withholdings from employees and the Charter School will be forwarded to the STRS fund as required. The Charter School will continue participation in STRS for the duration of the Charter School’s existence under the CDS code.

STAFF RETIREMENT ALLOCATIONS

1. STRS: All certificated personnel including teachers and Site Administrators
2. 403b option: Classified Staff
3. Federal Social Security: Classified Staff, including the Superintendent, Office personnel

RESPONSIBLE STAFF MEMBER

The Superintendent will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for the aforementioned coverage is made with approval of the Board.

STRS REPORTING

VLGA will submit all retirement data through the District and comply with all policies and procedures for payroll reporting. Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of STRS. The Superintendent shall be solely responsible for

ensuring that such retirement coverage is arranged and shall forward any required payroll deductions and related data to the District as required by Education Code Section 47611.3.

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.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(L).)

Pupils of Charter School do not have or gain any right to admission in a particular school of any school district, or program of any school district, as a consequence of applying to or enrolling in Charter School, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the school district.

No student shall be required to attend VLGA. Students who opt not to attend VLGA may attend other district schools or pursue an inter- or intra-district transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of their district or country of residence.

The parent or guardian of each pupil enrolled in VLGA shall be informed during open enrollment on admissions forms that the pupil has 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 VLGA, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the local education agency.

ELEMENT 13 – RIGHTS OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

“The rights of an 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.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(M).)

Employees of the District who choose to leave the employment of the District to work at Charter School shall have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment at Charter School unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement or policy of the District as aligned with the collective bargaining agreements of the District. Leave and return rights for District union-represented employees and former employees who accept employment with Charter School will be administered in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements and any applicable judicial rulings.

ELEMENT 14 – MANDATORY 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.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(N).)

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Any claim, controversy or dispute between the District and Charter School arising out of, or relating to, this Charter, except for any claim, controversy or dispute related to the authorization, non-renewal, revision, and/or revocation of this Charter, (“Dispute”) shall be resolved pursuant to the terms of this Element 14.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each party shall bear and be solely responsible for all of its own attorneys’ fees, costs and expenses associated with any Dispute, including, but not limited to, any written/oral communication, meeting, Issues Conference, mediation, arbitration, administrative and/or civil action (including all levels of appeal), and no party shall be ordered to pay, or be awarded, any other party’s attorneys’ fees, costs or expenses in connection therewith, regardless of who may be deemed the prevailing party. Any fees, costs and expenses charged by a mediator or arbitrator (including all associated administration fees, costs and expenses) shall be shared equally by the parties regardless of the outcome or award. To that effect, any order or award of attorneys’ fees, costs and/or expenses, or mediator’s or arbitrator’s fees, costs or expenses (including any associated administration fees, costs and expenses), issued by a mediator, arbitrator, judicial officer (including all levels of appeal) or jury in any Dispute shall be deemed invalid as a matter of law and unenforceable by one party against the other party.

Any Dispute between the Charter School and the District shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

- 1) Any Dispute shall be communicated in writing (“Written Notification”). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the Dispute and any supporting facts. The Written Notification shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

Unless directed otherwise all Written Notifications to the District and Charter School shall be addressed respectively as follows:

Director
Lake Elsinore Unified School District
545 Chaney Street
Lake Elsinore, CA 92530

Dr. Don Wilson

Vista Charter Public Schools
2900 W Temple St.
Los Angeles, CA 90026

- 2) A written response (“Written Response”) shall be tendered to the other party within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties. The Written Response shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile or e-mail, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such communication if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile or e-mail, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by certified mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.
- 3) If the Dispute has not been otherwise resolved by mutual agreement, the parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss the Dispute identified in the Written Notice (“Issue Conference”). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date from the date on which the Written Response is received by the other party or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties.
- 4) If the Dispute has not been resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, either party may then request that the Dispute be resolved by mediation. Within fifteen (15) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties, the parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator. If the parties are unable to mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator, the mediator shall be selected from a list of mediators prepared and provided by the American Arbitration Association. Mediation proceedings shall commence within thirty (30) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, mediation proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial mediation procedures of the American Arbitration Association.
- 5) If the mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to resolve the Dispute by binding arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, arbitration proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the State Bar of California or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California.

