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# THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL

**TK/K-8 CHARTER PETITION FOR FIVE-YEAR TERM  
(July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2019)**

**Originally Submitted to the SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Approved on Appeal by the STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ON JULY 9, 2014**

**Material Revision to Accelerate Student Enrollment Plan Approved May 2015**

**Material Revision to Add Grades 9-12 Submitted November 2015**

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**APPENDICES** included with original petition

- A: Curriculum Scope and Sequence Samples Grades**
- B: Governance Documents: Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Conflict of Interest Code**
- C: Teacher Signatures, Resumes & Credentials in Support of Petition**
- E: Parent Signatures in Support of Petition**
- F: Letters of Support for Petition**
- G: Grant Award Letters**
- H: Health and Safety Plan**

**Included with this revision:**

**11/2015 Revised Five Year Financial Projections and Cash Flow**

## AFFIRMATIONS AND ASSURANCES

Thrive Public School will comply with any and all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, ensuring that the school shall:

- Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations.
- Not charge tuition.
- Not discriminate against any student on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, nationality, race, color or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).
- Admit all pupils who wish to attend the school. Cal. Education Code § 47605(d)(2)(A).
- Determine admission by a public random drawing, if the number of pupils who wish to attend the school exceeds the school capacity. Preference shall be given to current students and pupils who reside in the San Diego Unified School District. The lottery shall be conducted in accordance with Federal and State Guidelines and Education Code § 47605(d)(2)(B).
- Not enroll pupils over nineteen (19) years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements and shall comply with minimum age requirements for public school attendance. Cal. Education Code § 47610(c).
- Not require any child to attend Thrive Public School, nor any employee to work at the charter school.
- In accordance with Education Code § 47605(d)(3), if a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduation or completing the school year for any reason, Thrive Public School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information.
- Be deemed the exclusive public employer of the employees of Thrive Public School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act.
- Adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.
- Meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code §§ 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute,

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

- Comply in a timely fashion with all reporting requirements, including enrollment, attendance (ADA), standardized testing, and other data and information required.
- Ensure that teachers hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools are required to hold under NCLB and other applicable laws. These documents shall be maintained on file at the charter school and shall be subject to periodic inspection by the chartering authority. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to non-core, non-college preparatory teachers.
- Comply with the terms of Education Code § 47611 (STRS).
- Maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage at all times.
- Comply with all applicable laws and regulations relating to charter school facilities.
- Agree to standard SBE requirements and processes regarding supervisorial oversight, funding and services for special education students, inspection and audit requirements as aligned to applicable laws.
- Comply with the Brown Act, nonprofit integrity standards, and applicable federal and state laws regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.
- Be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of the charter school.
- Submit a timely renewal application for the charter before the expiration of the initial five year charter term.
- The charter school shall consult regularly with its parents, guardians, and teachers regarding the school's educational program.
- The charter school shall offer at least the minimum amount of instructional time at grade levels specified in Education Code section 47612.5 and shall maintain contemporaneous written records of all pupil attendance which shall be made available for audit and inspection in accordance with law.
- A charter school that provides independent study shall comply with the same statutory requirements as do other public schools. Only pupils who are residents of San Diego, Imperial, Orange, or Riverside Counties shall be eligible to participate in the charter school independent study program.
- A charter school shall not claim state funding for the independent study of a pupil if the school has provided any funds or other things of value to the pupil or his or her parent or guardian that the school does not provide to pupils who attend regular classes or to their parents or

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

- The petitioner(s) shall provide information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the school, including, but not limited to, the facilities to be utilized by the school, the manner in which administrative services of the school are to be provided, and potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and the County Office of Education.
- The petitioner(s) shall provide financial statements that include the proposed first-year operational budget, including start-up costs, and cash flow and financial projections for the first three years of operation.
- An annual statement of all receipts and expenditures shall be approved and filed with the chartering authority by September 15.
- Annual budget and financial reports shall be submitted to the chartering authority and the San Diego County Office of Education/County Superintendent of Schools:
  1. Preliminary annual budget on or before July 1.
  2. First interim financial report on or before December 15. This report shall reflect changes through October 31.
  3. Second interim financial report on or before March 15. This report shall reflect changes through January 31.
  4. Final unaudited report for the full prior year on or before September 15.
- An annual, independent, financial audit report shall be transmitted to the chartering authority, the State Controller, the San Diego County Office of Education/County Superintendent of Schools, and the State Department of Education by December 15.
- The petition contains assurances of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for special education students.
  1. All eligible students will receive FAPE in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations as well as the policies and procedures of the Local Plan of the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) that funds this charter school.
  2. No student otherwise eligible to enroll in the charter school shall be denied enrollment due to a disability or to the charter school's inability to provide necessary services.
  3. Facilities used by the charter school do not present physical barriers that would limit an eligible student's full participation in the educational and extracurricular program.
  4. The charter school petition shall contain a reasonably comprehensive description of the charter school's educational program as it relates to the provision of special education services, including but not limited to the following:

Thrive Public School Material Revision Petition

- a. Implementation of support activities, such as Student Success Teams, prior to referrals for special education assessment.
  - b. Procedures for ensuring that students are referred, assessed, and served in a timely manner.
  - c. A full continuum of placement options that includes specialized instruction and related services.
- Comply with all state laws, regulations, reporting and processes required for Charter School Local Control and Accountability Plans under the Local Control Funding Formula. Ed. Code § 47606.5.



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Dr. Nicole Tempel Assisi  
Founder/CEO and Lead Petitioner

11/17/15

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Date

## ELEMENT 1: THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

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

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

*“If the proposed 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(b)(5)(A)(iii).*

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

### I. INTRODUCTION: HISTORY, MISSION, VISION AND SCHOOL LEADERS

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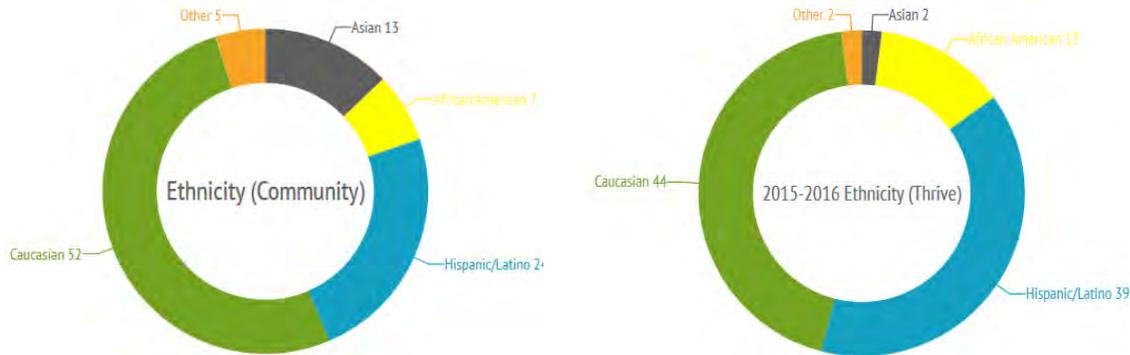
#### A. THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL HISTORY

Thrive Public School (Thrive or TPS) opened in September 2014 after a lengthy charter petition process that culminated in a unanimous approval by the California State Board of Education on July 9, 2014. The petition originally was submitted to the San Diego Unified School District, where, despite being recommended by the District staff for approval with no conditions, the petition was denied on a 3-2 vote by the school board; San Diego County Office of Education followed suit. Despite being authorized in July, which posed some significant operational challenges, Thrive's experienced founding team was able to open as planned in the fall of 2014. Now, in our second year of operations, Thrive seeks this Material Revision to add Grades 9-12, to enable us to offer our nationally recognized 21<sup>st</sup> century model of education to a full TK/K-12 grade span.

**1. ENROLLMENT DEMAND**

In our first year of operations, Thrive served 55 students in grades TK/K and 6 in 2014-15. While our original charter anticipated 252 students in Year 1, the lengthy charter authorization process understandably caused many of our interested families to seek other schools for their children. Based on community demand, in 2015-16 we expanded enrollment to a full TK/K-8 grade span. We now have 202 students enrolled – the capacity of our current facility – with over 100 students on our waiting list who have not been offered a spot by another school.

We have achieved our intention of ensuring a diverse enrollment that is reflective of the surrounding community. Currently: 51% of our students are eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL), 9% qualify for Special Education and another 2% have 504 Plans; 17% are English Learners. Thrive enrolls more Hispanic/Latino students (39%) and African American (13%) than reside in the surrounding community, and slightly fewer Caucasians (44%) and Asians (2%), as illustrated by the following:



**2. NATIONAL RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT FOR THRIVE**

Thrive’s innovative model has been recognized and generously supported – more than \$2.5 million in funding to date – through several prominent state and national programs:

- Charter Schools Growth Fund, Entrepreneur in Residence ([chartergrowthfund.org](http://chartergrowthfund.org)):** Thrive’s Founder and CEO, Dr. Nicole Tempel Assisi, participated in this prestigious incubator program from 2013-2014. Charter Schools Growth Fund (CSGF) is a non-profit venture capital fund working to transform K-12 education by investing in innovative charter school networks that offer outstanding educational options for underserved students. Its Next Generation School initiative supports entrepreneurs developing next generation schools in the charter sector. Many of these schools blend learning by combining online learning technology with the key tenets of successful bricks-and-mortar CMO's, creating personalized learning experiences for students, and delivering dramatically better results.
- Next Generation Learning Challenges ([nextgenlearning.org](http://nextgenlearning.org)):** Thrive was selected as one of 20 initial grantees in Wave IV of this highly competitive national grant program, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Thrive received an initial planning grant of \$100,000 in

2013, and a launch grant of \$150,000 (matched by another \$150,000 from other sources) in 2014 to help fund critical start-up costs in the next year of planning and development. Next Gen Learning Challenges (NGLC) are designed to accelerate educational innovation through applied technology to dramatically improve college readiness and completion in the United States. To date, the program has awarded more than \$40 million in grants to 75 grantees. This multi-year program provides investment capital to expand the use of proven and emerging learning technologies, collects and shares evidence of what works, and fosters innovation and adoption of solutions which will dramatically improve the quality of learning in the United States, particularly for low-income students and students of color. NGLC is managed by EDUCAUSE in partnership with the League for Innovation in the Community College, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the International Association for K-12 Online Learning.

- **The Eli and Edith Broad Foundation:** Thrive received a grant of \$200,000 from the Foundation in 2014. Since 1999, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation has invested more than \$600 million to significantly improve student achievement in urban areas through strong leadership to support great teachers, school district efficiency to push more resources to the classroom, and more options for parents seeking high-quality public education for their children.
- **The Girard Foundation:** The Girard Foundation, a private, grant-making foundation established in 1986, provided a \$60,000 grant to Thrive in 2014. The Foundation's mission is to foster innovation in K-12 education, with the goal of improving student outcomes in San Diego County. The Foundation supports projects and programs that: demonstrate new, more effective methods of teaching and learning; improve the ways schools operate; are designed around concepts that are transferable and/or scalable; and produce data that can lead to change.
- **California Department of Education (CDE) Public Charter Schools Grant Program:** In 2014, Thrive was awarded a \$575,000 Planning and Implementation sub-grant from the CDE under the U.S. Department of Education's Charter Schools Program. This competitive, peer-reviewed public grant program is intended to help new charter schools fund critical start-up expenses.
- **New Schools Venture Fund Catapult Grant:** In the fall of 2015, Thrive was awarded \$100,000 for the planning and design of Thrive's expansion into high school, including the articulation of our instructional model, our human capital strategy and our facilities plan. Thrive is one of only three programs in California (and 14 total nationally) to receive this grant.

Through these programs, Thrive has served as an important demonstration site modeling 21<sup>st</sup> century school design. More than 240 visitors in just over one year have come to see Thrive's innovative model in action. Thrive's Founder and CEO, Dr. Nicole Tempel Assisi, has given several presentations about Thrive at local, regional and national conferences, including: the National Charter School Conference, where she spoke on the process of starting a charter school; the CCSA Annual Conference, where she discussed messaging for education; the New schools Catapult Summit, where she shared strategies for successful implementation of Blended and Project Based Learning. In collaboration with National University, Dr. Assisi also hosted the 2015 Next Gen Learning Symposium which brought together educators from charter, district and private schools in San Diego to take a deep look at best practices for a 21<sup>st</sup> century education.

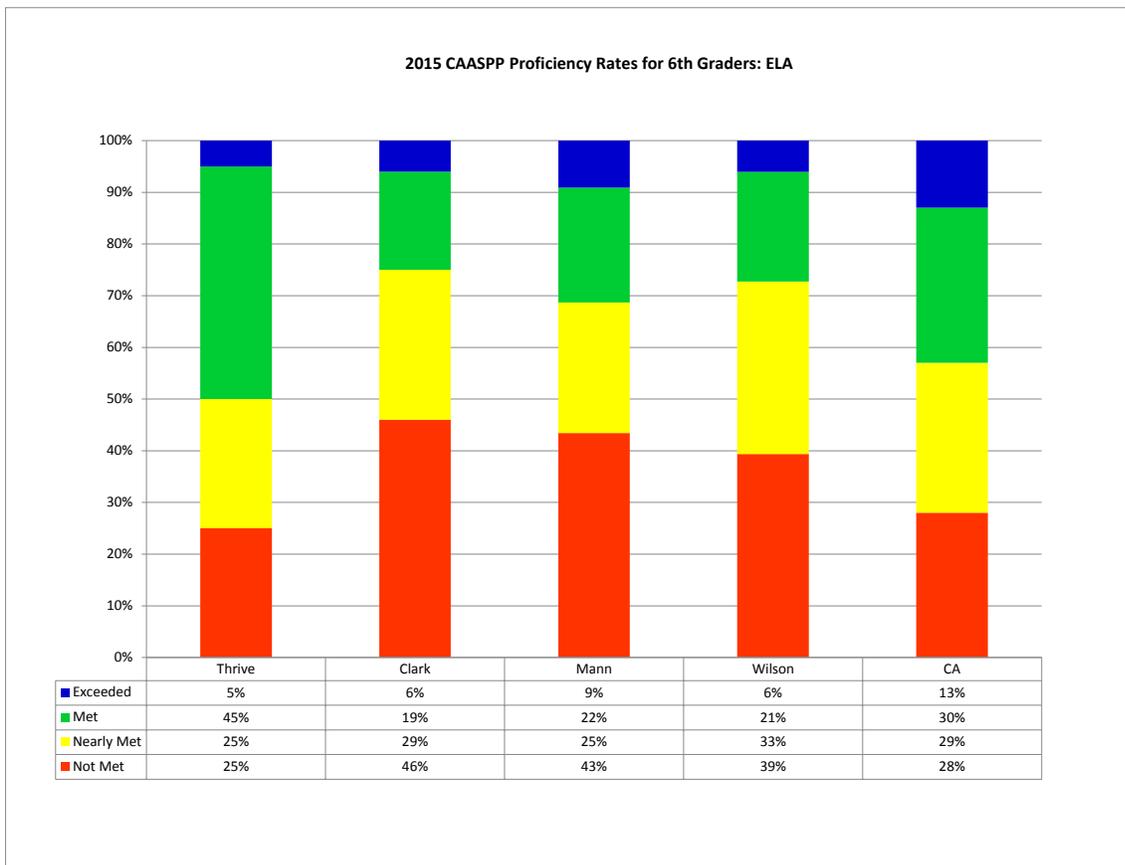
Thrive also has received local and national media attention, which has bolstered both student and staff recruitment efforts for the school considerably:

- [Thrive Public Schools Named Top 100 in U.S.](#), by Getting Smart and Dr. Tempel Assisi was interviewed on KUSI Television, November 27, 2014
- *Thrive Revive, Playspace Makeover*, FoxSports San Diego and Kaiser Permanente, September 23, 2014 ([pre-makeover footage](#)) and ([post-makeover footage](#)) January 10, 2015
- *Thrive is recognized as a NGLC Breakthrough School with best practices in Distributive Leadership*, by Stefanie Blouin for NGLC, April 2nd, 2015
- *Thrive, CBS Morning News*, AM760, April 21, 2015
- *Thrive's Next Gen Learning Symposium*, by Stefanie Blouin for NGLC, August 26, 2015
- *A Guide to Surviving – and Thriving – at Project Based Learning*, by MaryJo Madda, for edSurge, September 8, 2015.

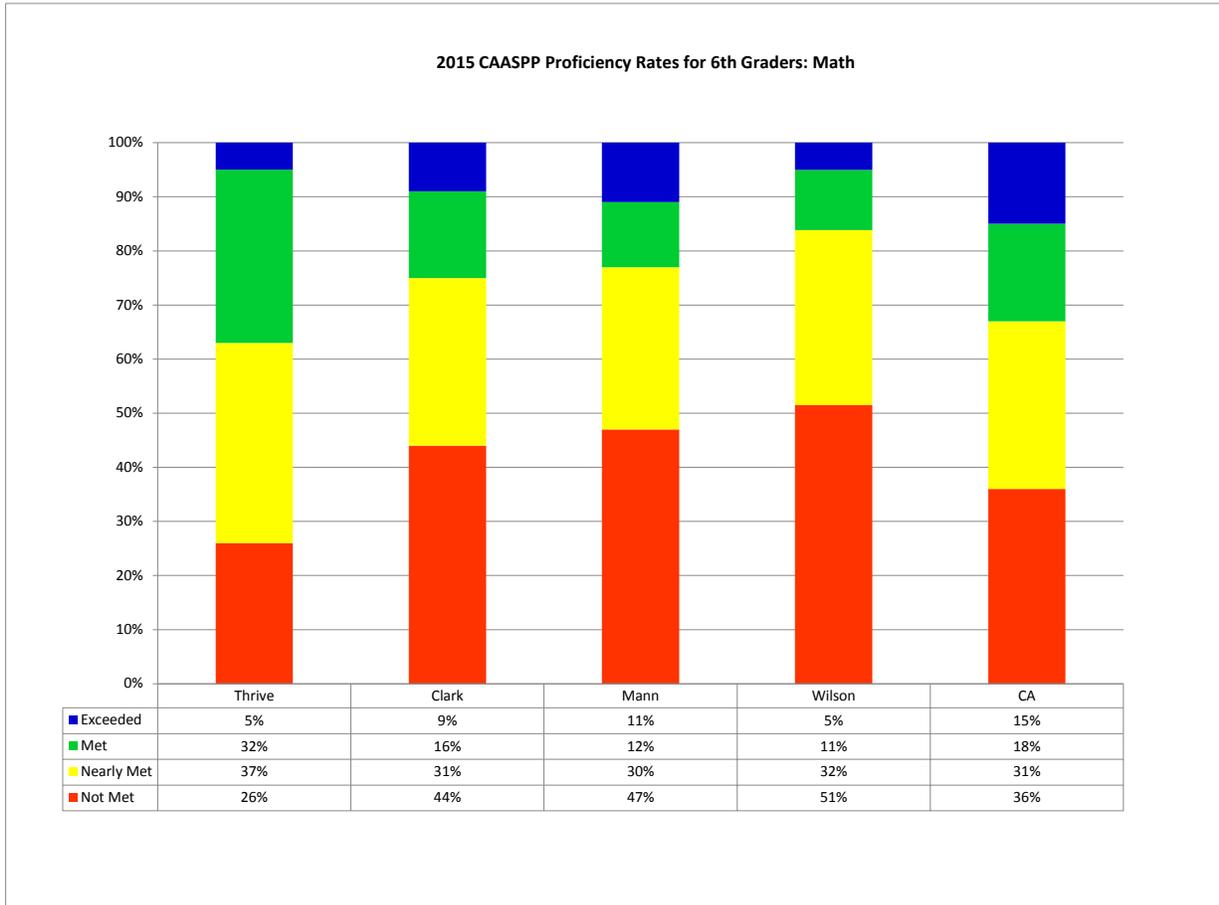
As we expand into a full TK-12 grade span, we are committed to continuing to lead discussion and serve as a model for other educators in implementing innovative practices that help personalize education and leverage 21<sup>st</sup> century technology for the success of diverse students.

### 3. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

While the availability of standardized data about Thrive to date is limited, it is very promising. On the spring 2015 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), Thrive's 21 6<sup>th</sup> graders – who had been with us for less than one full year – out-performed all three nearby traditional middle schools our students would otherwise attend, as well as statewide averages for 6<sup>th</sup> graders:



Source: <http://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/sb2015/Search>.



Source: <http://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/sb2015/Search>.

English Learners also have demonstrated impressive gains at Thrive: 42% made greater than one year's growth based on NWEA MAP data. While we are still awaiting 2015 CELDT data, initial feedback leads us to believe we will reclassify one-third of our students in the coming year.

#### **4. ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE OF THRIVE'S SUCCESS TO DATE**

The following additional measures reflect the solid foundation Thrive already has established:

- 100% of Thrive's 6<sup>th</sup> graders in 2014-15 made presentations of learning to their parents and a community audience. 100% of these students shared an explanation of their readiness to progress to the next grade level. Their presentations included a reflection on the year's learnings, an overview of the student's personalized learning plan, and the student's MAP data. Through their presentations, students reflected on the work they accomplished in the sixth grade and set goals for next year.
- All faculty completed 25 total professional development days and another 74 hours of weekly professional development/collaborative planning time in 2014-15. Already this year (as of the end of October), our 8 returning (including two teachers who returned as school leaders) and 6

new teachers have participated in a three-week Summer Institute for professional development and planning time. At the beginning of August, our entire Thrive education team traveled to Los Angeles for a week long intensive training in Responsive Classroom, a research-based approach to social and emotional learning that has shown an increased in academic performance and positive school culture. Our teachers are now fully trained in the four domains of the Responsive Classroom: Engaging Academics, Positive Community, Effective Management, and Developmental Awareness.

- As our enrollment grew dramatically from 55 students in 2014-15 to 221 students in 2015-16, student retention from the previous year was strong, with 88% of our students returning for the current year. Thrive added another 147 new students in grades 2-6 and grade 8.
- All of our teaching staff from 2014-15 returned for the current year. Approximately half of our teachers in 2015-16 have more than 10 years of experience and four hold a Master's degree.
- Thrive maintained a very low 2% suspension rate, (1 student in our small school was suspended 1 time), and had no expulsions in 2014-15.
- Student survey results from our first year were overwhelmingly positive:
  - 100% of students agree or strongly agree that they get academic help at school
  - 95% of students agree or strongly agree that they receive personalized attention
  - 90% of students agree or strongly agree that they are challenged in their classes
  - 90% of students agree or strongly agree that their teachers care about them
  - 90% of students agree or strong agree that they are not afraid to make a mistake at school.
- Parent surveys are similarly high:
  - 100% agree or strongly agree that Thrive creates a joy for learning
  - 100% agree or strongly agree that their child receive personalized attention at school
  - 96% agree or strongly agree that their child is being prepared for his/her academic future
  - 96% agree or strongly agree that their child enjoys going to school
- Parent participation has been high, with 92% of parents attending student exhibitions and student-led conferences, and 75% attending parent meetings at school.
- Thrive's Board of Governors has overseen all facets of operations and student performance, meeting monthly. All meetings are held in accordance with the Brown Act and other applicable legal provisions (see Element 4). At an annual retreat and at meetings throughout the year, the Board has received extensive training from: Thrive's back-office services provider regarding proper fiscal management and oversight; Young, Minney and Corr, LLP regarding various legal compliance issues including the Brown Act and Conflicts of Interest; and from school leaders regarding the Local Control Accountability Plan, state testing and other accountability measures.
- Thrive's financial position is very strong, with a 17% reserve and a current cash balance of 25.5% (Oct. 31, 2015). The first year audit, conducted by an outside independent auditor on the CDE's approved auditor list, resulted in no findings.

Based on ongoing parent demand to expand Thrive’s innovative model to serve high school students, Thrive now seeks to amend its charter petition to serve a full TK/K-12 grade span. The following includes detailed descriptions of Thrive’s plan for high school, embedded throughout the already-approved descriptions of our TK/K-8 program<sup>1</sup>.

## B. MISSION

Thrive Public School’s mission is to innovate, adapt and expand the concept of a 21<sup>st</sup> century school by leveraging technology and collaboration to provide a rigorous and highly individualized TK/K-12 academic program for diverse students in central San Diego. The foundation of our program is the concept of Aristotle's *Phronesis*: it is not enough to have knowledge; we must know what to do in context and with thoughtful deliberation. Thrive is a new paradigm for public education that *Engages Learners and Personalizes Learning* to help all students be College-Prepared, Career-Inspired and Community-Minded. To do this we:

- **INNOVATE** and model the Common Core through an authentic student-centered, mastery-based approach that integrates Project-Based Learning, Blended/Targeted Learning and a “whole child” approach via Exploratory Learning to ensure students gain “real world” understanding of content and learn *how* to learn;
- **ADAPT** by ensuring that our highly qualified educators have the time, resources, skills and support to meet individual student needs based on data, inquiry and ongoing reflection to offer a truly personalized program for each and every student, including multiage grouping, looping and team teaching in TK/K-8 and dedicated Studio, Advisory and Counseling time in high school to best meet students’ needs;
- **EXPAND** the concept of school to incorporate Community Based Learning, Family-Facilitated Learning, and Social/Emotional Learning as students work both individually and collaboratively, adapt to new challenges, and employ solid decision-making and self-regulation in the pursuit of ambitious goals for college and meaningful careers.

## C. VISION

Our vision as a 21<sup>st</sup> century school values:

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

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

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<sup>1</sup> Where appropriate, we have made minor revisions to the TK/K-8 descriptions to reflect actual operations, e.g. the enrollment chart, inclusion of TK with Kindergarten, and Board roster. There are *no* substantive changes to the TK/K-8 program descriptions – Thrive is operating as planned. Verbiage has been updated to reflect the fact that we are already open and operating (versus the original petitions future-projecting plans).

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

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

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

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

#### **D. FOUNDERS/LEADERS, BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND PARTNERS**

Thrive Public School was founded and is being led by an accomplished and experienced team of San Diego educators and partners. Several members of our team, including our Founder/CEO, have previously launched and/or managed highly successful charter schools and are familiar with the myriad tasks to be completed, ensuring strong capacity to develop and operate a successful new school.

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

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

##### **David Yeager II, Director of Operations**

Prior to working serving in the field of Education, David Yeager had twelve years business and operational experience in the professional sector. Since 2010, he's used his vast know-how and technical savvy to improve the functioning of a variety of charter schools. Director Yeager has served as a Business Operations and Charter Consultant for KAVOD Charter, Girard charter, and as the Operations Manager for UPforEd, City Heights Preparatory School, and now Thrive Public Schools. In addition, Mr. Yeager has volunteered in several public schools. He was a board member for both Helix Charter High School and Darnell Charter School and a School Site Council member for San Diego Unified School District.

**Shelli Kurth, School Director**

Director Kurth began her distinguished career as an educator in 1997. In the last two decades, she has been an advocate for educational change. Ms. Kurth was a founding member of both San Diego Parents for Education (UPforEd) and the Point Loma Cluster Schools Foundation. She served as a board member for the Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) and as an Education Committee member for the League of Women Voters. In 2012, she was recognized as the Volunteer of the Year by the Ocean Beach Town Council. Director Kurth brings her experience in the classroom and community to serve Thrive Public Schools.

**Joseph Acker III, Dean of Students**

Mr. Acker has a Master's in Education from High Tech High's GSE program and brings a compliment of real-world and educational experience to the Thrive Leadership Team. He's taught in both traditional schools and schools with expertise in 21<sup>st</sup> century learning such as e3, High Tech High North County, and Thrive Public Schools. In his nearly two decades of experience in education, Mr. Acker has served as an Associate Professor for the San Diego Community College District. Prior to entering the teaching field in the late 90's, Mr. Acker was a Field Engineer.

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

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

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

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

Kerry Flanagan serves as the Chief of Staff of the California Charter Schools Association, a membership organization supporting California's 1,100+ charter schools serving more than 500,000 students. Ms. Flanagan began her career in public education in 1991 as a secondary education teacher in Virginia. She then worked as an education consultant supporting various reform efforts in traditional urban and suburban public school districts in California, Arkansas, Louisiana, Michigan and Florida. Ms. Flanagan worked at San Diego City Schools for several years in various positions where she was responsible for strategic planning, organizational development and the authorization and oversight of the district's charter schools. She served as the District's Chief of Staff for her last one and a half years there. Ms. Flanagan received her B.A. in Secondary Education, Social Studies from Virginia Wesleyan and a M.A. in Political Science from San Diego State University.

**Ben Boyce, Senior Manager of Public Affairs, Southwest Strategies LLC**

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

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

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

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

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

In addition, Thrive partners with several prominent organizations and individual advisors, including:

**Illuminate Education, Inc. ([illuminateed.com](http://illuminateed.com)):** Dr. Assisi collaborated with Illuminate, a leading provider in student data and assessment management, to create an "On-Track Dashboard" that provides Thrive with actionable, real-time data from Thrive's various instructional programs. This new dashboard

expands on Illuminate's systems that include grading/report cards, attendance, special education tracking, discipline and more in a comprehensive data management system that includes a parent portal for parents and students to access information. The new dashboard system allows Thrive's educators to track individual, class, sub-group and other groupings, tied directly to our specific curriculum and assessments, and identify quickly where extra supports are needed, assign coaching to teachers, and help drive instructional decision-making.

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

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

**ExEd:** a non-profit organization, is a highly respected charter school back-office services provider that was founded in 1998 and has worked with more than 100 charter schools in Southern California. ExEd's 40+ staff members have years of combined expertise in public charter school finance, compliance, reporting, human resources, payroll services and much more. (ExEd.net.) ExEd provides services and expert consulting to Thrive including: bill paying, cash-flow management, financial reporting, accounting, budgeting, payroll, audit preparation, and more.

Additional advisors include:

*Marcia Aaron, Executive Director, KIPP:LA*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Dr. Darlene Robles, Professor of Clinical Education, Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California; Former Superintendent, Los Angeles County Office of Education*

*Robert Schwartz, Senior Advisor, New Teacher Center; Co-Chair, Education and Society Program and Academic Dean, Harvard Graduate School of Education*

*Jed Wallace, President and CEO, California Charter Schools Association*

*Daniel Zaragoza, Real Estate Professional, Prudential*

## II. STUDENTS THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL WILL EDUCATE

### A. TARGET STUDENT POPULATION

#### 1. PROJECTED ENROLLMENT

Thrive Public School (“Thrive”) opened in September 2014 with approximately 55 children in grades TK/K and 6. Thrive’s high school, which will open in the fall of 2016, will begin by serving three classes of 9<sup>th</sup> graders with a total of 90 students, and will add one grade level per year, until the school is at capacity. It is the vision to expand each year to ultimately reach 756 students in grades TK/K-8 in our 5<sup>th</sup> year of operations, and 360 students in grades 9-12 in 2019-20, our 6<sup>th</sup> year of operations, for a total TK/K-12 of 1,116 students. Between TK/Kindergarten and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, classes are arranged in mixed-age groupings of students taught by a collaborative team of teachers in self-contained classrooms, which we refer to as “Core” clusters rather than segregated grade levels:

Core 1: TK/Kindergarten

Core 2: 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade

Core 3: 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade

Core 4: 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade

Core 5: 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade

In high school, the model shifts to follow a traditional course selection structure, with students rotating to different classes with single-subject credentialed teachers.

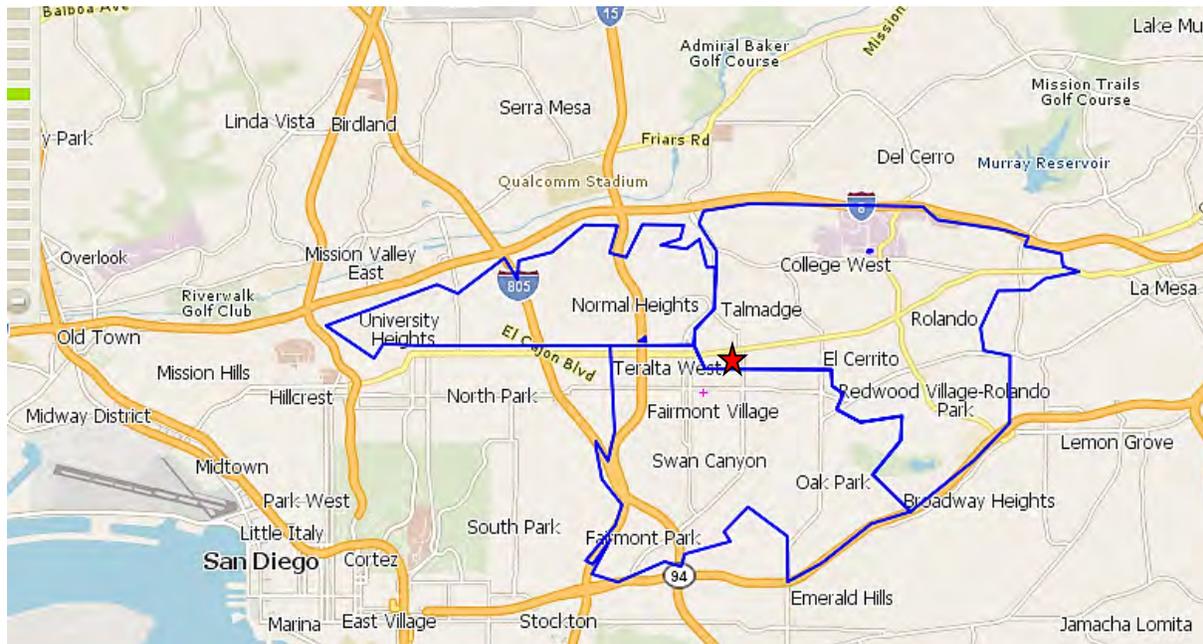
The following are our enrollment projections for the term of this charter:

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
TK/Kindergarten	34	44	84	84	84
1st grade		23	42	84	84
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade		23	42	84	84
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade		16	42	84	84
4 <sup>th</sup> grade		16	42	84	84
5 <sup>th</sup> grade		23	42	84	84
6 <sup>th</sup> grade	21	23	42	84	84
7 <sup>th</sup> grade		23	21	84	84
8 <sup>th</sup> grade		10	21	84	84
9 <sup>th</sup> grade			90	90	90
10 <sup>th</sup> grade				90	90
11 <sup>th</sup> grade					90
12 <sup>th</sup> grade					
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>1,026</b>

#### 2. SURROUNDING COMMUNITY:

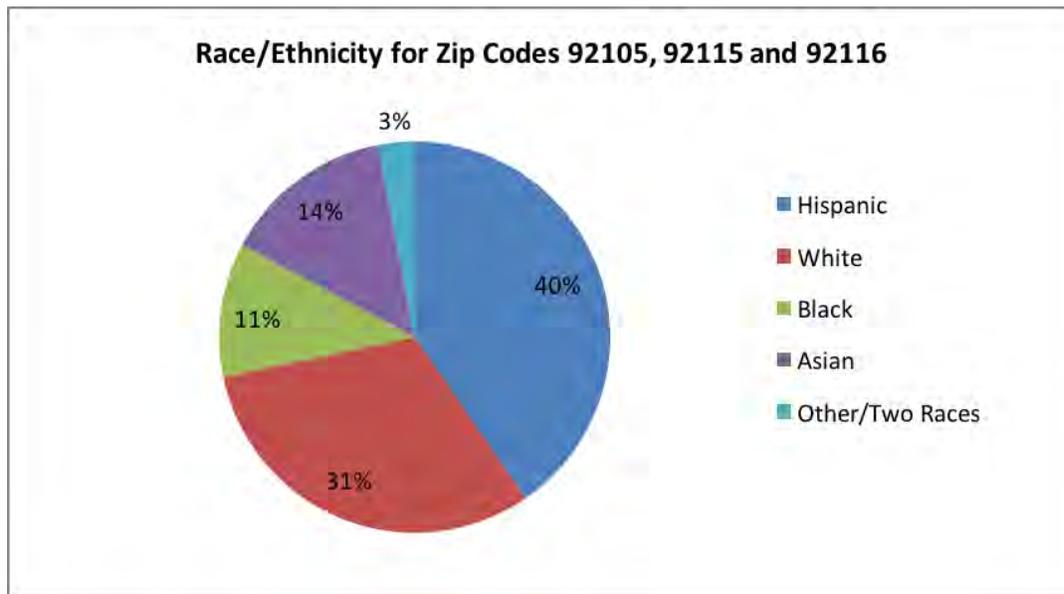
Thrive Public School is open to all students who wish to attend, though we focus our recruitment efforts (see *Element 7: Racial and Ethnic Balance*) on the Mid-City area and the Crawford and Hoover Clusters, which include portions of zip codes 92105, 92115 and 92116, as illustrated by the map below (see

Section II.B., Existing Public Schools, below, for a detailed map of the Hoover and Crawford Cluster boundaries). Thrive’s current campus is indicated by the red star:



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

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



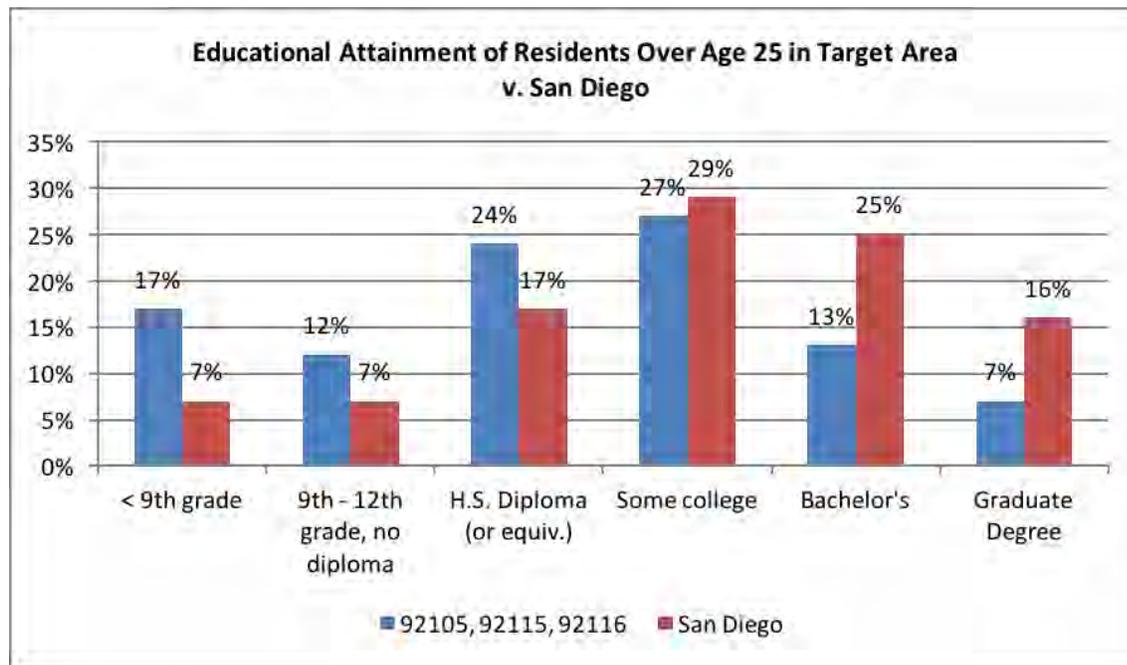
Source: [healthycity.org/census](http://healthycity.org/census) 2010.

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

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

Source: *factfinder2.census.gov (2010 census)*.