ELEMENT 15 – CHARTER SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES

“The procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the charter 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.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(O).)

REVOCATION OF THE CHARTER

The District may revoke the Charter pursuant to the provisions set forth in the Charter Schools Act of 1992, as they may be amended from time to time. The District may revoke the Charter of Charter School if the District finds, through a showing of substantial evidence, that Charter School did any of the following:

- Charter School committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the Charter.
- Charter School failed to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the Charter.
- Charter School failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.
- Charter School violated any provision of law.

Prior to revocation, and in accordance with Education Code section 47607(g) and state regulations, the District will notify Charter School in writing of the specific violation, and give Charter School a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation, unless the District determines, in writing, that the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils. Revocation proceedings are not subject to the dispute resolution provisions set forth in this Charter.

Pursuant to Education Code section 47607.3, a charter school identified for needing assistance and provided advice and assistance from the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence based on failure to satisfy state evaluation rubrics may be subject to revocation.

CLOSURE ACTION

The decision to close Charter School, by the governing board of Charter School must be documented in a “Closure Action”. A Closure Action shall be deemed to have been automatically taken when any of the following occur: the Charter is revoked (subject to the provisions of Education Code section 47607(f)) or non-renewed by the District Board of Education and Charter School has exhausted its revocation or non-renewal administrative appeal rights pursuant to Education Code sections 47605(k) and 47607(j), or its administrative appeal rights have lapsed, or the charter school voluntarily closes at any stage of the administrative appeal process; the governing board of Charter School votes to close Charter School; or the Charter lapses.

CLOSURE PROCEDURES

The procedures for charter school closure set forth below are guided by Education Code sections 47604.32, 47605, and 47607 as well as California Code of Regulations, title 5, sections 11962 and 11962.1, and are based on “Charter Schools Closure - Requirements and Recommendations” posted on the California Department of Education website. All references to “Charter School” apply to Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation and governing board.

Designation of Responsible Person(s) and Funding of Closure

Prior to or at the time of the taking of a Closure Action by either the governing board of Charter School or the District Board of Education, the governing board of Charter School shall designate a person or persons responsible for conducting and overseeing all closure-related procedures and activities, and allocate sufficient funding for, or otherwise determine how Charter School will fund, these activities.

Notification of Closure Action

Upon the taking of a Closure Action, Charter School shall send written notice of its closure to:

1. The District. Charter School shall provide the District with written notice of (1) the person(s) designated to be responsible for conducting and overseeing all closure activities, and (2) the source, location, and management of the funding for such activities. If the Closure Action is an act of Charter School, Charter School shall provide the District with a copy of the governing board resolution or minutes that documents its Closure Action.
2. Parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, currently enrolled in Charter School within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written parent notification to the District.
3. Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE). Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to RCOE by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the District.
4. The Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) in which Charter School participates. Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the SELPA in which Charter School participates by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the District.
5. The retirement systems in which Charter School’s employees participate. Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action, Charter School shall notify, as applicable, the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), the Social Security Administration, and the Riverside County Office of

Education of the Closure Action, and follow their respective procedures for dissolving contracts and reporting. Charter School shall provide a copy of these notifications and correspondence to the District.

6. The California Department of Education (CDE). Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the CDE by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this notification to the District.
7. Any school district that may be responsible for providing education services to the former students of Charter School. Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action within 72 hours of the Closure Action. This notice must include a list of potentially returning students and their home schools based on student residence. Charter School shall provide a copy of these notifications, if any, to the District.
8. All Charter School employees and vendors within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written employee and vendor notification, with any attachments, to the District.