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

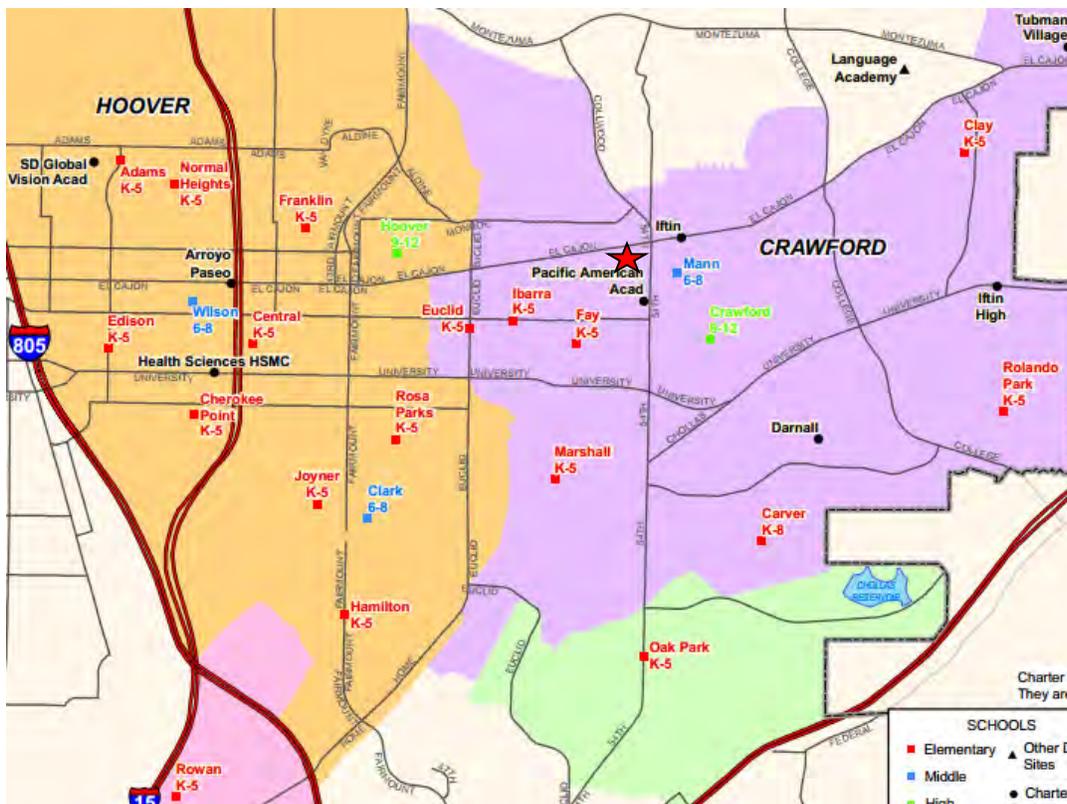


Source: *factfinder2.census.gov (2010 census)*.

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

**A. EXISTING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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



Source: sandi.net.

Across the Hoover and Crawford Clusters, there are currently 20 traditional public elementary schools, three middle schools, one TK/K-8 span school, two high schools (Hoover and Crawford), plus six charter schools. Seventeen of the traditional public schools and two of the charter schools operate on SDUSD’s year-round schedule.<sup>2</sup> While most of these schools have realized student achievement gains in recent

<sup>2</sup> Schools on the year-round schedule are: Carver, Central, Cherokee Point, Clark, Edison, Euclid, Fay, Garfield Elementary, Hamilton, Hardy, Ibarra, Joyner, Language Academy, Marshall Elementary, Normal Heights, Rosa Parks, Wilson, plus America’s Finest Charter and Darnall Charter.

years, 20 of the traditional public schools and two of the charter schools were in Program Improvement status as of the 2013 CDE reports – all three middle schools and both high schools are in PI Year 5. (*Dataquest.cde.ca.gov.*)

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

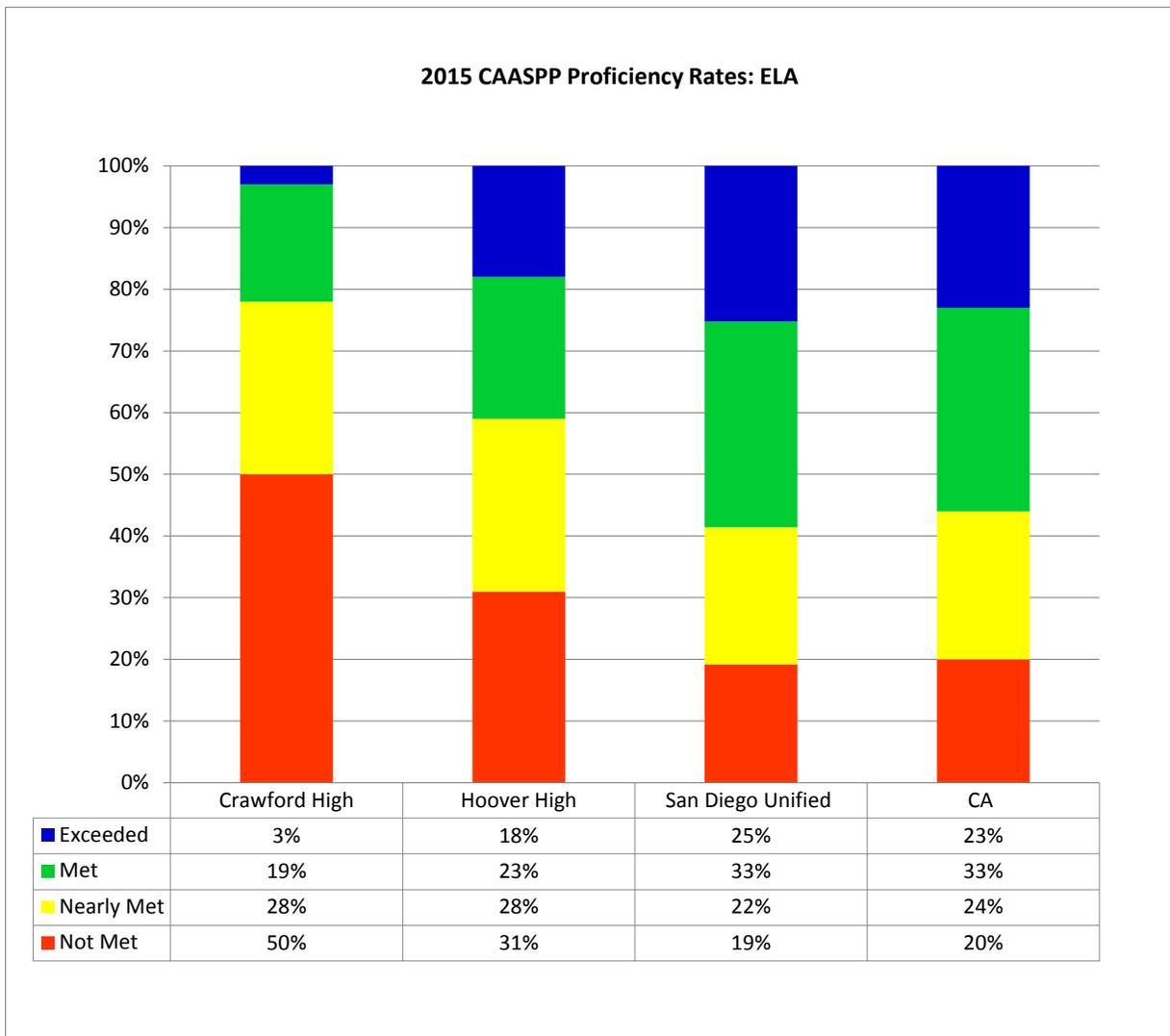
Notably, while the preceding data has demonstrated the remarkable racial, ethnic and socio-economic diversity of our area, the existing public schools do not reflect this diversity -- almost all of these schools have 99-100% students who qualify for Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL), significant English Learner populations (13 of the elementary schools have 50-81% English Learners), and a disproportionate racial composition compared to the broader population, as detailed in the following chart:

School (Grade Levels) 2014-15	2013-14 Enrollment	2013 API Score	2013 State Rank/ Sim. Schools Rank	2013 3-Year Weighted API	%FRPL	% ELs	% Stud. w/ Disab.	% Hisp/ Latino	% Black	% Asian
Adams ES (K-5)	329	776	4/5	777	100	51	17	71	15	5
Carver ES (K-5)	250	725	2/1	730	100	47	15	45	23	19
Central ES (K-5)	784	778	4/6	776	100	78	14	76	8	14
Cherokee Pt. (K-5)	476	735	2/3	740	100	70	13	83	9	5
Clay ES (K-5)	318	791	4/9	797	100	23	23	37	28	8
Edison ES(K-5)	575	859	8/10	852	100	70	12	85	6	3
Euclid ES (K-5)	536	768	3/7	781	100	76	9	76	8	14
Fay ES (K-5)	726	782	4/6	754	100	68	11	59	13	22
Franklin ES (K-5)	287	777	4/6	797	100	60	14	53	13	23
Garfield ES (K-5)	321	829	6/10	840	100	45	20	65	14	2
Hamilton ES (K-5)	524	787	4/8	NA	100	66	9	70	12	14
Hardy ES (K-5)	408	898	9/6	907	63	35	10	27	5	34
Ibarra ES (K-5)	521	727	2/3	742	100	78	14	63	14	19
Joyner ES (K-5)	721	766	3/4	756	100	68	12	78	8	10
Marshall ES (K-5)	524	700	1/3	693	100	67	9	45	26	26
Normal Heights (K-5)	316	816	6/9	802	99	60	12	76	12	1
Oak Park ES (K-5)	529	812	6/5	772	100	46	12	36	26	30
Rolando Park ES (K-5)	230	784	4/9	756	100	45	28	74	10	6
Rosa Parks ES (K-5)	984	776	4/5	778	100	76	11	82	4	12
Rowan ES (K-5)	233	797	5/6	794	91	26	11	99	0	0
<b>MIDDLE SCHOOLS</b>										
Clark (6-8)	1036	745	3/8	722	100	39	15	76	12	9
Mann (6-8)	760	746	3/10	744	100	43	17	49	22	24
Wilson (6-8)	621	708	2/6	701	100	39	19	75	11	9
<b>K-8 SPAN SCHOOLS</b>										
Language Acad. (K-8)	1037	855	7/3	856	55	22	7	51	18	2
<b>HIGH SCHOOLS</b>										
Crawford High School	1161	648	1/7	651	100	37	13	41	25	29
Hoover High School	2019	668	2/4	668	100	30	44	70	12	14

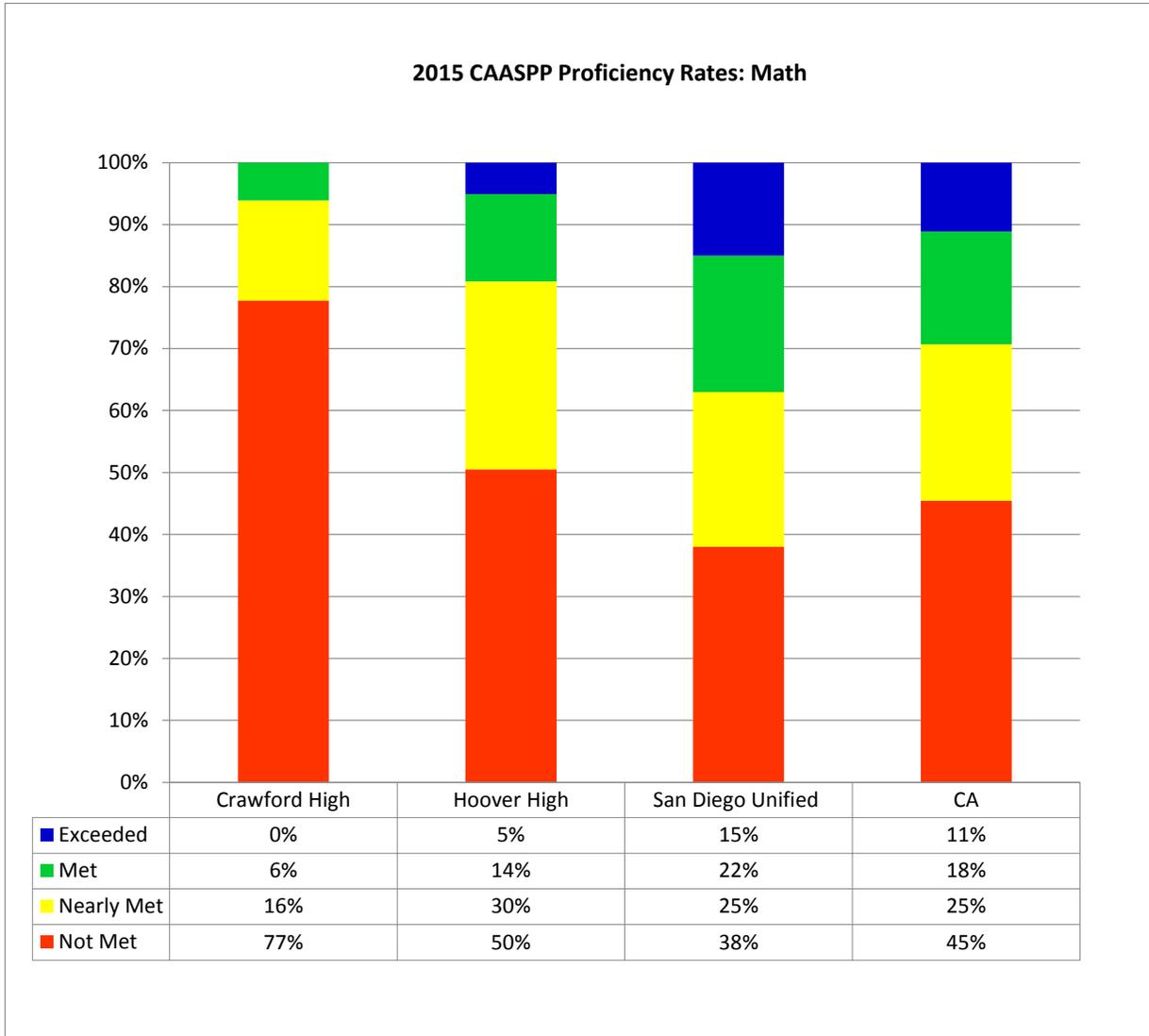
CHARTER SCHOOLS										
America's Finest Ch. (K-8)	255	728	2/6	NA	95	45	14	65	11	10
Arroyo Paseo High (9-12)	140	704	3/*	668	90	37	14	81	10	1
City Heights Prep Acad. (6)	114	534	1/*	NA	100	83	13	43	15	33
Darnall Charter (K-6)	639	790	4/8	789	100	54	13	69	13	11
Harriet Tubman Village Charter (K-8)	363	838	7/10	817	100	40	11	46	35	3
Health and Sciences Middle (6-8)	150	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Health and Sciences High (9-12)	569	828	8/10	792	68	14	10	50	18	5
Iftin Charter (K-8)	476	770	3/10	773	100	79	7	1	88	1
SD Global Vision Acad. (K-5)	228	869	8/*	837	81	10	16	27	36	2
SD Global Vision Acad. Middle (6-8)	86	848	7/*	NA	88	12	20	27	51	0

Source: [cde.ca.gov/Dataquest](http://cde.ca.gov/Dataquest) (2013 API Reports; 2013-14 Enrollment Data).

While overall, San Diego Unified's high schools perform on par or better than state averages, Hoover and especially Crawford – located just 0.3 miles from Thrive's campus -- are struggling, as illustrated by the 2015 spring administration of the new California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP):



Source: <http://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/sb2015/Search>.



Source: <http://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/sb2015/Search>.

While Crawford had an 82.5% cohort graduation rate in 2013-14 (the most recent year available), only 31.9% of their graduates met a-g requirements for admission to the UC/CSU system. Hoover fared slightly better with an 84.6% cohort graduation rate; 39.5% met a-g requirements. (cde.ca.gov/Dataquest (2014 graduation rates). Thrive Public School sees diversity – racial/ethnic, home language, socio-economic status, learning style – as a community asset that should be embraced and celebrated in our school. Our highly personalized model of instruction ensure that all of these diverse students meet our high expectations.

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

Like many in education reform, we believe that models of education developed during the industrial age and still in effect today are outdated and impractical for our ever-changing, rapidly developing global economy. We believe education is not simply about drilling students to learn concrete facts and skills

found in standardized tests, but rather that a 21<sup>st</sup> century education, in order to be truly successful for both students and our nation’s future, must emphasize aptitudes such as problem-solving, critical and creative thinking, inquiry, collaboration, communication and invention. While these aptitudes necessarily depend on a foundational knowledge base that is detailed in content standards, we believe the strongest value in education is learning *how* to learn. Thus, our overarching goal is to ensure that as each student masters the new Common Core standards across each discipline, we also develop each individual student's confidence and passion for learning.

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

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

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



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

leading researchers.

In our self-contained TK/K-8<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms, projects are an inherent part of learning, embedded throughout the day. At the high school level, dedicated PBL time is incorporated into the daily schedule, with teachers collaboratively planning interdisciplinary standards-aligned learning that has real world connections and relevance for our older students. Upper classmen at Thrive's high school will engage in more self-directed projects of their own design (with faculty advising and support), engaging in deeper learning in a topic(s) of interest to them with (where possible) collaboration with working professionals in their field of interest, all culminating in public presentations of their learning.

**Blended/Targeted Learning:** Through interactive tech-based learning programs such as ST Math, Lexia, Achieve 3000, Brain Pop and many more, students proceed at their own pace to master skills and concepts. These online learning tools provide instant data about each student's progress against state standards, enabling teachers to target instruction and ensure each student is progressing. Based on real-time student achievement data and reflection, our classroom teachers use blended learning and flex time to offer "Just Right Instruction" – what students need, when they need it. For example, in grades TK-8, as some students work on classroom laptops, teachers can work with small groups and provide one-on-one support. Curriculum such as Readers' and Writers' Workshop, CGI Math and more ensure each student can proceed at an individualized level and pace. At the high school level, students will use Jungle Writer and College Preparatory Math for their core studies and studio time is allocated daily for students to work on designated online learning such as Learning Bird, Ten Marks and NewsELA, complete credit recovery through programs such as APEX Learning, and receive one-on-one or small group tutoring or other supports. Each core subject teacher will be assigned one Studio session daily to ensure that students who need extra support have dedicated time with a certified teacher in that subject. Students' Advisors and our College Counselor (full-time from year 1 of the high school), will work with students continuously to ensure they are spending their Studio time on appropriate tasks.

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

**Family-Facilitated and Community-Facilitate (Real World) Learning:** We believe that parents are kids' first teachers. Thrive builds on all the teaching parents already do, as well as the natural curiosity that students of all ages have about the adult world.

With our younger students, rather than asking families to do busy work at home, we support families (and provide tutors for parents who are unavailable) to have rich dialogue and fun activities with their children. We select tasks have been shown to increase student success and even improve family dynamics by creating "home-fun" rather than "home-work." This is another opportunity for students to learn things more deeply one-on-one with adults instead of a one-size-fits-all high-level approach to learning. We provide intensive family support, workshops and guidance to help meet families' needs and enable all families to fully participate in their students' learning on a daily basis.

As student age and become more independent, our focus shifts to authentic “real world” applications of learning, including, for our high school students, opportunities to participate in internships, job shadowing, and collaborate with professional on projects that have real world application.

**Social Emotional Learning:** Interwoven in all we do at Thrive is an emphasis on students’ self-actualization through high standards for student behavior, applied learning, student choice and continuous feedback at all ages and stages of their development. We emphasize solid decision-making and self-regulation in the pursuit of ambitious goals, and yet our students also understand that some of the greatest learning can come from reflection on “failures.” Students are active participants in designing and directing their own learning, reflecting on their own learning modalities and styles, and presenting culminating exhibitions and student-led conferences to help them develop awareness and responsibility for their own growth. At the high school level, our emphasis on self-actualization and solid decision-making broadens to include learning in social justice. Faculty will use a variety of acclaimed resources such as Facing History and Ourselves, Zinn Education, Paulo Freire’s Critical Pedagogy (advocating a constructivist approach to learning) and more to help students develop personal connections to historical topics and non-fiction reading. Social justice learning helps engage students in their learning and motivate them to become leaders and active participants in their communities and the world around them, all through a focus on Common Core ELA standards of writing, reading, speaking and listening, as well as History/Social Studies themes.

**Preparation for College and Career:**

Starting at the earliest grade levels, Thrive emphasizes a college mindset for all students. Our emphasis on critical thinking, communication skills (including public presentations of learning), collaboration, time management, persistence and the ability to learn from (and not fear) failure, and more all serve to prepare students will skillsets and mindsets that will benefit them in post-secondary school and their careers. Our Advisory program includes direct instruction in college preparation starting in 9<sup>th</sup> grade; at the high school level, this is expanded to include SAT/ACT/AP test prep, assistance with college applications, financial aid, and identifying appropriate post-secondary options, resume writing and more. Students visit local colleges and universities at least once annually starting in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Thrive’s graduation requirements intentionally exceed a-g requirements for UC/CSU admission, and students will have the option of dual enrollment courses both online and with our partners at San Diego Continuing Education (one of San Diego’s four community colleges). Internships and job shadowing opportunities and collaboration with working professionals will help expose students to meaningful career options. Finally, starting in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, all Thrive students will meet at least quarterly with our full-time College Counselor to discuss and begin preparing for their post-graduation plans. Thrive plans to track graduates (to the extent possible) to help inform our college and career preparation efforts, and measure students’ post-secondary school persistence rates.

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

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

As illustrated in the preceding section (and more fully in *Section IV.C. Teaching Methodologies*, below), the innovative Thrive model is designed to create a new paradigm for 21<sup>st</sup> century education – one that authentically meets the needs of students today, as well as today’s global economy. Thomas Friedman

describes a relevant education that best prepares Americans for the global economy as one that emphasizes the importance of instilling curiosity, love of learning, discernment, creativity, and interdisciplinary thinking. (Ibid.) Defining an “educated person in the 21st century” is perhaps more important now than at any time in the past several decades. New technologies and the globalization of the world economy are fueling societal change at a pace unprecedented in human history. In just the last decade, we have witnessed remarkable change in commonly used technology devices – the so-called “democratization of technology”:

- Digital photos and videos are available instantly (versus film-based), easily manipulated via software such as Photoshop, and distributed in real time on a global scale via social media such as Facebook (more than 1 billion users), YouTube (1 billion unique visitors each month), and Twitter (550 million users); and countless websites and blogs – all changing forever the way humans interact on a global scale.
- Search engines such as Google (more than 1 billion search requests a day in 184 countries) and Yahoo (700 million each month) have dramatically changed the way we access information, including educational content. Where school librarians – and school budgets -- once had to work diligently to replace outdated texts as advances in science, social science and more, today students can access the best thinking in medicine, archeology, astronomy, and an ever-changing economy and political world in real time.
- Personal technology devices including iPods/MP3 players, iPhones/smart phones, Kindles/e-readers, iPads/tablet computers and more – all introduced within the last 5-10 years -- have revolutionized the production, distribution and accessibility of news and entertainment content in a dramatic way, shifting the way billion dollar industries operate.

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

Given the pace of technological developments in particular, many of the vocationally oriented skills and knowledge learned by middle and high school students today will be obsolete by the time these students enter the workforce. Thus, while the educated 21<sup>st</sup> Century worker certainly requires strong English and math skills, there is a growing recognition that “soft skills” -- “the ability to use knowledge, facts, and data to effectively solve workplace problems” (US Dept. of Labor, [www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/softskills.htm](http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/softskills.htm)) – are increasingly important. Problem-solving skills, an ability to think critically and analytically, and a true passion for learning are no longer ideals, but imperatives.

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

First, our learning structure **adapts** to the needs of each student and his/her family. Our schedules encompass flexibility, mixed-age grouping in grades TK/K-8 based on student mastery and not age and dedicated Studio time for high school students to engage daily in targeted, personalized instruction. Small group and one-on-one learning is facilitated by teachers and technology at all grades, and

meaningful family facilitation of learning in grades TK/K-8 and opportunities for “real world” internships and work-based learning in high school expand opportunities beyond our school walls.

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

Just as our students are encouraged to learn from their mistakes, so too our instructional team is driven to continuously **reflect**, refine, try differently and grow. Data is a constant presence in our efforts, both as a tool to track student growth but also to focus professional development and coaching for teachers. Beyond that, we emphasize a simple “gut check” for our team members: Would I send my own child here? Are we providing each student here with the school they deserve?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### A. HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS

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

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

We believe learning best occurs when:

1. Students feel safe, nurtured and supported in a caring school environment with clear, fair and consistent expectations for student and adult conduct.
2. Students and adults are all expected to joyfully push their own limits, with appropriate guidance and enthusiastic support. We believe that children and young adults want to be challenged, and given high expectations for their own futures. They must then be given appropriate, individualized support to achieve the stated goals, and meaningful opportunities to demonstrate their accomplishments and successes. We believe teachers must continuously analyze student achievement data, then scaffold learning and differentiate instruction in order to lead all students to academic growth and achievement, including offering older students opportunities to exercise independence, choice and autonomy in their own learning.
3. Instruction is authentically student-centered and presented in a meaningful context that is relevant to students' lives. While educational pedagogy has long recognized that there are different ways of knowing and learning the same information, many schools continue to emphasize a "one-size-fits-all" approach to teaching. For far too long, schooling has been "premised on the notion that there exists a fixed world that the learner must come to know" and that the construction of new knowledge has not been "as highly valued as the ability to demonstrate mastery of conventionally accepted understandings." (Brooks and Brooks, 1999.)
4. Students are active, not passive learners. True mastery of content best occurs when students are given the means to explore, question, solve problems, reflect, make mistakes, try again, and demonstrate their knowledge. The more actively engaged students are in the learning process, the more effectively they understand and retain concepts and skills that are delineated in the state standards, and even more importantly, the better equipped they are to handle the challenges of the future.
5. Teachers have ample resources, including time, training and coaching, to develop their skills and talents. We believe it is imperative that teachers study and understand the best thinking in education, learn directly from experienced lead teachers, and collaborate with their peers in order to consistently be learners themselves in the context of our school community.
6. Data is used consistently, continuously and effectively to adapt curriculum to individual student's needs. Effective assessment tools (online/offline, formative and summative) and efficient data systems from Illuminate Education, Inc. help educators continually assess and refine their curriculum's impact on each individual student throughout the school year.
7. Collaboration, cooperation and communication skills are valued. Understanding and respecting diverse perspectives and people, effectively communicating and building relationships all are imperative in today's tech-based global economy. Most importantly, we believe learning best occurs **when children and young adults have confidence and believe they can succeed**. When students are given the opportunity to express their skills, talents and intelligence across a variety of contexts, they are able to realize more success and thus develop more confidence. "If we can mobilize the spectrum of human abilities, not only will

people feel better about themselves and more competent; it is even possible that they will also feel more engaged and better able to join the rest of the world community in working for the broader good.” (Howard Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*, 2006.)

#### B. THRIVE ENABLES STUDENTS TO BECOME SELF-MOTIVATED, COMPETENT AND LIFELONG LEARNERS

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

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

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

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

#### C. TEACHING METHODOLOGIES

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

Thrive’s integrated and balanced instructional approach provides a standards-based curriculum that is both skills-based and hands-on, in order to ensure each and every student meets our high

expectations for success, well beyond achieving proficiency on state standards. We emphasize mastery of content over proficiency – authentic understanding and the ability to apply learning, in context, across realms.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **1. PROJECT-BASED LEARNING**

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

Through project-based learning, our students engage in complex and challenging tasks and problem-solving, both independently and in small groups, engaging in a depth of learning that creates true understanding for each individual student in a very personalized way, beyond rote memorization of facts. Our PBL curriculum include Public Presentations of Learning, Exhibitions, and Digital Portfolios. This instructional approach engages students in sustained, collaborative, real-world investigations that involve activities such as asking and refining questions, debating ideas, making predictions, designing experiments, collecting and analyzing data, and creating artifacts. At the high school level in particular, student projects will emphasize authentic, real-world application, with projects constructed around problems and situations that can be found in the modern workplace. These activities will promote a deeper grasp and thoughtful application of important knowledge. Some of the most recognized public high schools in California utilize a project-based approach, including Summit Public Schools high school (2013 API score of 823, 36% FRPL, 87% non-white, 30% EL).

Through projects, our faculty are able to accomplish a number of objectives in an engaging, relevant way for students of all ages, and enable students to:

- *Acquire, communicate, and investigate worthwhile knowledge in depth.* Instead of dividing instruction into disconnected learning blocks in grades TK/K-8, students are able to view school subjects as connected and interrelated, much like real life. At the high school level, dedicated PBL time enables faculty with expertise in discrete core subjects to collaboratively plan integrated, hands-on learning for students with real-world connections. As students explore topics in a variety of ways and through various sources, they learn to relate what they are

learning to their own lives. When students view their learning as having personal relevance, they put more effort into their schoolwork and achievement. (Willis, 1995; Csíkszentmihályi, 2009.) Activities are assigned for home exploration/independent study that help students bridge school learning and their lives at home and the world around them, with the intent of helping students develop problem-solving and decision-making skills.

- *Integrate reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking across the curriculum.* As noted by the California Science Standards Framework: “Effective science programs use standards-based connections with other core subjects to reinforce science teaching and learning. Reading, writing, mathematics, and speaking skills are all needed to learn and do science. In self-contained classrooms, teachers incorporate science content in reading, writing, and mathematics.” (CA Science Framework, p. 13.) Narrative and expository literature and high interest trade books serve as key resources for thematic instruction. Extensive research documents the power of reading and writing across the curriculum to create “active readers and writers by engaging students in authentic literacy tasks that emerge naturally from interesting and worthwhile topics and ideas.” (Vogt, 2010; see also Heibert, 1994, Fielding and Pearson, 1994.)
- *Make choices, interact, collaborate, and cooperate.* Students explore topics individually, in small groups, and together as a whole class. Reading and writing tasks are authentic, motivating, relevant, and contextualized. Students at all grade levels make appropriate choices based on their interests, abilities, and needs.
- *Participate and learn, regardless of ability, level of language development, or background.* One of the most important advantages of cross-curricular thematic instruction is that it is flexible and adaptable. Thematic learning allows teachers to implement a variety of instructional approaches that best meet the students’ needs. For example, while some students may need extra practice with a strategy or skill, others may need additional time for writing or independent reading. This flexibility is central to thematic teaching.

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

While many schools today incorporate some aspect of project-based learning, at Thrive, projects offer two key elements: First, our projects are comprehensive and all-encompassing – projects are a core part of student learning that permeates and integrates activities at our school. This enables students to make real connections between subjects and deepen their understanding of skills and content. Faculty carefully plan and detail all aspects of projects before starting, including alignment to standards across all subject areas. During common planning time, teachers collaboratively create projects using a common project planning template and resources from experts such as the Buck Institute, and then use ongoing student achievement data to continuously refine their plans to ensure the needs of each individual student are being met.

Second, at Thrive it is imperative that our projects are not simply hands-on; they must be authentic and meaningful, allowing children to see the real-world implication of the academic skills and knowledge they master. More importantly, they are able to develop and apply problem-solving, critical and

creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and other crucial skills in a variety of practical contexts and settings and see how “real people” utilize these skills in the everyday workplace. Students gain confidence in their own abilities and the possibilities for their own futures, motivating them to persist in their education.

In this way, projects at Thrive help students become self-directed. Upper classmen in high school will select their own topics – with the guidance of faculty and their Advisors – for meaningful deeper learning over an extended period of time. Engaging in hands-on, real-world project work helps learners “construct meaning by using recognition, memorization, conservation of constancy, classification, spatial orientation, temporal orientation, and metaphorical thinking. Helping students to be conscious of what their senses are telling them, encouraging them to visualize the information for processing, and then prompting them to ask questions and figure out solutions on their own that teachers can best help students develop the tools they need to:

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

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

Finally, project-based learning has significant benefits for English Learners as well. Karen Carrier, in “Key Issues for Teaching English Language Learners in Academic Classrooms,” (Middle School Journal, November 2005) identifies three key challenges English Learners face in the academic classroom: (1) the amount of time required for second language acquisition; (2) the dual job of ELs – learning content and learning the language; and (3) the need for multiple modes of input and output.

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

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

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

A critical tool in our effort to personalize learning for each student is the use of blended learning. Students at Thrive are able to use the ever-growing body of rich on-line curriculum to practice skills and engage in fun, game-like learning that adapts continuously to their individual needs. Instruction in phonetics, reading, math, science, history and much more can be found on high-quality free or low-cost

websites such as [www.khan.org](http://www.khan.org), [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov), [pbskids.org](http://pbskids.org), [coolmath-games.com](http://coolmath-games.com), [www.brainpop.com](http://www.brainpop.com), and [www.curriculet.com](http://www.curriculet.com) that offer K-12 support. In addition, our math curriculum in TK/K-8 is based on the highly successful MIND Institute program, including their acclaimed Spatial Temporal Math software, which has been consistently shown to realize dramatic increases in proficiency levels at schools that previously were among the lowest performers in their states<sup>3</sup>. (See *B.2. Scope and Sequence, Math*, below for more information about the math program.) We also utilize a standards-based programs like Lexia, Reading Plus, Brain Pop, Reading Eggs and more (see below), and at the high school level, ThinkCerca, Learning Bird, and Ten Marks, to enhance classroom learning.

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

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

- *Differentiated learning technology to quickly address students' academic needs.* We anticipate that students – especially those at upper grade levels – enter Thrive with a wide range of different skill levels, with some potentially several grades behind. Quality education software programs can meet students at their levels and provide individualized curriculum and instruction to each student. This allows students who are behind to build the core skills they need to eventually master the grade level standards while also enabling students that are on grade level or above to push ahead. Teachers can create more differentiated lessons plans and pacing guides for groups of students in the same class and leverage the technology to meet their students' unique needs.
- *Real-time data delivered to teachers to improve instruction on a daily basis.* Software programs provide real-time data to teachers so that teachers know the exact levels of their students on an on-going daily and weekly basis. This allows teachers to develop and refine their instructional strategies to ensure that each and every student is meeting the defined criteria for academic success. Teachers are more effectively able to make immediate adjustments during a lesson or in preparation for a lesson because they are provided with organized, accessible, and timely data on their students' progress.
- *Format and delivery mechanism engages students and facilitates small group instruction.* Today's tech-savvy students are engaged when they are using quality technology programs in the classroom. They want to participate in their learning and quality educational software programs offer a highly interactive, engaging experience for students. Because the programs meet students at their levels, students are much less likely to be lost or bored and more likely to feel a sense of accomplishment as they progress through programs. Leveraging technology effectively can also help a teacher group students by levels and having some students work on the technology while others are working directly with the teacher in a smaller group.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://mindresearch.net/cont/research/re\\_ResultsAtScale.php](http://mindresearch.net/cont/research/re_ResultsAtScale.php)

- *Unique offerings for students with special needs.* Thrive has chosen software programs that are flexible and can meet the needs of our student population. ST Math, for example, the acclaimed online math program from the MIND Institute, includes very little language and focuses on numbers, objects and concepts. This has proven to be particularly effective for English Learners. Additionally, Achieve 3000, a literacy program, has customized supports for English Learners built into the software. Blended learning also is particularly impactful as it allows for teachers to most effectively provide targeted one-on-one and small group instruction while other students work online.
- *Potential to extend instructional time for students.* All of the software programs we have selected are web-based and thus students can use them at any time, including during time at home. This enables Thrive to essentially extend the school day for students (we plan to ensure that students also have computer access on campus before and after school through our before and after school program and our 1-to-1 program) and allow students to continue working on their favorite programs. Because students enjoy the programs, they are more likely to use them outside of the school day. This is particularly essential for students who are in need of remedial work to catch up to grade level standards.
- *Increased exposure to technology for a student population with limited access.* 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs require employees to be proficient with technology. Starting in TK/Kindergarten, students have regular access to technology and be able to master the practical technology usage and application skills that are imperative in today’s world. In addition to interactive software, students learn specific tech skills and engage in research and creation of presentations with technology. Programs such as freetypinggame.net, lessonplanet.com, and research sites such as yahooligans.com, bensguide.gpo.gov, lawforkids.org and dozens more are used to enrich student learning.

**a. Blended Learning Curriculum**

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

Curriculum	Subject	Grade Level	Description
<b>Achieve3000</b>	Reading	9-12	Cloud-based tool that assesses students’ Lexile levels and provides differentiated non-fiction texts for reading and analysis. Students complete regular assessments aligned to grade level standards. Texts increase with difficulty as students’ reading levels improve.
<b>Kahn Academy</b>	Math Science	TK-12	Kahn offers thousands of free online courses and video tutorials on a variety of topics, primarily in mathematics and sciences. These videos are supported by interactive exercises. Kahn is ideal for supporting classroom instruction in a rotations-based blended model.

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Curriculum	Subject	Grade Level	Description
<b>No Red Ink</b>	Reading	5-8	Teacher created software that allows for immediate feedback. Provides Common Core aligned grammar and writing support with activities based on student interest and provides students with unlimited online help. Assessments are interactive and questions frequently have multiple correct answers.
<b>Zearn</b>	Math	3-4	Zearn is a comprehensive program designed to provide deep understanding, fluency practice and problem solving skills for students learning mathematics. Strategies include animated videos, learning labs and reassessment opportunities. E-curriculum can be supported by paper-and-pencil workbooks.
<b>ThinkCERCA</b>	Reading Math	3-4	Offers a schoolwide approach o literacy that focuses on argumentative writing and close reading. ThinkCERCA has a library of leveled texts and standard-aligned assessments. The program also provides professional development to teachers to support high quality implementation.
<b>NewsELA</b>	Reading	3-8	Provides unlimited access to hundreds of leveled texts that address current newsworthy events. Every article is available at five levels and supported with Common Core aligned assessments. Students can search articles by interest, and teachers can assign readings.
<b>Waggle</b>	Reading Math	5-8	Waggle analyzes student performance behavior to tailor learning paths. It creates a safe online environment for exploration and student engagement. Emphasizing productive struggle, Waggle provides limited hints and targeted feedback to student activities.
<b>Zeal</b>	Math	TK-12	Supports teachers in providing personalized instruction and assessment by recommending Common Core aligned lesson plans and practice problems. Zeal improves classroom engagement by offering competitive and collaborative class challenges. K-5 tutoring services are also available for a fee.
<b>Razz Kids</b>	Math	TK-4	The award-winning program where K-5 students go to read — anytime, anywhere. With over 27 levels of text, students with varying abilities can benefit from rich content and practice.
<b>ST Math</b>	Math	TK-4	Acclaimed program successfully implemented for more than 10 years, based on research from UC Irvine. ST Math, the Mind Research Institute’s core program, is designed for elementary students and provides courseware that employs a learner’s spatial-temporal reasoning abilities to explain, understand and solve multi-step math problems.
<b>Reading Plus</b>	ELA	3-6	Provides individualized instruction in expository reading comprehension, vocabulary and fluidity. As a student’s Lexile level increases, the text adjusts to increase the challenge for that student furthermore, student reading guides increase based on student needs. Reading Plus has been particularly successful with at risk students, English Learners and other high-need populations.

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Curriculum	Subject	Grade Level	Description
<b>BrainPop and BrainPop Jr.</b>	ELA Math Science History	TK-12	Helps introduce new topics and illustrate complex concepts in math, reading, writing, science, and social studies through animated videos.
<b>Complete Curriculum</b>	ELA Math Science History	TK-12	Downloadable and printable workbooks for math, reading, writing, science, and social studies.
<b>College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM)</b>	Math	9-12	A program designed in collaboration with university professors and created to help students develop an understanding of the mathematical concepts rather than mimic a teacher's procedures without understanding the concepts. Used in collaboration with the math instruction your child receives in core classes. Provides practice problems, descriptions and team challenges, as well as a message board to ask questions and get help.
<b>Lab4u</b>	Science	9-12	Lab4U is a series of apps that support science experimentation and data analysis. Lab4U takes advantage of sensors that are built into smartphones and tablets to allow students to experiment in real time and in any location. Lab4U enhances student motivation and fosters collaboration and participation.
<b>Lexia</b>	ELA	TK-2	Online system for differentiated reading practice, embedded assessment and targeted instruction designed for lower elementary students who are learning to read, primarily in grades K-2. The on-line activities are designed to be multisensory games with engaging settings and characters. With norm-referenced performance measures, Lexia provides teachers with recommendations for the appropriate intensity of instruction in order to improve reading achievement of on-level and at-risk students. It also provides skill-specific lesson plans for teachers or other support providers to complete with students based on their needs. Since students using this program are working on foundational reading skills, there is a significant focus on word study including phonological, phonemic awareness, structural analysis, fluency, vocabulary & comprehension.
<b>Curriculet</b>	ELA	9-12	Provides student and teacher access to literary texts and assignments that are aligned to the common core.
<b>Actively Learn</b>	ELA	4-12	Reading program with tailored questions. Scaffolding, peer learning, and assessment come together inside a text, exactly when students need help and motivation.
<b>ThinkCERCA</b>	Reading Math	3-12	Offers a schoolwide approach o literacy that focuses on argumentative writing and close reading. ThinkCERCA has a library of leveled texts and standard-aligned assessments. The program also provides professional development to teachers to support high quality implementation.
<b>Quill</b>	ELA	6-12	Quill provides free writing, grammar and vocabulary activities to middle and high school students in a video game like environment. It is Common Core aligned.