Notification of all the parties above, with the exception of employees and vendors, must include but is not limited to the following information:

1. The effective date of the closure of Charter School
2. The name(s) and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
3. The students' school districts of residence
4. How parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, may obtain copies of student records and transcripts, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements

In addition to the four required items above, notification of the CDE shall also include:

1. A description of the circumstances of the closure
2. The location of student and personnel records

In addition to the four required items above, notification of parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, shall also include:

1. Information on how to enroll or transfer the student to an appropriate school
2. A certified packet of student information that includes closure notice, a copy of the student's cumulative record and other records, including but not limited to grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed coursework, credits that meet graduation requirements, a transcript, and state testing results

3. Information on student completion of college entrance requirements, for all high school students affected by the closure

Notification of employees and vendors shall include:

1. The effective date of the closure of Charter School
2. The name(s) and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
3. The date and manner, which shall be no later than 30 days from the effective date of the closure of Charter School, by which Charter School shall provide employees with written verification of employment

Within 30 calendar days of the effective date of closure, Charter School shall provide all employees with written verification of employment. Charter School shall send copies of all such employee verification letters to the District.

Records Retention and Transfer

Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws as well as District policies and procedures, as they may change from time to time, regarding the transfer and maintenance of Charter School records, including student records. These requirements include:

1. Charter School shall provide the District with all original student cumulative files and behavior records, pursuant to District policy and applicable District handbook(s) regarding cumulative records for secondary and elementary schools, for all students, both active and inactive, of Charter School. Transfer of the complete and organized original student records to the District, in accordance with District procedures applicable at the time of closure, shall occur within seven (7) calendar days of the effective date of closure.
2. Charter School's process for transferring copies of student records to receiving schools shall be in accordance with applicable law and District procedures for students moving from one school to another.
3. Charter School shall prepare and provide an electronic master list of all students to the District in accordance with the District procedures applicable at the time of closure. This list shall include the student's identification number, Statewide Student Identifier (SSID), birthdate, grade, full name, address, home school/school district, enrollment date, exit code, exit date, parent/guardian name(s), and phone number(s). If the Charter School closure occurs before the end of the school year, the list also shall indicate the name of the school to which each student is transferring, if known. This electronic master list shall be delivered to the District in the form of a CD or otherwise in accordance with District procedures.

4. Charter School must organize the original cumulative files for delivery to the District in two categories: active students and inactive students. Charter School will coordinate with the District for the delivery and/or pickup of student records.
5. Charter School must update all student records in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) prior to closing.
6. Charter School must provide to the District a copy of student attendance records, teacher gradebooks, and Title I records (if applicable).
7. Charter School must provide to the District the name, title, and contact information of the person designated to maintain all Charter School personnel records after the closure. Personnel records to be transferred to and maintained by the designee must include any and all employee records, including but not limited to, records related to performance and grievance. Charter School must provide to the District and the designee a list of all active and inactive employees and their periods of service. Both Charter School and the designee, individually and separately, shall inform the District immediately upon the transfer of Charter School's employee records to the designee.
8. Charter School shall ensure that all records are boxed and clearly labeled by classification of documents and the required duration of storage in accordance with District procedures.
9. Charter School shall provide to the responsible person(s) designated by the governing board of Charter School to conduct all closure-related activities a list of students in each grade level and, for each student, a list of classes completed and the student's district of residence.

Financial Close-Out

After receiving notification of closure, the California Department of Education (CDE) will notify Charter School and the authorizing entity of any liabilities Charter School owes the state, which may include overpayment of apportionments, unpaid revolving fund loans or grants, and/or similar liabilities. The CDE may ask the county office of education to conduct an audit of the charter school if it has reason to believe that the school received state funding for which it was not eligible.

Charter School shall ensure completion of an independent final audit within six months after the closure of Charter School that includes:

1. An accounting of all financial assets. These may include cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value.
2. An accounting of all liabilities. These may include accounts payable or reduction in apportionments due to loans, unpaid staff compensation, audit findings, or other investigations.

3. An assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to Charter School.

This audit may serve as Charter School's annual audit if it meets all of the requirements of the annual audit.

Charter School shall pay for the financial closeout audit of Charter School. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt incurred by Charter School will be the responsibility of Charter School and not the District. Charter School understands and acknowledges that Charter School will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Charter School. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. Charter School understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused AB 602 funds will be returned to the District SELPA or the SELPA in which Charter School participates, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.

Charter School shall ensure the completion and filing of any annual reports required. These reports include but are not necessarily limited to:

1. Preliminary budgets
2. Interim financial reports
3. Second interim financial reports
4. Final unaudited reports

These reports must be submitted to the CDE and the authorizing entity in the form required. These reports should be submitted as soon as possible after the Closure Action, but no later than the required deadline for reporting for the fiscal year.