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Curriculum	Subject	Grade Level	Description
<b>Learning Bird</b>	ELA Math	9-12	Learning Bird is a web-based application aligned with their curriculum or textbook. Learning Bird was designed to provide multiple teaching approaches for a given topic, and promote self-directed independent learning for students. Learning Bird's cloud-centric database of over 15,000 digital resources that are aligned with local curricula, textbooks, and standards. All lessons were created by certified teachers in distinct mediums including PowerPoint, video, images, and songs. Learning Bird's curriculum library is strictly aligned with Common Core Standards, and is checked monthly with each state standard for accuracy. In addition, students can rate lessons as "helpful" and "not helpful," which Learning Bird uses to understand how each student learns and provide recommendations on potential lessons. Learning Bird also tracks students' progress in recent activity reports, activity summaries, and a graph of individual progress.
<b>Books that Grow</b>	ELA History Science	9-12	Books That Grow is an adaptive reading platform that creates CCSS-aligned, leveled, custom versions of fiction and nonfiction books. Books That Grow assesses a student's reading level and adapts their textbooks from different subjects to match that level. Stronger students will be challenged with more difficult syntax and vocabulary, and struggling students will read a simplified version of the same text. Readers from a wide-range of levels will be able to comprehend the same content. This enables teachers to provide differentiated instruction without assigning different textbooks or adapting all of the curriculum by hand.
<b>Time Edge</b>	ELA	9-12	TIME Edge provides current event reading content for students as well as lesson plans for teaching this content. Teachers assign articles to classes, and then use the provided questions and activities to monitor and improve students' reading abilities.
<b>KnowRe</b>	Math	9-12	TIME Edge provides interactive, current events-based reading content for students as well as lesson plans for teaching this content. It allows teachers to assign articles to classes, and then use the provided questions and activities to monitor and improve students' reading abilities. Teachers can also track individual students' progress through an article, as well as their scores on items assigned to a variety of Common Core standards. Students track their progress through each article with a progress bar at the top of the page. The teacher version of each article provides a full Teacher's Guide, complete with discussion questions and the Common Core standards linked to the article. Teachers can also see additional discussion questions in line with the text.
<b>Aleks</b>	Math	K-12	ALEKS (Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces) is a Web-based learning system covering a wide range of full courses in math for K-12 and higher education, with courses from 3rd through 12th grade correlated with state and Common Core standards. Using artificial intelligence to assess what students know--and don't--ALEKS then guides them toward and through adaptive instruction, with periodic re-assessment along the way. The resulting pie charts show students (as well as parents or teachers) their mastery level and what areas they need help with. These pie charts are updated as students progress through the course's embedded assessments, with historical progress reports available to teachers and parents. The original system was developed several decades ago with National Science Foundation funds by software engineers, mathematicians at cognitive scientists at New York University and the University of California, Irvine, and has since been used by millions of students in thousands of schools.

Curriculum	Subject	Grade Level	Description
<b>Ten Marks</b>	Math	3-12	Allows for self-paced, personalized learning. Assessments are customized for student needs and progress monitoring. Emphasizes mathematical fluency through engaging and motivating digital curriculum.
<b>Manga High</b>	Math	K-10	MangaHigh offers over 600 web-based games and adaptive quizzes aligned to math curriculum for grades K through 10. Teachers can search for quizzes and games that align to particular Common Core State Standards and assign them to individual students or the entire class to complete both in the classroom and at home. Teachers can track student progress and activity on their assignments via a Newsfeed. As students progress through the assigned activities, they are guided by a virtual tutor that intervenes when a student struggles and fills in the concept or skill gap. Students can also earn medals and compete with students from other schools for the top spot on the leaderboard for a particular game or activity. MangaHigh activities and games are all browser-based, so they can be accessed on any device with an internet connection.
<b>Science With Tom</b>	Science	6-12	Science With Tom is a NGSS-inspired YouTube show that encourages teacher and student participation in asking questions of the scientists in the comments, and subscribing to the YouTube channel. It supplements a science teacher's current curriculum and inspire curiosity, investigation, and creativity.
<b>Nepris</b>	Science	9-12	Nepris came out of a real need from educators, industry leaders, professionals and community partners alike, to reduce the barriers between industry and education. Its core mission is making industry engagement part of the everyday classroom by empowering teachers to engage students in STEAM. Nepris connects teachers and students with the right industry experts, virtually without having to spend much planning time or leaving the classroom while providing an effective way for companies to extend education outreach and create equity of access.
<b>Flowcabulary</b>	ELA Science Math History	K-12	Flocabulary is an online library of educational hip-hop songs and videos for grades K-12. Over 35,000 schools use Flocabulary to engage and inspire students. Our team of artists and educators is not only committed to raising test scores, but also to fostering a love of learning in every child. Flocabulary songs, videos and exercises will help you meet Common Core objectives in ELA and math. And our engaging material for social studies and science supports interdisciplinary literacy practice.
<b>Science Bits</b>	Science	9-12	Science Bits provides teachers with lessons that help them teach science in a way that engages their students. Based on the constructivist 5E Instructional Model, Science Bits lessons use high quality multimedia interactive content to develop an inquiry-based, learning-by-doing method. Science Bits can be used either as a substitute for textbooks or as complementary material. Science Bits lessons have a homogenous structure designed from a social constructivist perspective. They adhere to an inquiry based model and emphasize skills development. Science Bits is a repository of multimedia science lessons designed to fire up your science class.
<b>Mosa Mack</b>	Science	9-12	All of Mosa Mack's units start with a 6-7 minute animated mystery that engages students with plot, humor, songs, and ends with a question that students get to solve. Inquiry activities that use materials you already have, giving students a tactile way to experience the concepts learned in the episode. The inquiry-scale allows teachers to implement the lesson in a way that makes sense for their classes. They can challenge students to apply what they've learned to solve real-world and relevant problems. The program also walks teachers through best practices of implementing the iterative design process.

Curriculum	Subject	Grade Level	Description
<b>Phet</b>	Science Math	9-12	PhET provides fun, free, interactive, research-based science and mathematics simulations. They test and evaluate each simulation to ensure educational effectiveness. These tests include student interviews and observation of simulation use in classrooms. The simulations are written in Java, Flash or HTML5, and can be run online or downloaded to your computer. All simulations are open source. To help students engage in science and mathematics through inquiry, PhET simulations are developed using the following design principles: encourage scientific inquiry; provide interactivity; make the invisible visible; show visual mental models; include multiple representations (e.g., object motion, graphs, numbers, etc.); use real-world connections; give users implicit guidance (e.g., by limiting controls) in productive exploration; create a simulation that can be flexibly used in many educational situations. As users interact with these tools, they get immediate feedback about the effect of the changes they made.
<b>Accelerate Learning's STEMscopes</b>	Science	TK-12	STEMscopes is a digital science solution for PreK through 12th grade students offering three core curriculum programs, STEMscopes K-12, STEMscopes NGSS, and STEMscopes Early Explorer. Born from the lab and penned by the hands of expert teachers, STEMscopes has always had its ear to the ground, taking in feedback, best practices, and the latest pedagogy to develop the most effective STEM curriculum. Each curriculum is supported by STEMcoach, a professional development portfolio offering a free STEM community that allows teachers to share best practices and lessons while learning from experts in the field, embedded professional development within the program, and onsite launch, advanced & coaching and mentoring sessions.
<b>BirdBrain Science</b>	Science	9-12	BirdBrain Provides easy access to the Common Core standards: Accessible reading ensures every student in your classroom can comprehend the text; free response questions allow students to dig deeper into the text; intuitive reports show administrators how much your students are reading and where students are struggling; teachers can teach lessons based on the specific common core standard they need to focus on; articles focus on domain specific vocabulary to build students comprehension and academic vocabulary. BirdBrain is like an online science textbook written at multiple reading levels.
<b>Noticing Tools</b>	Science Math	9-12	Noticing Tools is a suite of iPad apps that make learning math and science irresistible through play, creative design projects, and collaboration. Find standards-aligned lesson plans and share ideas for implementing Noticing Tools in classrooms. Join the community of educators making STEM learning irresistible.
<b>TuvaLabs</b>	Science	K-12	Tuva is a web-based learning platform that empowers students to master data and statistics methods and concepts, enabling them to become global citizens of the world. Individual classroom use is free! Use Tuva's powerful and user-friendly graphing tool on any of your class projects. Teachers can dive into student and classroom level data about progress and growth. Tuva aligns to Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards and overlapping skills.

Curriculum	Subject	Grade Level	Description
<b>Duolingo</b>	Foreign Language	9-12	Duolingo offers bite-sized lessons that are effective. Each lesson includes a variety of speaking, listening, translation, and multiple choice challenges. Students can instantly see which answers they get correct and receive recommendations for improvement. It's free, fun and effective. With Duolingo for Schools, teachers can easily track their students' progress, run in-class activities and assign homework. Best of all, students love it. An independent study conducted by the City University of New York has shown that 34 hours of Duolingo are equivalent to a university semester of language education.
<b>English Attack!</b>	ELD	9-12	English Attack!'s innovative learning method combines videos, photos, games and social networking for a daily English workout. It's fun and effective. Video Boosters are self-contained exercises are based on video clips. They enable students to practice a range of language skills across six contextual exercises. Each Video Booster takes about 10 minutes to complete: an ideal timespan for sustained concentration. There are over 1,000 video exercises, with more added each day based on the latest movies, TV series, music and current events. To retain a new word or expression in English over time, it needs to be seen and used at least seven times, ideally in different contexts. Repeat exposure and use in games is an ideal way to consolidate new language items without it seeming like hard work. Our range of language games allows you to review vocabulary items seen in a Video Booster or Photo Vocab; to practice your irregular verbs; or to fine-tune oral comprehension. Every lesson or game results in a score that you can always try to improve. Students move up a points and also collect achievement badges once you complete certain learning tasks.
<b>Learning Games Studio</b>	ELD	9-12	<i>Learning Games Studios</i> builds on the work of the award winning not-for-profit <i>Learning Games Network's</i> (LGN) research and game development. By combining educational expertise, innovative game mechanics and experienced industry game developers, LGN attracts funding from a variety of government agencies and major philanthropies. LGN's portfolio includes twelve games and three digital assessment products.
<b>Middlebury</b>	ELD and Foreign Language	9-12	Language faculty from Middlebury and its renowned Language Schools work with K12 to develop and manage the academic content of the Web-based language courses, which K-12 will offer through its online education programs.
<b>Apex</b>	Language Credit Recovery	9-12	Apex Learning is the leading provider of blended and virtual learning solutions. Its digital curriculum provides an active learning experience that engages all students in rigorous coursework to prepare them for college and work. The standards-based digital curriculum is widely used for original credit, credit recovery, remediation, intervention, acceleration, and exam preparation.
<b>Edgenuity</b>	Foreign Language Credit Recovery	9-12	Edgenuity provides engaging online and blended learning education solutions that propel success for every student, empower every teacher to deliver more effective instruction, and enable schools and districts to meet their academic goals. Edgenuity delivers a range of Core Curriculum, AP, Elective, Career and Technical Education (CTE), and Credit Recovery courses aligned to the rigor and high expectations of state, Common Core and iNACOL standards and designed to inspire life-long learning.

In addition to core subject learning via sophisticated online software, pending funding via grants and other financial support, we plan to offer our students myriad opportunities to explore, create, investigate and invent through a tinkering lab, robotics, digital media such as photographs and videos, game creation, and more (see Exploratory Learning, below). In addition to learning skills relating to

keyboarding, word processing, digital editing, presentations, databases and more, students also learn about responsible and ethical use of digital information and electronic communication.

Thrive will have a 1:1 computer to student ratio from grade 3 up and 2:1 for lower grades. Initially, we may establish a computer lab and/or mobile computer carts to ensure each student has frequent exposure to computer learning. We provide students with safe and secure internet access for learning. Our faculty have extensive training in implementing and using on-line curriculum and assessment tools (see *Section VII. Professional Development*, below). Parents also are offered training to ensure equitable access to these tools – through various grant programs we hope to provide computers for families to use at home, but we also ensure parent access to computers on our campus.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

articulate data patterns in their classrooms and describe what they are doing to raise the achievement of all students, and close any gaps that may exist.

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

### 3. *EXPLORATORY LEARNING*

At Thrive, success is not defined simply based on academic prowess in the four core subject areas, but rather far more broadly in ensuring each and every student demonstrates a wide array of skills and talents that go well beyond literacy, math, science and social science – a “whole child” approach. Drawing from acclaimed theories of human development such as Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence Theory, Thrive ensures that students have ample opportunity to explore and develop all areas of their talents and interests, beyond the four core academic subjects. As Gardner has explained, rather than measuring intelligence as one finite figure or concept, “human cognitive competence is better described in terms of a set of abilities, talents, or mental skills, . . . *intelligences*. All normal individuals possess each of these skills to some extent; individuals differ in the degree of skill and in the nature of their combination. . . . intelligences always work in concert, and any sophisticated adult role involves a melding of several of them.” (Howard Gardner, *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons* (2006).) Specifically, Gardner has identified eight broad areas of intelligence, some of which align clearly with the four core academic subject areas, while others cross subjects and realms:

- *Linguistic intelligence* involves sensitivity to spoken and written language, including the ability to use language to accomplish certain goals; to listen perceptively and read critically; to learn languages; to express oneself persuasively or poetically.
- *Logical-mathematical intelligence* is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking: the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically, conceptually, and abstractly; the interest in experimentation, puzzles, investigations and cosmic questions.
- *Musical intelligence* involves the capacity to distinguish the whole realm of sound, and in particular, to discern, appreciate and apply the various aspects of music (pitch, rhythm, and mood) both separately and holistically.
- *Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence* involves the ability to use one's body in highly differentiated and skilled ways, for both goal-oriented and expressive purposes; the capacity to exercise fine and gross motor control of one's body.
- *Spatial intelligence* involves the ability to accurately perceive the visual world and to re-create, manipulate and modify aspects of one's perceptions, even in the absence of the relevant visual stimuli.

- *Interpersonal intelligence* relates to the ability to work cooperatively and communicate, verbally and non-verbally, with other people; the insight to understand others' intentions, motivations and desires; and the judgment to recognize the biases underlying sources of information.
- *Intrapersonal intelligence* involves the ability to understand oneself; the motivation and focus to study independently; and the wisdom to reflect.
- *Naturalist intelligence* (added to Gardner's theory in 1997) involves the ability to recognize, collect, analyze and classify plants, minerals, animals, flora, fauna and even cultural objects such as cars and sneakers. Those who excel in naturalist intelligence exhibit a greater sensitivity to nature and their place within it, the ability to nurture and grow things, and care for animals.

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

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

At the high school level, a variety of electives will enable students to pursue their interests (see course descriptions, below), including a-g required classes in foreign languages and the arts and advanced core content electives. As a small high school (360 students at capacity), Thrive already is partnering with our local community college, San Diego Continuing Education, to offer dual enrollment courses for our students, both in electives (languages, arts, etc.) as well as core content areas for our advanced students. On-line college courses also will be offered as appropriate.

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

Another way in which Thrive innovates, adapt and expand our concept of school is through our emphasis on the home-school connection for the success of all children. In grades TK/K-8, Thrive does not give students "homework," but rather provides parents/guardians with training and support to engage their children in high-quality learning activities at home. Thrive provides curriculum and training to support parents to be engaged in learning. The emphasis here is to provide families the opportunity and support to add to what their children are doing at school in meaningful ways beyond rote memorization work and worksheets. Staff provide fun and engaging activities as extensions to the classroom work (for example, students in kindergarten learning about Carbon Footprints are encouraged to practice recycling at home, students who are learning about constellations are encouraged to look up at the night sky with their family members, etc.). For families who have challenges providing this aspect of our program, trained tutors (our faculty plus community volunteers, parents and others) and flexible scheduling ensure that each student receives the same learning as

his/her peers receive at home (a student could take care of recycling in after school programs, watch a sky video with a mentor, or engage in other activities as appropriate). Our family-school collaboration includes the following key components:

#### a. Parent Education

All TK/K-8 families are invited to attend a series of workshops throughout the year. These workshops are led by Thrive's school leaders and faculty, as well as outside consultants. Each workshop is scheduled to maximize parent attendance and participation, and include topics such as:

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

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

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

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

- Handwriting Without Tears, a curriculum designed to facilitate the gain of printing skills which leads to writing fluency. [www.hwtears.com/hwt](http://www.hwtears.com/hwt)
- 6+1 Trait Writing (also referred to as "The Six Traits of Writing"), a writing instructional model in which teachers and students use a set of characteristics/traits to develop and analyze written work. The traits include ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. <http://educationnorthwest.org//resource/949>.
- Literacy & Learning Strategies, a series of free, downloadable learning guides designed to introduce a variety of literacy strategies appropriate for a variety of grade levels: <http://www.litandlearn.lpb.org/>
- National Library of Virtual manipulatives: This site has various virtual math manipulatives that parents can use with their learners. (<http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html>)

- [Illuminations](http://illuminations.nctm.org/): This resource, from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, has math lessons and activity pages that parents can download. <http://illuminations.nctm.org/>
- [Illustrative Mathematics Project](http://www.illustrativemathematics.org/): This site has examples of problems that illustrate the Common Core State Standards for Mathematical Content. <http://www.illustrativemathematics.org/>

#### **b. Community-Facilitated Learning**

As students age and become increasingly dependent, Thrive's faculty will support student engagement in more authentic "real world" learning, including job shadowing, internships and other work-based learning experiences. Community-facilitated learning also will encompass learning about college/university options, with visits to college campuses, guest lecturers from current college students who grew up in the neighborhood, and other college readiness/awareness programs for both students and their parents.

The high school is intentionally designed with an innovative calendar that includes two-week long intersessions at the end of each quarter for electives and supplemental learning. These intersessions will allow students to engage in intensive learning in a particular subject (though not their core, grade level ELA, Math, Science or History/Social Studies courses) through extended blocks, e.g., Spanish or Visual Art, advanced core-based electives such as Journalism or Robotics. This time also will be used for intensive sessions for SAT/ACT and AP exam test prep; preparation of college essays and applications (i.e. Fall Intersession in 12<sup>th</sup> grade); prepare resumes and engage in career planning; or engage in work-based learning off-campus via internships and other work-based learning. While these same activities will take place throughout the year through Advisory, Studio time and in one-on-one and small group sessions with the College Counselor and other staff, these short intersessions will enable students to focus intensively on key skills and tasks at appropriately timed intervals.

Like our friends at Da Vinci Schools in the Los Angeles area (where Dr. Tempel-Assisi was the founding principal of two high schools, among other roles), we also hope to partner with industry experts who can co-teach classes, guest lecture, coach student teams, judge end-of-term Presentations of Learning, mentor students, and collaborate with faculty to design curriculum and assessments. This collaboration enables students to see how fundamental knowledge mandated in the state standards is utilized and applied every day in the workplace. More importantly, they can develop and apply competencies and skills in a variety of practical contexts and see how "real people" utilize these skills in the everyday workplace. Students gain confidence in their abilities and their futures, motivating them to persist in their education.