For apportionment of categorical programs, the CDE will count the prior year average daily attendance (ADA) or enrollment data of the closed Charter School with the data of the authorizing entity. This practice will occur in the first year after the closure and will continue until CDE data collection processes reflect ADA or enrollment adjustments for all affected LEAs due to the charter closure.

Disposition of Liabilities and Assets

The closeout audit must identify the disposition of all liabilities of Charter School. Charter School closure procedures must also ensure appropriate disposal, in accordance with the Charter School's governing board bylaws, fiscal procedures, and any other applicable laws and regulations, of any net assets remaining after all liabilities of Charter School have been paid or otherwise addressed. Such disposal includes, but is not limited to:

1. Charter School, at its cost and expense, shall return to the District any and all property, furniture, equipment, supplies, and other assets provided to Charter School by or on behalf of the District. The District discloses that the California Education Code sets forth the requirements for the disposition of the District's personal property and Charter School

shall bear responsibility and liability for any disposition in violation of statutory requirements.

2. The return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any terms and conditions set when the donations were accepted.
3. The return of any grant and restricted categorical funds to their sources according to the terms of the grant or state and federal law.
4. The submission of final expenditure reports for any entitlement grants and the filing of Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as appropriate.

If Charter School is operated as or by a nonprofit corporation, and if the corporation does not have any functions other than operation of Charter School, the corporation shall be dissolved according to its bylaws.

Charter School shall retain sufficient staff, as deemed appropriate by the Charter School governing board to complete all necessary tasks and procedures required to close the school and transfer records in accordance with these closure procedures.

Charter School's governing board shall adopt a plan for wind-up of Charter School and, if necessary, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code.

Charter School shall provide the District within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action with written notice of any outstanding payments due to staff and the time frame and method by which Charter School will make the payments.

Prior to final close-out, Charter School shall complete all actions required by applicable law, including but not limited to the following:

- a. File all final federal, state, and local employer payroll tax returns and issue final W-2s and Form 1099s by the statutory deadlines.
- b. Make final federal tax payments (employee taxes, etc.)
- c. Complete and submit all required federal and state filings and notices to the State of California, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Department of the Treasury, including but not limited to final tax returns and forms (e.g., Form 990 and related Schedules).

This Element 15 shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, cancellation of this Charter, or any other act or event that would end Charter School's authorization to operate as a charter school or cause Charter School to cease operation. Charter School agrees that, due to the nature of the property and activities that are the subject of this Charter, the District and public shall suffer irreparable harm should Charter School breach any obligation under this Element 15. The District therefore reserves the right to seek equitable relief to enforce any right arising under this Element 15 or any provision of this Element 15 or to prevent or cure any breach of any

obligation undertaken, without in any way prejudicing any other legal remedy available to the District. Such legal relief shall include, without limitation, the seeking of a temporary or permanent injunction, restraining order, or order for specific performance, and may be sought in any appropriate court.

SCHOOL'S CLOSURE AGENT

The Superintendent will serve as the Charter School's closure agent in the event that the school closes.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

FACILITIES

Charter School shall comply with all geographic and site limitations and related requirements set forth in Education Code sections 47605.1, 47602(a), and 47605(a).

Non-District-Owned Facilities

Occupancy and Use of the Site: Prior to occupancy or use of any school site or facility, Charter School shall provide the District with a current Certificate of Occupancy or equivalent document issued by the applicable permitting agency that allows Charter School to use and occupy the site as a charter school. Charter School shall not exceed the operating capacity of the site and shall operate within any limitations or requirements provided by the Certificate of Occupancy and any applicable permit. Charter School may not open or operate without providing a copy of an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy to the District. If Charter School intends to move or expand to another facility during the term of this Charter, Charter School shall adhere to any and all District policies and procedures regarding charter material revision and non-material amendment. Prior to occupancy or use of any such additional or changed school site, Charter School shall provide an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy to the District for such facility. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in this Charter, the interpretation, application, and enforcement of this provision are not subject to the Dispute Resolution Process outlined in Element 14.