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

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

*Parent Communication* is frequent, comprehensive and multi-pronged based on the "best practices" of similar schools in similar communities, to ensure the strongest possible connections between home and school. Given the prevalence of Spanish-speaking families within the community, communication efforts occur in both Spanish and English, and, and other languages as needed. The following are just some of the activities that occur:

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

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

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

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

**Before and after-school programs** are offered to support the needs of working parents. Parents are able to drop off their children at school starting at 6:45 a.m. We offer a comprehensive before and after-school program from 7:00 a.m. in the morning, and until 6:15 p.m. each day, supervised by instructional aides and other part-time staff. This program takes place in classrooms as well as on the play yard and includes breakfast in the morning for students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch. As funding and capacity allows, we intend to offer a variety of enrichment activities and clubs after school, including structured homework support, tutoring and activities in the arts, technology, sports and more.

At the high school level, student-initiated clubs, intermural; sports and other enrichment activities will be hosted after school (as funding/capacity permits), exposing students to a variety of experiences and enabling them to excel in developing individual talents.

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

leading enrichment/club activities and more. Parents are encouraged to volunteer each school year; all parents working with students will be required to undergo required background clearances.

School-sponsored **Family Events**, such as an Annual Picnic to build community and get to know one another and the school’s faculty and staff, and Exhibitions and Celebrations of Learning at the end of significant projects and units, where students have the opportunity to show what they know to family and community members at school. As the high school develops, we anticipate that student performances and competitions will serve as important community-building activities for the entire school community.

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

**5. SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**a. Multiage Grouping and Looping in TK/K-8**

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

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

In high school, students will be placed in a specific grade level, 9-12, progressing through the a-g-G requirements. This is because our experience in high schools has shown us that colleges and universities respond positively to, and expect this progression, and not to offer it would place our students at an unnecessary disadvantage when applying to post-secondary programs. Our counseling staff and Advisors will work with students and their families to ensure students are registered for appropriate classes with sufficient remediation or challenge as warranted, and that they are on pace to graduate from Thrive on time with sufficient credits. While Thrive does not at this time plan to offer AP courses, students will be encouraged to take AP exams and will receive coaching and support in test prep. As needed, students will be referred to dual enrollment classes both at San Diego Continuing Education

community college and online university partnerships. Those in need will receive remedial intervention and support including online learning, tutoring, credit recovery and more.

#### **b. Community Agreements**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The following includes details about curriculum and instruction at Thrive, starting with the TK/K-8<sup>th</sup> grade program and followed by grades 9-12 (including specific course descriptions). Online learning is embedded in all subjects, at all grades to offer more targeted, personalized instruction for each student based on his/her needs, with specific online curricular sources listed above. Appendix A includes curriculum samples for all grades.

## 1. TK/K-8 GRADES

### a. TK/K-8 English Language Arts

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

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

#### Reading

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

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

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

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

*Guided Reading:* Teachers target instruction based on the individual needs of students through guided reading. As a whole class, reading instruction might be focused on the reading strategy of asking questions. During guided reading time, the teacher chooses texts that provide opportunities to guide students in the use of this strategy based on the appropriate instructional levels of individual students. Students are all working on the same objective, but using different texts. At other times, reading groups might be working on different strategies, again based on need. Because students are more likely to reveal questions, tentative hypotheses, inferences and connections to past learning in small groups rather than in front of the whole class (Rhodes and Shanklin, 1993), teachers regularly observe and assess the reading habits and progress of students. In the upper grades, in addition to guided reading, teachers employ literature circles and discussion groups. Both of these activities encourage student exploration of complex themes in text, enhance oral language and higher-level cognition, provide a chance for students to freely explore ideas, deepen students’ understanding of what they read, while creating more enthusiastic and engaged readers. The cooperative and heterogeneous grouping practices used in these activities are also beneficial to English Learners who may be less hesitant to practice and perform in smaller groups where peer interaction is more natural and comfortable.

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

In primary grades,, letter and word study include spelling instruction and targeted vocabulary development. Spelling instruction are based on a student’s developmental stage, as determined by

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

Teachers use a variety of techniques to help students make connections between unfamiliar words with their own background knowledge. Explicit instruction in word-learning strategies allows students to determine meanings of unfamiliar words encountered while reading. These strategies include teaching students to use dictionaries, online sources and other resource aids to deepen understanding of words, instruction in word structure as it relates to meaning (morphemes, affixes, and roots) and directly teaching students to identify and use external clues to determine word meaning from context. Starting in the primary grades, teachers model these learning strategies as they read aloud, using picture and text clues to help students learn simple ways of applying context clues. As students get older, they learn and apply more sophisticated strategies such as identifying examples, restatements, and comparisons in order to clarify word meanings. Upper grade students apply knowledge of word origins and Greek and Latin roots, especially in content-area texts.

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

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

## Writing

Hand in hand with the school's reading program is a structured daily writing program, which is directly aligned to the new Common Core emphasis on writing. The chief component of the writing program is the acclaimed Writer's Workshop, based on the Lucy Calkins' Teachers College Writer's Workshop model. Writer's Workshop, which is based on the constructivist principle that learning to write is as

much about the process as the product, is used to teach students in all grade levels how to enjoy writing and at the same time reach the goal of becoming competent writers.

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

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

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

*Basic Modes:*

- *Descriptive Writing* - The primary purpose of descriptive writing is to describe a person, place, or event so that the topic can be clearly seen in the reader's mind. The writer must use vivid details that paint a picture for the reader.

- *Expository Writing* - The primary purpose of expository writing is to provide information such as an explanation or directions.
- *Narrative Writing* - The primary purpose of narrative writing is to describe an experience, event, or sequence of events in the form of a story.
- *Persuasive Writing* -The primary purpose of persuasive writing is to give an opinion and try to influence the reader's way of thinking with supporting evidence.
- *Creative Writing* -The primary purpose of creative writing is to entertain the reader.

#### *Subcategories:*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Speaking**

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

communicate expectations. These rubrics provide students with an understanding of the components of effective speaking enabling them to reflect on their own performance and from the presentations of their peers.

### **Listening**

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

### **b. TK/K-8 Mathematics**

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

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

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

Pearson's enVisionMATH California textbook series form a jumping off point for mathematic curriculum. (See Appendix A.) Pearson is currently rolling out new transitions to the Common Core for California,

which Thrive adopts. The enVisionMATH program utilizes interactive and visual learning strategies so that all students are able to access the curriculum and are appropriately challenged. In addition, faculty utilize a variety of additional instructional resources and hands-on activities, including manipulatives, math games, measuring, patterning, cooking and art projects that give students opportunities to learn by doing and relate math concepts and skills to their lives. Small group and one on one intervention for struggling students, consistent practice towards mastery and speed in basic computations (math “facts”), increased time spent on problem solving activities, and other strategies.

Cores 1-3 (grades K-4) use the Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) model for gaining intuitive mathematical thinking. Cores 4 and 5 (grades 5-8) use College Preparatory Math (CPM), a program designed in collaboration with university professors and created to help students develop an understanding of the mathematical concepts rather than mimic a teacher’s procedures without understanding the concepts. These curricula have been chosen to provide in-depth, flexible instruction to meet the needs of the diverse learners at Thrive. Both of these selected curricula are non-traditional in that they take a discussion approach to working through math problems and concepts. Much time is spent on “digging deep” and working through a few problems, rather than practicing rote memorization of an algorithm, which does not lend itself to a true understanding of mathematics.

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

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

### **c. TK/K-8 Science**

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

Our inquiry-based science curriculum emphasizes learning through exploration and experience, relying on resources such as the acclaimed Full Option Science System (FOSS) kits for grades K-5, which provide hands-on investigations, laboratory experiences, and projects. The program is fully aligned to California standards (and also is being updated to reflect Common Core and NextGen standards) and research has

demonstrated its efficacy in engaging and educating diverse students. (See Appendix A for samples.) The following chart indicates the sequence of the standards-based FOSS units that may be used to facilitate student engagement and understanding of the standards for physical, life and earth sciences in grades K-5:

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

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

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

For middle grades (6-8), middle school science program are informed by Lawrence Hall of Science, at the University of California, Berkeley. This curriculum, known as the Science Education for Public Understanding Program (SEPUP) is distributed nationally by LAB-AIDS, Inc. and supported by grants from the National Science Foundation. SEPUP is fully aligned with California state standards and National Science Foundation education standards (see [http://www.sepup.com/correlations/CA/CA%206-8%202011\\_v2.5.pdf](http://www.sepup.com/correlations/CA/CA%206-8%202011_v2.5.pdf)) as well as the inquiry-based focus of the new NextGen Science Standards, and provides hands-on investigations, student resources, laboratory experiences, and projects. The school utilizes standards based materials for the few state standards not covered by SEPUP. SEPUP also lends itself to traditional, quantitative assessments that are appropriate for middle grade students. Teachers therefore are able to utilize a variety of pedagogical

methods and a variety of assessments in order to best develop conceptual understanding via students' own inquiries, investigations, and analyses. The curriculum provides students with science experiences that are appropriate to their stages of cognitive development. The experiences serve as a foundation for more advanced ideas that prepare students for life in an increasingly complex scientific and technological world.

SEPUP learning modules are organized under the following strands:

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

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

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

#### **d. TK/K-8 Social Studies**

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

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

Broad social studies themes and content cover topics of family life, cultures, community, the environment, the study of California, geography, economics, United States and world history with connections to mathematics, science, visual art, music, dance, and drama. At Thrive, learning activities engage students in reading rich literature as well as original source documents across all content areas. Our teachers invite experts from the community to speak to students. For example, during the first grade study of the Neighborhood, we can have firemen, policemen, bankers, librarians, doctors, etc. —interviewed by our first graders. When third grade is studying government, field representatives from our councilman, assemblyman, and senator’s office can speak with students and share materials. Online curriculum such as Study Island and Brain Pop are used as a guided source of research and information. Students experience daily opportunities to develop listening, speaking, research, and writing skills across the content areas and to develop proficiency in the use of the arts as tools for learning, creative thinking, and problem solving as well as assessment.

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

#### **e. TK/K-8 Enrichments/Exploratory**

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

## **2. GRADES 9-12**

All students will be expected to complete the UC/CSU a-g requirements as a condition of graduation.<sup>5</sup> As students learn *how* to learn and develop the skills and attributes of the intellectual virtues, all students are capable of success in our rigorous program. Innovative schools like Da Vinci Science High School in the Wiseburn District of LA County (75% non-white, 43% FRPL; 53% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders' parents were not college graduates) have demonstrated that all students – regardless of background – can and will thrive when given access to a challenging college-preparatory curriculum with a focus on developing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and attributes. At Da Vinci Science, on the 2015 CAASPPs, in ELA, a remarkable 50% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students “Exceeded” ELA standards and another 30% “Met” standards; and in Math, 61% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders Met/Exceeded standards. Similarly, at Impact Academy in the East Bay Area (94% non-white, 72% FRPL, 74% of parents are not college graduates), learning is centered around four Core Competencies: the ability to conduct *research*, perform *inquiry*, *express creatively*, and engage in *analysis*. These Competencies, along with the school’s 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leadership Skills (Think Critically, Collaborate Productively, Communicate Powerfully, Complete Projects Effectively) fuel their mantra: *Know, Do, Reflect*. On the 2015 CAASPPs, 78% of Impact Academy’s 11<sup>th</sup> graders Met/Exceeded ELA standards and 43% Met/Exceeded math standards. These, and other schools like them, are demonstrating that “at-risk” students can achieve high standards for performance when given the proper tools and support to succeed.

As a small school anticipated to have 360 high school students at capacity, the array of courses will not be broad, yet the depth and complexity of learning is designed to provide a rigorous college- and career-preparatory curriculum in which each and every student can complete a-g requirements and enroll in the post-secondary school, technical program, or career of his/her choice.

Our high school curriculum will incorporate the same instructional practices outlined above, as well as offer courses that meet the UC/CSU a-g requirements. A brief outline of those courses follows.

### **1. 9-12 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

Thrive’s English Language Arts curriculum in high school aims to cultivate literacy through a cohesive, comprehensive, and progressive learning sequence. Lessons are aligned to the CCSS for ELA, ensuring the curriculum cultivates the skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that are the foundation for any creative and purposeful expression in language. Curriculum is supported by several blended learning programs, as described above. Students learn to closely read and analyze critical works of literature and an array of nonfiction text in a print and digital world. Through a balanced curriculum, students use research and technology to engage in collaborative conversations, sharing and reforming viewpoints through a variety of written and speaking applications. Students practice critical and innovative thinking, problem solving, and flexibility and adaptability. The literacy program will emphasize reading fluency, comprehension, writing for varied audiences and purposes, a love of literature, and a deep understanding of the significance of reading and writing to the goals of learning, working, and living well.

Thrive students are required to take four years of course work in the ELA department, and four years’ credit, with grade C or above, is needed for graduation.

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<sup>5</sup> Exceptions to this requirement may be made at the discretion of the High School Dean, in consultation with the student, his/her parents and faculty, e.g., for English Learners who need elective time to receive more intensive support.

For struggling readers, low-achieving students and English Language Learners (ELs), scaffolding and SDAIE strategies (such as explicit teaching of vocabulary and teacher modeling of scientific methodology) will be necessary to promote English acquisition and content acquisition. Auditory presentations of primary source material, graphic organizers, laboratory opportunities, hands-on activities, manipulatives, models, scientific drawings and diagrams, and classroom pairings are examples of strategies that offer support to students. Modifications to pacing, offering more accessible language/texts, developing self-guided learning for advanced students, and student/teacher conferences are among differentiation strategies that will be used. To accommodate struggling readers, materials from Achieve 3000 and Flex Literacy also will be used to provide grade level content at lower reading levels. (See also Section XI below re: Students with Special Needs.)

### **English 9AB - Core/College preparatory**

This course covers the California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts 9th grade, and build upon students' skills in writing, reading, comprehension, and communication skills. Students examine many aspects of English literature, including novels, plays, poetry, graphic novels, expository pieces and musical lyrics. Throughout the year students complete narrative, persuasive, literary analysis, expository, and informational, and poetry writing.

### **English 10AB - Core/College preparatory**

Focusing on various elements of the English Language Arts, English 10 student continue to strengthen critical thinking and writing skills obtained in English 9. Students read literature and identify literary archetypes and universal themes across works. Students learn to identify literary terms and the author's use of them. Students write compositions throughout the year based on the literature read in class. Special attention is given to the development of scholarly artistic expression and as such visual and dramatic arts, music, dance, and media is woven into the curriculum and enhances the understanding of literary concepts, respectful collaboration, and listening and speaking strategies. All students will meet the Common Core State Standards.

### **English 11AB - Core/College preparatory**

English 11 is an all inclusive language arts course spanning various genres of American literature dating from the pre-colonial period through modern day. Genres explored during this course include poetry, drama and classic American literature with an emphasis on persuasive, narrative, informational/technological, and expository approaches to literature. Students develop in-depth understanding of the evolution of American literature through critical analysis, writing assignments, group and individual projects, and various forms of assessment. A clear understanding of historical connections to literature guides students in the area of reading comprehension, and provides them with solid footing in their ability to analyze and critically discuss American literature. Throughout this course students are introduced to new vocabulary terms to advance their use of vocabulary in written and oral communication as well as aid them in their preparation for the SATs.

### **English 12AB - Core/College preparatory**

English 12 is an extensive examination of World Literature: novels, plays, short stories, and poems. The curriculum stresses the development of critical thinking and writing, with a focus on analysis of authorial intent and technique. Frequent assessment, oral and written, individual and group, reinforces our study

and practice of the persuasive, expository, narrative, informational, and technological writing approaches. Students also will be encouraged to take AP exams, with coaching and test-prep support offered during Studio and intersession electives.

### **English Language Development (ELD) -- Core/Non-College Prep**

This multi-levelled class (with multiple sections, as needed, based on enrollment) will include students with varying English proficiencies. It is designed to allow students to grow in their English skills at a pace that best fits their learning style and needs. Thrive’s 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). Thrive’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.)

We facilitate the English development and mastery of our English learners through direct instruction, collaboration with content teachers and communication with parents. English Learners will gain progress in each of the following: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. We manage students’ progress by reviewing grades, communicating with teachers, and sending updates to parents and family members. The course uses Achieve 3000 and Flex Literacy as its foundation, with the structure and direction of the class differentiated significantly based on individual students’ needs (see also Element 1.XI.B.)

## **2. 9-12 MATHEMATICS**

The Mathematics curriculum at Thrive develops the “habits of mind” that foster mastery of mathematics content as well as understanding as students learn content in the context of real-world situations, using mathematics to solve a range of problems – our program and instructional methodologies will be directly aligned with the new CA CCSS in Mathematics (CCSSM), guided by the 2013 CA Mathematics Frameworks. Throughout the progression of mathematics courses, students acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to prepare them for college and careers and productive citizenship. Thrive students are required to take and pass three years of course work (four years recommended) in the Math department.

### ***Algebra 1AB - Core/College preparatory***

Algebra 1AB is the foundation for high school mathematics courses, requiring satisfactory completion of a math placement exam. It bridges the concrete to the abstract in practical mathematical applications. A strong foundation in working with fractions, decimals, percentages, and arithmetic operations is necessary for successful completion of this course. Students learn exponents, polynomials, factoring, various relations and functions, rational and radical expressions and equations, and quadratic equations.

### ***Geometry AB - Core/College preparatory***

The prerequisite of Geometry AB is either the Algebra 1A/1B series with grade of "C" or better for all semesters or satisfactory completion of math placement exam. The focus of Geometry AB is to build a strong foundation in abstract and logical thinking through the use of deductive and inductive reasoning. A strong foundation in algebra is necessary for successful completion of this course. Students explore the following topics: Euclidean Space and 3 dimensional solids: points, lines, planes, angles, deductive reasoning and proof writing, congruent and similar polygons, coordinate geometry, quadrilaterals, inequalities, right triangles, circles, constructions, and areas of volumes and solids.

### ***Algebra 2AB - Core/College preparatory***

The prerequisite of Algebra 2AB is Geometry AB with grade of "C" or better for both semesters. Students gain experience in several content areas, including rational numbers and expressions, systems of equations, matrices and determinants, logarithmic and exponential functions, sequences and series, probability and statistics, and the complex number system.

### ***Pre-Calculus – Core/Non-College preparatory***

The prerequisite of Pre-Calculus is Algebra 2AB with grade of "C" or better for both semesters. Students gain a thorough understanding of polynomial, rational, exponential, logarithmic, and trigonometric functions. Students are introduced to basic linear algebra concepts such as working with determinants to find the inverse of a square matrix, and applications of determinants and matrices. Students are introduced to polar graphs and equations, parametric graphs and equations, and limits.

### ***Calculus – Core/College preparatory***

The prerequisite of Calculus is Pre-Calculus with grade of "C" or better for both semesters. This course is designed to provide an understanding of the topics covered in a first semester college calculus course. A good understanding of polynomial, logarithmic, exponential, and the six basic trigonometric functions are essential. The course of study is broadly divided into four topics: limits, continuity, derivatives, integrals, and applications. Active participation is integral to success in this course. For our most advanced students who desire deeper learning and/or are ready for a more accelerated course sequence in math than our small school may be able to provide, we will research online courses and early-college partnerships that allow upper-class students (11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades) in particular, to have a maximum number of options. Students also will be encouraged to take AP exams, with coaching and test-prep support offered during Studio and intersession electives.

### **3. 9-12 HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES**

Thrive's history curriculum is rooted in the California History-Social Science Standards, the California History-Social Science Framework and incorporate the CA CCSS. Reading, writing, listening and speaking will be stressed as central to obtaining and communicating information. 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. To this end, the mission of our History/Social Studies department is to provide students with an understanding of our history as well as how our society and the world work. Students become active, caring citizens who have the historical knowledge and contemporary consciousness to make informed decisions.

Thrive students are required to take three years of course work in the Social Studies department: American Government and Community Civics (9<sup>th</sup> grade), World History (10<sup>th</sup> grade), United States History (11<sup>th</sup> grade), and Economics (12<sup>th</sup> grade). Each history course addresses the California content standards for History/Social Studies and incorporates the Standards for Reading and Writing in History/Social Studies, as outlined in the California CCSS, Career and College Readiness Anchor Standards.

Thrive anticipates using the *History Alive!*, *Government Alive!*, and *Economics Alive!* series. These series are well-aligned to Thrive's emphasis on engaging, curiosity-inspiring curriculum with real world relevance for students. Students will read primary sources and historic literature, conduct research, write and present findings. Much of the grade level reading material will be presented with scaffolds for comprehension, particularly primary source or other high-interest or high-authenticity materials that would otherwise be above students' comprehension levels. Social studies will also include instruction in expository writing.

There are a growing number of high quality websites that provide secondary history teachers with a wealth of resources, both instructional and informational. Many of these websites are interactive and have primary source documents, news from around the world, educational games on historical events and much more. These sources, such as Books that Grow and BrainPop will provide an excellent source of material for planning authentic and challenging standards-based instruction.

***American Government (one semester) and Community Civics (one semester)  
- Core/College preparatory***

This course introduces students to American government and politics. Students analyze the structures of institutions that make up the American system of government such as the fundamental characteristics and how the U.S. Constitution effects the organization of government: the historical perspective and influences of the Founding Fathers and the framers of the constitution; political behavior as it is expressed individually and collectively within our communities; and how and why the three branches of government are organized and the role they have in the policymaking process in the United States. In particular, students analyze the relationship among federal, state, and local governments, analyzing key historical documents such as the Federalist Papers. The second semester of this class prepares students to take on the responsibilities associated with being an active citizen, including voting, participating in community activities, and assuming the critical responsibilities of citizenship. Students demonstrate understanding through research papers, in-depth debates, and current event analysis.

***Modern World History AB - Core/College preparatory***

This course is designed to engage students in learning about the historical origins of the political, social, and economic foundations of the modern world. Students analyze the development of modern political thought from its origins in ancient times to the events and people shaping our world today. Some of the topics covered in this course include: Ancient Greece, the Roman Republic, the spread of Western religions, the French Revolution, the American Revolution, the Latin American Revolutions, the Industrial Revolution, the Age of Nationalism, World War I, World War II, and the Cold War.

***US History 20th Century AB - Core/College preparatory***

This course is a survey of the critical, political, social, and economic developments in American History from “The Discovery” to the Election of 1992. Students use primary and secondary sources to analyze and critique the developments of American history and culture. Students trace the evolution of how the events of the past have shaped the United States. Led by the overarching question, “How does history help us define the American identity” students study the various themes and time periods in American history in order to develop a better understanding of the development and growth of America.

***Economics-Core/College preparatory (semester course)***

Explore the principles of economics that apply to the functions of individual decision makers, both consumers and producers, within an economic system. Learn about the nature and functions of product markets and factor markets and about the role of government in promoting greater efficiency and equity in the economy. The course teaches students how to generate, interpret, label, and analyze graphs, charts, and data to describe and explain economic concepts. For our most advanced students who desire deeper learning and/or are ready for a more accelerated course sequence in History/Social Science than our small school may be able to provide, we will research online courses and early-college partnerships that allow upper-class students (11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades) in particular, to have a maximum number of options. Students also will be encouraged to take AP exams, with coaching and test-prep support offered during Studio and intersession electives.

#### 4. 9-12 SCIENCE

Drawing from the recommendations of the Next Generation Science Standards and upcoming 2016 Science Frameworks, the Science curricula develops student exploration and analysis. Students develop critical thinking skills, as well as creativity in scientific thought. Students explore concepts through lab investigations, simulations, and mathematical problem solving and practice lab procedures and develop sound reasoning and thoughtful questioning. As with other parts of the Academy curriculum, the emphasis will be on genuine conceptual understanding of scientific principles and concepts (vs. mere memorization of scientific facts and formulas).

The science curriculum will emphasize hands-on learning and inquiry to tap into and cultivate students' natural curiosity about the world around them. Students will use the scientific method to investigate the physical, life, and earth sciences. Students will learn to ask questions and teachers will guide students in hands-on experimentation to find answers and solutions. Students learn to ask scientific questions, form and test hypotheses, and use logic and evidence to draw conclusions about the concepts. Lab activities reinforce critical thinking, writing, and communication skills and help students develop a deeper understanding of the nature of science. Reading, writing, listening and speaking will be stressed for obtaining and communicating information.

In 9<sup>th</sup> grade, all Academy students will enroll in a Conceptual Physics course, in keeping with the Physics First approach to science and Next Generation Science recommendations. This is the approach at the Da Vinci Schools in the Wiseburn District, High Tech High schools in San Diego, Pacific Collegiate City in Santa Cruz (all of whose 9<sup>th</sup> graders outscore older high school students on the state physics exam consistently), and many of the top private schools.

The rationale for Physics First is stated by the American Association of Physics Teachers:

Placing physics first would expose more students to the discipline that provides the foundation for understanding engineering concepts and provides real-world connections to mathematical concepts. In a beginning course in physics, students explore their own notions about common, everyday phenomena, discuss their observations with peers, and draw conclusions that can be tested. They begin to make predictions, practice data collection and graphing techniques, apply some mathematical skills to real situations, and start to make sense of their observations. Exposing a greater number of students to the concrete concepts of physics can provide the basis for understanding the more abstract concepts introduced in chemistry and biology.

(<http://www.aapt.org/aboutaapt/updates/upload/physicsfirst.pdf>)

After 9<sup>th</sup> grade, students will have choices in their science coursework. In alignment with a-g requirements, students will be expected to complete at least two years of lab science over their high school years, though three years will be recommended. As with math, we will explore online and early college options for our most advanced students to engage in deeper science learning. Students also will be encouraged to take AP exams, with coaching and test-prep support offered during Studio and intersession electives.

### ***Physics AB – Core/College preparatory***

The science of physics focuses on the laws of nature that help to explain real world phenomenon. Although this course has a conceptual focus, throughout the year students use measurement, observation, and the language of mathematics to better their understanding of how those laws govern the physical world. Among other things, students calculate speed, velocity, and acceleration; apply Newton’s Laws of Motion; demonstrate the effects of force on the motion of an object; identify evidence for the work-energy theorem; describe examples of kinetic and potential energy along with their transformations; use conservation of energy and momentum to solve problems; identify the characteristics and behaviors of sound and electromagnetic waves; and recognize the relationships between electricity and magnetism. In addition, students conduct field and laboratory investigations; apply the scientific method; develop hypotheses; use variables; and collect, manipulate, graph and interpret data from laboratory investigations.

### **Biology 1AB - Core/College preparatory**

This course is designed to give the students a general understanding of the biological processes. This class focuses on cell biology, genetics, evolution, ecology, and physiology to develop an understanding of the complexity of living organisms. Understanding how to scientifically problem solve and use higher levels of thinking is intertwined in the curriculum throughout the year. ThriveS Renewal Petition 46

### **Chemistry AB - Core/College preparatory**

This course explores the chemical and physical properties of matter. It uses measurement, calculation and analytical thinking to create a better understanding of the chemical and physical laws that govern the organization and behavior of matter. Students classify matter; comprehend atomic structure and electron arrangement; understand periodic law and chemical bonding; use chemical formulas and balance chemical equations; solve Stoichiometry problems; compare and contrast the phases of matter; characterize the properties of acids and bases; explain reaction energy and chemical equilibrium; balance oxidation-reduction reactions; describe the functional groups of organic molecules; and explore nuclear chemistry. In addition, students perform a wide range of qualitative and quantitative laboratory investigations; apply the scientific method; develop hypotheses; use variables; and collect, manipulate, graph, and interpret data from laboratory investigations.

For our most advanced students who desire deeper learning and/or are ready for a more accelerated course sequence in math than our small school may be able to provide, we will research online courses and early-college partnerships that allow upper-class students (11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades) in particular, to have a maximum number of options.

## ***5. FOREIGN LANGUAGE***

Thrive believes that it is important for all students to be literate in a foreign language. All courses incorporate the California World Language Standards and the California Framework for Foreign Language K-12. Per a-g requirements, students must take and pass at least two years of a foreign language with a grade of C or better. Counselors will work closely with students who wish to take additional languages offered at neighboring community colleges or online, including high-quality summer school options.

### **Spanish1AB– Core/College preparatory**

Spanish IA/B emphasizes communication skills in listening and speaking, reading and writing. Students in this course learn a basic vocabulary in contextual units that are reinforced by reading and writing as well as listening and speaking. A strong emphasis is placed on acquiring basic vocabulary, but cultural authenticity is also an integral part of the curriculum. Special cultural units further this understanding as well as the students' knowledge of the Hispanic world.

### **Spanish 2AB – Core/College preparatory**

Spanish 2 is a continuation of the language skill development initiated in Spanish 1 (or placement may be made based on student proficiency from Spanish at a prior school, as measured by an entry assessment). Oral and written communicative proficiency is emphasized in free-responses, situational activities in order that language usage moves towards real-life, natural production. Short literary reading selections provide cultural enrichment while enhancing basic skill acquisitions. Creative problem solving techniques provide opportunity for higher-level thinking skills. Students engage in cultural activities for proficiency practice and knowledge extension of the Hispanic world.

### **Spanish 3AB – Core/College preparatory**

Spanish 3 is a continuation of the language skill development initiated in Spanish 2 (or placement may be made based on student proficiency from Spanish at a prior school, as measured by an entry assessment). This course provides students with materials and methods to enhance their oral and written fluency and proficiency by enabling them to speak primarily in Spanish. The content of this course includes an extensive study of grammar through opportunities to apply designated vocabulary, syntax, and idiomatic expression in both oral and written situations. Students are introduced to literary works representing a variety of genres. Unique to this course are the opportunities to perfect the language skills through instruction and communication in the class in the target language as well as to develop an understanding of the Spanish culture through activities requiring high levels of cognition.

### ***Spanish Speakers 1-4***

These courses – adapted based on student need/interest -- are designed for heritage learners of Spanish who bring strong proficiency and literacy skills in Spanish. This course focuses on the development of communicative competence in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing, as well as on understanding Hispanic cultures and issues of identity of heritage speakers of Spanish in the United States. Students continue to develop awareness and understanding of Hispanic cultures, including language variations, customs, geography, history, and current events.

## **6. VISUAL AND/OR PERFORMING ARTS**

Using the CA Visual and Performing Arts Standards as a base, Thrive's arts programs ground students in the discipline, detail and focus of the arts. Students explore their own creative processes and the skills and techniques of professional artists. The curriculum stresses the artistic process over the final product and strives to foster an appreciation for the creative endeavor and the willingness to take risks, the inherent discipline and rewards of the creative process, cultural relevance, and a sense of art history, and a sense of one's own infinite creative possibility. We will begin by offering a Visual Arts sequence, and expand to include other arts as student population and interest demands. Thrive requires a minimum grade of a C in at least one year of Visual or Performing arts for graduation. A second year

also meets the “g” requirement. Advanced visual arts courses as well as instruction in music, drama and dance will be offered in partnership with San Diego Continuing Education community college.

### **Visual Arts 1 AB: Drawing and Painting –Core/College preparatory**

The purpose of this class is to promote an interest in art and to encourage students to continue their education in the visual arts. Students cultivate cultural awareness, are exposed to art skills, development of self-confidence and inner discipline, nurturing of art appreciation throughout history, and the promotion of aesthetic sensitivity that is vital for a full and meaningful life. Conceptual challenges are combined with exploration of varied media through traditional and experimental drawing and painting projects as students review drawing and painting techniques and design principles. Students work with still life, figure, and the conceptual with emphasis on the development of individual techniques and continuity of style.

### **Visual Arts 2: Digital Media –Core/College preparatory**

This is an upper level course requires one prerequisite year of Visual Arts and is offered for serious art students. Students are introduced to the elements of art and principles of design through photography, and digital image creation and manipulation, using Canon DSLR cameras, iPhoto, and Adobe Photoshop. This exciting course builds a foundation in the visual communication and storytelling skills needed for a career in the growing fields of photography, photo editing and retouching, and graphic, web, video, and motion design. Students practice using the elements of art and principles of design through photography, digital image editing and compositing, music video and commercial production, animation, and graphic design. Students use these abilities to complete projects for their other core academic courses and for personal projects. We also review academic word processing and presentation skills.

## **7. ADDITIONAL REQUIRED COURSES**

### **Studio– Non-Core/Non-College Prep**

Every student will have Studio time built into their daily schedule. All core teachers similarly will supervise on Studio session daily, to ensure that students have access to subject-certified teachers at least once weekly for targeted instruction/tutoring. During Studio time, students will engage in specific targeted, personalized learning: online curriculum assigned to develop skills in a particular area, online test prep (SAT/ACT/AP), credit recovery online, small group or one-on-one tutoring, ELD instruction/tutoring, meetings with the Counselor or other staff, research and individual project work, completion of dual enrollment/online course work, and more.

As needed, based on initial entry assessments of students (many if not most of whom we expect will be one or more grade levels behind), specific ELA and Math intensive labs will be offered once or twice weekly. Students will be grouped by ability and not grade level, in order to receive small group instruction and one-on-one support, remedial skills development (including interactive, online programs for remediation and practice), and targeted interventions.

Time during Studio will be structured by the student and his/her Advisor (and, as appropriate, the College Counselor or intervention staff) based on each student’s needs (faculty/staff will utilize ongoing data/assessments collected in Illuminate data system to determine appropriate Studio assignments). Students will be taught how to track their own progress toward mastery of content standards and

schedule appropriate tutoring, counseling and other sessions with faculty and staff, in preparation for similar time management needs that will present themselves in college. Students will learn to be self-directed in this technology enhanced course. A pass/fail grade will be assigned to the Studio course based on students' participation and completion of appropriate work during this time.

### **PBL– Non-Core/Non-College Prep**

Building upon our TK/K-8's Project Based Learning curriculum, students also will have year-long courses in Project Based Learning each year of high school. Each year-long class will allow for students to participate in four distinct projects, planned collaboratively by grade-level faculty. PBL allows students to deeply explore cross-curricular themes in a profound way. PBL classes integrate standards-based objectives from multiple disciplines, and in doing so encourages students to connect what they are learning in their core classes to real world scenarios. Each year will begin with a grade level project collaboration and continue with projects that students elect into. Project design and oversight is explicitly taught to students so that by their junior and senior years, students are capable of driving high quality exploration of the world around them. Upperclassmen will have the opportunity to propose individualized projects tailored to their personal interests. Example projects include: the cross section of literature and physics via superhero tropes; the overlap of myth, symbol, astronomy and electrical circuits in transforming a classroom into a night sky; the study of population, civil engineering, and theatre production in creating a spoken word café to raise awareness for urban communities. These elective classes will be driven by student desire and guided by teacher expertise. Four years of PBL are required; while the courses will be graded and included in the students' GPA, a student's failure to earn a "C" or better will not prevent graduation, as credit recovery/remediation is not possible.

### **Advisory**

All students will be placed in an Advisory class that will meet at least four times weekly. Advisory groups allow for ongoing positive relationships between students and intellectual mentors or advisors. They provide a safe environment in which teachers can nurture students' character development through conversation, goal-setting, structured reflection, personal encouragement, and other means (Berkowitz and Bier 2004, 2006). Each student will be assigned to a small advisory group, led by an Academy teacher or administrator. We hope to ensure that each Advisory stays together for all four years, schedules permitting, so that the groups can build a common dialogue and trust with one another throughout their high school years.

In addition to supporting and reinforcing adolescent social-emotional development through structured reflection and conversation, a primary focus of Advisory will be on student goal setting and actions towards realizing post-secondary goals. This will include one-on-one meetings with the Advisor to review credits earned and progress towards graduation, identification of remediation or interventions and potential referral to the school's SST (see below); and support – in collaboration with the school's College Counselor -- in the college application process. We anticipate that many, if not most, of our students will be the first in their families to attend – and graduate from – college, thus explicit education about college opportunities, financial aid, summer opportunities on college campuses, the application process, assistance with essays and more will all be critical supports for our students.

### **9<sup>th</sup> Grade Wellness – Non-Core/Non-College Prep**

Thrive’s wellness program is designed to help shape positive self-image while providing students with skills and strategies specific to a wide variety of movement and fitness opportunities. Current statistics underscore the reality that not all students receive equitable access to the tools necessary to live healthy lives. According to the California Endowment, the “high rate of obesity among low-income teens suggests that barriers to healthy behaviors, healthy foods and physical activity not only continue to exist but have grown even larger.” Youth from low-income families are more likely to drink sugary soda (approximately 70% versus 55% among affluent teens); to consume more fast food (approximately 48% versus 37%); to eat fewer family meals (11% never eating with a parent versus 5%); to have fewer opportunities to participate in organized sports (approximately 37% are on athletic teams versus 49% of their affluent peers); and to watch more TV (56% versus 46%). They also get very little physical activity – only 1 in 5 low income students gets at least one hour of exercise a week (Driscoll, Gwendolyn, 2008). Thrive aims to address these inequities by requiring a year-long Wellness class in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. A C or better in this class is required for graduation.

#### ***8. ELECTIVES (BOTH CORE AND NON-CORE/COLLEGE-PREP AND NON-COLLEGE PREP)***

Throughout their high school career, students will be able to participate in a variety of college and career readiness electives including SAT/ACT and AP test prep, College & Financial Aid Applications, Transition to College Life and Internships. Dual enrollment courses (online or at San Diego Continuing Education) will be encouraged for qualified students (i.e., those who are on track for graduation and succeeding in core courses at Thrive). In order to meet a-g and Thrive’s graduation requirements, all students must take one additional year of a College Preparatory Elective beyond the A-F course minimum. For example, students may take a fourth year of mathematics or a second year of visual arts. All students will have multiple opportunities to meet this requirement.

As the school grows, based on both student interest and teacher expertise/talent, we will offer additional electives that meet core graduation and a-g requirements, such as Journalism, Creative Writing, Psychology, Yoga, Robotics and Graphic Design.

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

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

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

As noted above, we currently use the following instructional materials for grades TK/K-8:

- Language Arts – Reader’s Workshop, Writer’s Workshop, Fontes & Pinnell leveled readers, Lexia, Reading Plus, Write Source, Reach and Inside (the last two are specifically used for our English Language Learners)
- Math –ST Math, Think Through Math. EnVision Math (Pearson), as well as CGI and CPM strategies
- History/ Social Science –Social Studies Alive!, History Alive!, and DWOK
- Science – FOSS and SEPUP
- ELD – EL Achieve and Edge

For grades 9-12, we plan to use the following:

- Language Arts – Teacher-selected resources to include class sets of novels (likely provided through tablet devices), curated primary source online materials (e.g. from Newsela.com and www.proquestk12.com), school-wide writing rubrics, and curricula, Actively Learn, Quill,
- Math – Algebra Intervention – Carnegie Learning Bridge to Algebra, CC Algebra I – CPM, CC Algebra II – CPM, CC Geometry – CPM, Pre-Calculus with Trigonometry – CPM, Calculus – CPM Learning Bird, College Preparatory Mathematics, Noticing Tools
- History/Social Science -- History Alive!, Government Alive!, Books that Grow, Flowcabulary,
- Science – SEP-UP 9-12 kits, Mosa Mack, Phet, BirdBrain, Lab4u, Science with Tom, Other resources as available aligned to Next Generation Science Standards (still in development)
- Foreign Language – Duolingo, Middlebury, Apex
- ELD – Constructing Meaning, EnglishAttack! And Learning Games Studio, Achieve 3000
- Wellness -- Teacher-created materials from state Frameworks and other sources
- Art -- Teacher-created materials from state Frameworks and other sources

As discussed in the detailed course descriptions, a variety of online resources will also be used for curriculum and assessments. Thanks to the ever-increasing availability of high-quality, free online curriculum from sources such as Scout (University of California free courses), CK-12 Foundation materials, the Open Learning Initiative through Carnegie Mellon University and many others, the use (and expense) of traditional published texts will diminish over time.