The Charter School will maintain a safe and healthy work and school environment. The Charter School will comply with Education Code Section 47610 by utilizing facilities that are either compliant with the Field Act or facilities that are compliant with California Building Standards Code.

Vista Lago Global Academy is in the process of negotiating a private, non-District building, and it will comply with local city and county ordinances, safety codes, and other relevant codes for the building that the school will occupy, including obtaining any required use permit or certificate of occupancy and shall provide copies of the same to the District. OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) and Department of Health & Safety regulations will be followed. Campus cleanliness and security will be maintained as follows (not an exhaustive list):

- All buildings comply will with California Building Standards Code, Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access requirements, and other applicable fire, health and structural safety requirements, and evidence as such will be on file;
- A safety inspection of the grounds and facilities will occur on a monthly, or as needed, basis;
- Employees will report any unsafe conditions, or potential hazards, to the administration immediately; and

- Ongoing communication with law enforcement and local police regarding crime around and within the campus will occur;
- SASCA-CV will annually test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained and in an operable condition at all times. SASCA-CV will conduct fire drills as required under Education Code Section 32001.

INSURANCE

Insurance Requirements

No coverage shall be provided to Charter School by the District under any of the District's self-insured programs or commercial insurance policies. Charter School shall secure and maintain, at a minimum, insurance as set forth below with insurance companies acceptable to the District [A.M. Best A-, VII or better] or the equivalent provided through a California Joint Powers Authority self-insurance program to protect Charter School from claims which may arise from its operations. Each Charter School location shall meet the below insurance requirements individually.

It shall be Charter School's responsibility, not the District's, to monitor its vendors, contractors, partners, and/or sponsors for compliance with the insurance requirements.

The following insurance policies are required:

1. Commercial General Liability, including Fire Legal Liability, coverage of \$5,000,000 per Occurrence and in the Aggregate. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Lake Elsinore Unified School District and its Board of Education as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School's policy. Coverage shall be maintained with no Self-Insured Retention above \$15,000 without the prior written approval of the District.
2. Workers' Compensation Insurance in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code adequate to protect Charter 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 if Charter School does not operate a student transportation service. If Charter School provides student transportation services, the required coverage limit is \$5,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.
4. Crime Insurance or Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by Charter 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 \$1,000,000 per occurrence/\$1,000,000 aggregate.

5. Cyber Liability insurance coverage with minimum limits of \$500,000 per occurrence and \$500,000 general aggregate.
6. Professional Educators Errors and Omissions liability coverage with minimum limits of \$5,000,000 per occurrence and \$5,000,000 general aggregate.
7. Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage with minimum limits of \$5,000,000 per occurrence and \$5,000,000 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. Whether this coverage is separately issued or included by endorsement to another policy, such coverage shall be endorsed to name the Lake Elsinore Unified School District and Its Board of Education as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School's policy.
8. Employment Practices Legal Liability coverage with limits of \$5,000,000 per occurrence and \$5,000,000 general aggregate.
9. Excess/Umbrella Liability insurance with limits of not less than \$10,000,000 is required of all high schools and any other school that participates in competitive interscholastic or intramural sports programs.

Coverages and limits of insurance may be accomplished through individual primary policies or through a combination of primary and excess policies and alternative methods of coverage as approved by the District. Where specifically required above, and with respect to any other coverage for which such endorsements and/or provisions are available, each policy shall be endorsed to name the Lake Elsinore Unified School District and Its Board of Education as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School's policy.

Evidence of Insurance

Charter School shall furnish to the District at the outset of the Charter agreement and within 30 calendar days of the inception or effective date of any new policies, renewals, or changes, certificates of insurance evidencing such coverage and signed by authorized representatives of the insurance carrier.

With respect to the coverages for which additional insured status is required as set forth above, the certificate(s) of insurance shall reflect the Lake Elsinore Unified School District's and Its

Board of Education's status as named additional insureds thereunder, and shall attach a copy of the endorsement(s) extending such coverage.

Should Charter School deem it prudent and/or desirable to have insurance coverage for damage or theft to Charter 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 Charter School.

Hold Harmless/Indemnification Provision

To the fullest extent permitted by law, Charter School does hereby agree, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the District and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorneys' fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever, arising out of, or relating to, this Charter agreement. Charter School further agrees to the fullest extent permitted by law, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the District and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorneys' fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever for claims, damages, losses and expenses arising from or relating to acts or omission of acts committed by Charter School and/or its officers, directors, employees or volunteers. Moreover, Charter School agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the District and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers, for any contractual liability resulting from third party contracts with Charter School's vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors.

FISCAL MATTERS

District Oversight Costs

The District may charge for the actual costs of oversight of Charter School not to exceed 1% of Charter School's revenue, or the District may charge for the actual costs of oversight of Charter School not to exceed 3% if Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District may charge the maximum oversight fee allowed under the law as it may change from time to time. The oversight fee provided herein is separate and distinct from the charges arising under charter school facilities use agreements.

Cash Reserves

Charter School acknowledges that the recommended cash reserve is 5% of expenditures, as provided in section 15450, title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

Third Party Contracts

Charter School shall ensure that all third party contracts, whether oral or written, for supplies, equipment, goods and/or services, for the direct or indirect benefit of, or otherwise related to the operation of, Charter School, require compliance with and otherwise conform to all applicable local, state, and federal policies, regulations, laws, and guidelines, including but not limited to licensing and permit requirements as well as requirements related to protection of health and safety.

Special Education Revenue Adjustment/Payment for Services

In the event that Charter School owes funds to the District for the provision of agreed upon or fee for service or special education services or as a result of the State's adjustment to allocation of special education revenues from Charter School, Charter School authorizes the District to deduct any and all of the in lieu property taxes that Charter School otherwise would be eligible to receive under section 47635 of the Education Code to cover such owed amounts. Charter School further understands and agrees that the District shall make appropriate deductions from the in lieu property tax amounts otherwise owed to Charter School. Should this revenue stream be insufficient in any fiscal year to cover any such costs, Charter School agrees that it will reimburse the District for the additional costs within forty-five (45) business days of being notified of the amounts owed.

Student Body Funds

Charter School shall supervise and manage any and all student body funds in a manner consistent with the provisions of Education Code sections 48930-48938. Charter School shall include and address student body funds in its financial reports, and ensure that such funds are included and addressed in Charter School's annual audit as a stand-alone item.

Audit and Inspection of Records

Charter School agrees to observe and abide by the following terms and conditions as a requirement for receiving and maintaining its charter authorization:

- Charter School is subject to District oversight.
- The District's statutory oversight responsibility continues throughout the life of the Charter and requires that the District, among other things, monitors the fiscal condition of Charter School.
- The District is authorized to revoke this Charter for, among other reasons, the failure of Charter School to meet generally accepted accounting principles or if Charter School engages in fiscal mismanagement.

Accordingly, the District hereby reserves the right, pursuant to its oversight responsibility, to audit Charter School books, records, data, processes and procedures through the District or other means. The audit may include, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Compliance with terms and conditions prescribed in the Charter agreement,

- Internal controls, both financial and operational in nature,
- The accuracy, recording and/or reporting of Charter School's financial information,
- Charter School's debt structure,
- Governance policies, procedures and history,
- The recording and reporting of attendance data,
- Charter School's enrollment process,
- Compliance with safety plans and procedures, and
- Compliance with applicable grant requirements.

Charter School shall cooperate fully with such audits and shall make available any and all records necessary for the performance of the audit upon 30 days' notice to Charter School. When 30 days' notice may defeat the purpose of the audit, the District may conduct the audit upon 24-hours' notice.

Fiscal Policies and Procedures

Charter School shall establish, maintain, and implement sound fiscal policies and procedures, including but not limited to internal controls governing all financial and business-related activities.

Apportionment Eligibility for Students Over 19 Years of Age

Charter School acknowledges that, in order for a pupil over nineteen (19) years of age to remain eligible for generating charter school apportionment, the pupil shall be continuously enrolled in public school and make satisfactory progress toward award of a high school diploma. (Ed. Code § 47612(b).)

Local Control and Accountability Plan

In accordance with California Education Code sections 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall include in its annual update a "listing and description of the expenditures for the fiscal year implementing the specific actions included in the charter as a result of the reviews and assessment required by paragraph (1)" of section 47606.5(a). (Ed. Code § 47606.5(b).)