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

#### **F. HIGH SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS BY GRADE**

All students will be expected to take seven courses each year, including two-week intensives (due to extended hours, a single course taken during all three two-week intensives fall/winter/spring will be the credit -equivalent to a course taken during the regular eight week sessions year-long):

	Ninth Grade	Tenth Grade	Eleventh Grade	Twelfth Grade
ELA (4 years)	English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12
Math (3 years)	Algebra I Geometry	Geometry Algebra II	Algebra II Pre-Calculus	Pre-Calculus Calculus
Lab Science (2 years)	Physics	Biology Chemistry	Biology Chemistry	Biology Chemistry
History/Social Studies (3 years)	American Gov't & Community Civics	Modern World History	U.S. History 20 <sup>th</sup> Century	Economics (semester)
Wellness (1 year)	Wellness			
Art (1 yr.)	Visual Art I	Visual Art I Visual Art II	Visual Art I Visual Art II	Visual Art I Visual Art II
World Lang. (2 yrs.)	Spanish 1 Spanish 2 Spanish 3	Spanish 1 Spanish 2 Spanish 3	Spanish 1 Spanish 2 Spanish 3	Spanish 2 Spanish 3
Studio	Studio	Studio	Studio	Studio
PBL	PBL	PBL	PBL	PBL
Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory

**G. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (INCLUDING THE NUMBER/TYPE OF UNITS REQUIRED) AND A-G REQUIREMENTS**

All of Thrive’s high school courses have been designed in alignment with the state standards including CA CCSS. Graduation requirements also have been designed to meet and exceed UC/CSU A-G requirements, as shown here<sup>6</sup>:

UC/CUS A-G Admissions Requirements	Thrive Minimum Graduation Requirements	Thrive Competitive Course Sequence
A. 2 years social studies (see above)	A. 3 years social studies	A. 3.5 years social studies
B. 4 years English	B. 4 years English	B. 4 years English
C. 3 years math (including geometry)	C. 3 years math	C. 4 years math
D. 2 years lab science	D. 2 years science	D. 3 years science
E. 2 years foreign language	E. 2 years foreign language	E. 3 years foreign language
F. 1 year visual or performing arts	F. 1 year visual arts	F. 1 year visual arts
G. 1 additional upper level A-G course	G. 1 additional upper level A-G course	G. 1 additional upper level A-G course
Minimum number of specific courses requirement to be considered for a CSU or UC	* 1 year wellness	*1 year of wellness
	* 2 years Studio (or elective if transfer)	*4 years of Studio
	* 2 years PBL (or elective if transfer)	*4 years of PBL
	* 1 year College & Career electives	*3 years of college & career electives
	* 2 additional electives	*2 additional electives
<b>15 Courses (150 Credits)</b>	<b>24 Courses (240 Credits) with C or better for Diploma</b>	<b>Ideally, 33.5 (335 Credits) Courses on transcript</b>

<sup>6</sup> Each year’s course is worth 10 credits.

#### **H. CREDIT RECOVERY OPPORTUNITIES**

Credit recovery options will be available in order to ensure that all students graduate on time having completed a-g and graduation requirements. Each student will have an Individualized Graduation Plan that is reviewed at least twice annually by his/her Advisor and once annually by the College Counselor. If a student is not making adequate progress, the Advisor will meet with the student and discuss options, such as summer school, online classes, and adult school. Credit can also be earned through community college. Thrive will also explore offering a summer bridge program that will include opportunities for credit recovery, funds permitting.

#### **I. ENSURING TRANSFER STUDENTS CAN MEET GRADUATION AND COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Upon enrollment, Advisors will work with individual students to create an Individualized Graduation Plan to meet the requirements for graduation. This plan will be monitored and updated once per semester during the school year. Advisors will help ensure that each student is enrolled in appropriate courses, and that each student has the support he or she needs to successfully complete graduation requirements. Transfer students who enter Thrive in grades 10-12 will have their graduation requirements modified accordingly (e.g., not requiring four years of PBL). Our college- and career-going culture encourages all students to complete the a-g requirements and, when appropriate, enroll in community college coursework to begin to understand how to be successful on a college campus or take technical classes to learn how to successfully transfer into a career.

#### **J. WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES (WASC) ACCREDITATION**

Thrive will seek Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation before the school graduates its first class of students. Thrive's goal is to ensure that all of our high school courses are transferable to other local high schools on the most expeditious timeline that is feasible.

#### **K. THRIVE WILL INFORM PARENTS ABOUT COURSE TRANSFERABILITY AND COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Thrive will provide all students and parents/guardians with a course catalog or its equivalent – in both English and Spanish (with translation in other languages as needed) – notifying them about the transferability of courses to other public high schools and the eligibility of courses to meet college entrance requirements.

Parents of students seeking higher education admission will be notified in writing within five (5) business days should any issues or problems arise regarding the eligibility of Thrive's courses to meet college entrance requirements. Thrive will ensure that courses meet the standards of the University of California and the California State University's "a-g" course requirements for college entrance eligibility into the UC or CSU systems.

#### **L. TEACHER CAPACITY: RECRUITMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

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

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

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

### **1. RECRUITMENT**

New faculty members are recruited through various communication channels, including local newspapers, education networking websites (CCSA, CSDC, Teach for America, EdJoin, idealist.org, etc.), the school website, career fairs, local universities and word of mouth referrals. Thrive engages in a thorough review of the qualifications of candidates that apply for employment at the school. The CEO, Directors of the TK-8 and high schools, and other lead staff review resumes, letters of recommendation, statements of teaching philosophies and portfolios to determine which candidates are interviewed for positions. The CEO and Directors bear primary responsibility for all teacher hiring, joined in their efforts by a hiring committee that includes teachers. Candidates for teaching positions re interviewed, and in some cases are asked to teach a lesson to a classroom of students where feasible and/or return for a second round of interviews. In some cases, the CEO or Directors may observe candidates teaching a lesson in their current positions. Following interviews, Thrive contacts references, review letters of recommendation and notify each person of their status once a decision is made. Candidates that are offered employment receive a written offer of employment. In addition, Thrive verifies the teaching credentials of candidates with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, ensuring that each teacher possesses credential subject authorization that meets state and NCLB requirements to teach the subject that he/she is being hired to teach.

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

## 2. **TEACHER EVALUATION**

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

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

- The use of value-added data, consistent with current trends in teacher evaluation
  - The Directors formally conference with teachers one-on-one, no less than twice each year to review and discuss the academic progress of the students in their classroom.
  - The Directors and teacher participate in an analysis and discussion of impact on student learning over time, across all student groups
- Teacher performance is evaluated using a criteria rubric that describes various levels of accomplishment as they pertain to job duties. The criteria rubric is shared with teachers during professional development prior to the opening of school so that teachers are familiar with the process.
- Teachers receive feedback from their Director regarding their effectiveness in all aspects of the job (i.e., instruction, parent communication, planning, collaboration, support of the school's mission).
- The Directors meets individually with teachers at the start of each school year for dialogue and goal setting and later in the year to assess progress toward goals.
- All teachers are expected to maintain professional portfolios that document the features of their classroom program, including long and short term instructional planning, student assessment, student work, meeting the needs of all students, collaboration with colleagues, and parent communication.
- Teachers develop a plan for professional growth that are approved annually by the Directors.

## 3. **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

Thrive offers engaging, interactive and ongoing professional development, incorporating principles outlined by Linda Darling-Hammond and other leading experts, including activities that are experiential, collaborative, sustained and intensive, supported by modeling, coaching, and problem solving around specific problems of practice. (Darling-Hammond, 1995.) The Directors serves as the instructional leader and lead supervisor of instructors for each grade span (TK/K-8 and 9-12), conducting formal and informal classroom observations, setting goals for performance, and providing regular feedback to

teachers. General observations that have school wide implications inform plans for professional development. The Directors, and as the school grows, additional instructional leaders, visit classrooms daily to observe teachers. In addition, the K-8 and high school Intervention and Resource Specialists work closely with teachers in providing professional development and individualized expertise in strategies and targeted interventions for students in need. Teachers also are given ample opportunity to observe one another, with those who excel in a particular area taking the lead in helping to train their peers. Data collected through classroom observations help determine professional development topics. Teachers are surveyed annually to determine whether or not the practices of high quality professional development are in place at the school.

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

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

- Teachers work with the Directors in the summer prior to the school opening and throughout the year, to plan curriculum and assessments, professional development and more for the upcoming year.
- A two-week, mandatory Summer Institute for all Thrive teachers prior to the start of each school year to review the school’s philosophy, goals, and teaching methodology; to discuss professional readings and research; to analyze and discuss instructional practices and student outcomes; and to engage in collaborative planning for the year ahead.
- Once-weekly grade level planning meetings; monthly planning time across grade levels.
- Wednesday “Early Out” sessions provide a dedicated three hour block of time each week for faculty to engage in professional development with a rotating schedule of full-faculty meetings, professional development workshops, and every other week, collaborative planning time for curriculum and assessment development.
- Pupil-free days throughout the year to intensely analyze student achievement data and engage in collaborative planning
- Clearly articulated expectations with respect to professional development outcomes.
- Visits to other innovative and high performing schools.
- Access to a professional development library and other professional resources.
- Opportunities to attend professional development workshops or conferences on topics that have been agreed upon in advance by the Directors.

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

School leadership and teachers all collaborate to determine specific topics and sequencing for professional development. We anticipate that the following, at a minimum, are topics covered in the first years of operation:

- Mission and vision of Thrive and review of the charter petition

- Review of student achievement data for returning students
- School Operations
- Health & Safety Policies and Procedures
- In-depth study of the Common Core Standards as well as using cross curricular groupings and collaborative learning to create greater engagement and a deepened understanding of concepts, including creation of performance tasks aligned with Common Core and other state standards;
- Differentiating instruction for all learners
- Project-based learning
- Backwards Design, including using data to differentiate instruction
- Integrating technology in the classroom: full-day sessions are devoted to each core online learning program (e.g., ST Math, Lexia, etc.) to ensure all staff not only understand the nuances of each program and use it most effectively, but also to ensure that each student's initial benchmark assessment data is incorporated into each program to provide targeted instruction for each student
- Universal Design for Learning
- Literacy instruction: reading and writing across the curriculum
- Advisory curriculum design and social and emotional learning support for adolescent students;
- Classroom Management Success
- Thrive's Habits of Heart and Mind
- Unifying diverse communities of learners;
- Supports and structures for a college and career ready culture;
- Meeting the needs of English learners including Sheltered English instruction/SDAIE and Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) strategies
- Special Education: legal timelines, district policies, Student Success Team process, assessments, and strategies for working with students with special needs
- Teacher evaluation: the evaluation rubric, teacher expectations
- Assessment: standardized tests (CAASPP, CELDT/ELPAC, etc.), benchmark assessments, online assessments
- Review of student achievement data and using data to differentiate instruction

## **M. INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES: ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND BELL SCHEDULE**

### **1. SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULES**

The following illustrative of the schedules students at Thrive follow. A few notes about some terminology regarding the TK/K-8 sample schedules:

**Optional Tutoring:** While our intention is that each student completes family-facilitated learning at home each day, we understand that for some families this may present challenges, particularly as subject matter becomes more sophisticated as a student progresses through upper grades.<sup>7</sup> Thrive ensures that all students who need it – whether because of family needs, intervention support, or

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<sup>7</sup> As explained above, families are asked to participate in a variety of hands-on trainings throughout the year designed to help them work with their children and provide appropriate learning support in our specific curriculum. Families who need additional support are also invited to work directly with tutors on campus or meet with their child's teacher.

simple assistance with complex learning – have access to trained tutors each morning and afternoon (except Friday afternoons). These tutors – both our own faculty (who are expected to be on campus from 8:00 to 4:00 each day) and aides as well as trained volunteers (parents, retired seniors, local university and high school students, etc.) provide invaluable assistance to our students and help expand their learning. Students who are struggling are assigned to specific tutoring sessions, while all students who wish to attend the morning or afternoon sessions are invited to do so (free of charge).<sup>8</sup>

**Advisory Structure:**

**TK/K-8 Morning Meeting**, at all grade levels, includes teachers working with students to review work done at home (family-facilitated learning) and check in based on individualized plans according to each student’s assessments (online and offline) and needs. Given our mastery-based focus with students progressing at their individual pace, this time serves an important connection between students and the teacher. This time is also used to discuss our Habits of Heart and Mind and “character development,” and provides an important forum for student communication and expression. Once a week, the entire school gathers for a **School-wide/Community Meeting**, which include presentations (by students and staff) and community building activities.

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

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

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

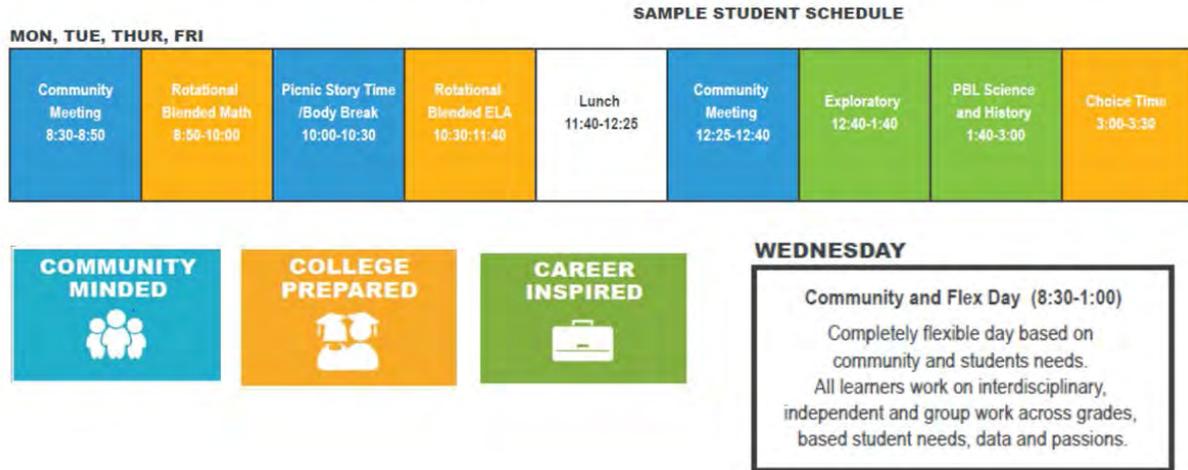
**Picnic Story Time**: in TK and Kindergarten, is a gathering of the class for snacks and literacy development via guided/group reading.

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

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<sup>8</sup> In time, pending funding through ASES and other grants, Thrive offer a comprehensive before and after-school program that includes both tutoring and enrichment activities (sports, arts, tech and more).

## Sample Schedule:



For our high school, we have reimagined the traditional high school experience and collaborated with colleges to maximize what works and eliminate what does not work. Our program offers students flexible scheduling. By splitting the year into seven sessions (four Quarters and three Intensives), we allow students to complete more classes than they would in traditional bell schedule. This in turn allows students to be better positioned for the competitive admissions process for colleges. Our multisession model provides students intensive elective experiences, hands-on exploration and competitive college preparatory classes, while simultaneously offering electives like SAT/ACT prep, internships and more. We do all of this so students can have access to college prep coursework *and* high interest electives. During the four 8-week Quarters, students study traditional “core” classes: math, English, History/Social Science and Science. They also participate in Advisory, PBL and Studio time.

After each quarter, 2 week long Intensives allow students to complete their graduation requirements in foreign language and visual arts, and round out their day with college and career readiness courses, such as SAT/ACT prep. Intensive Sessions are offered in block sessions of varying lengths. A sample schedule for both the Quarter Sessions and Intensive Sessions follows an illustration of sample course sequences in the 8x2 week calendar schedule:

### Thrive High School Course Sequence

#### Quarter Sessions

9	10	11	12
Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Algebra 1/Geometry	Geometry/Algebra 2	Algebra 2/Pre-Calculus	Pre-Calculus/Calculus
English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12
American Government & Community Civics	US History	Modern World History	Economics
Physics	Bio	Chemistry	College Class or Credit Recovery
Studio	Studio	Studio	Studio
PBL	PBL	PBL	PBL

**Intensive Sessions**

9	10	11	12
Spanish 1	Spanish 2	Spanish 3	Internship
Visual Arts 1	Visual Arts 2	SAT/ACT/AP Prep	Transition to College Life
Wellness	College & Career Elective	College & FAFSA Applications	College Class or Credit Recovery

\*Grey highlighting indicate a sampling of possible electives. Sequence and variety will depend on student readiness and choice.

**High School 8 Week Quarter Session Sample Schedule**

M/T (395 Instructional Minutes)		W (275 IM)		Th (395 IM)		F (395 IM)	
8:30-9:05	Advisory	8:30-9:25	ELA	8:30-9:25	Studio	8:30-9:50	Science
9:10-10:05	ELA	9:30-10:25	Math	9:30-10:50	PBL	9:55-11:15	Studio
10:10-11:05	Math	10:30-11:25	History	10:55-12:15	ELA	11:20-12:15	PBL
11:10-12:05	History	11:30-12:25	Science	12:15-12:55	Lunch	12:15-12:55	Lunch
12:05-12:45	Lunch	12:25-12:35	Lunch	1:00-2:20	Math	1:00-1:55	PBL, con't.
12:50-1:45	Science	12:40-1:15	Advisory (Family Lunch)	2:25-3:45	History	2:00-2:35	Advisory
1:50-2:45	Studio	2:00-4:00	Staff Meeting			2:40-3:45	Studio
2:50-3:45	PBL						

**High School Intensive Session Sample Schedule**

M/T/Th (390 IM)		W/F (390 IM)	
8:30-8:45	Advisory	8:30-9:45	Wellness
8:50-9:45	Wellness	9:50-11:50	Spanish 1
9:50-11:50	Spanish 1	11:50-12:30	Lunch
11:50-12:30	Lunch	12:35-2:35	Visual Arts 1
12:35-2:35	Visual Arts 1	2:35-3:35	Studio
2:35-3:35	Studio		

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**SAMPLE SCHOOL CALENDARS**

**TK/K-8 CALENDAR, 2015-2016**

Thrive’s TK/K-8<sup>th</sup> grades operate on a trimester schedule, with a minimum of 180 days. We have provided the 2015-2016 TK/K-8 Calendar, as we are still negotiating with our teachers and families the alignment of vacation and PD days with the 2016-2017 high school calendar below. We will continue to work with families and staff to ensure our calendars support their needs.

S	R	M								
				3	4	5	6	7	3-6 Responsive classroom training in LA (maybe???) 6-7-New Staff PD	
5				10	11	12	13	14	PD for all	
5				17	18	19	20	21	PD for all. 13th or 20th Parent Orientation	
2	2	1		24	25	26	27	28	24/25- PD day 26- First Day for students	
1				31					<b>Add in</b> 180 Student days 25 Staff PD days 39 Weeks of Instruction 13 Weeks of Vacation	
3	1				1	2	3	4		
3	1			7	8	9	10	11		7- Labor Day 10 - back to school night
4	1			14	15	16	17	18		MAP Testing
4	1			21	22	23	24	25		
2	1			28	29	30				
2								1	2	
4	1			5	6	7	8	9	Exhibition in October or December?	
2	2	1		12	13	14	15	16		
4	1			19	20	21	22	23		
4	1			26	27	28	29	30		
4	1			2	3	4	5	6		
4	1			9	10	11	12	13	11- Veteran’s Day	
4	5			16	17	18	19	20	<b>TRIMESTER</b> 1/3 of year is done (Trimester Reportcards go out?)	
				23	24	25	26	27		
1				30						
3	1				1	2	3	4		
4	1			7	8	9	10	11		
4	1			14	15	16	17	18	Exhibition in October or December?	
				22	22	23	24	25		
				28	29	30	31			
								1		
5				4	5	6	7	8		
4	1			11	12	13	14	15		
4	1			18	19	20	21	22	18 MLK community based learning day / day of service	
4	1			25	26	27	28	29		
4	1			1	2	3	4	5		
1	3	1		8	9	10	11	12		
3	1			15	16	17	18	19	15- Presidents Day	
4	1			22	23	24	25	26	MAP Testing	
1				29						

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	3	1			1	2	3	4		24	
	4	1			7	8	9	10	11	Exhibition	25
	4	1			14	15	16	17	18	report cards?	26
1	3	1			22	22	23	24	25	TRIMESTER 2/3 of year is done	27
					28	29	30	31		Spring Break	
	1	3	1		4	5	6	7	8		28
			5		11	12	13	14	15	SLCs	29
	4	1			18	19	20	21	22		30
	4	1			25	26	27	28	29		31
	4	1			2	3	4	5	6		32
	4	1			9	10	11	12	13		33
	4	1			16	17	18	19	20		34
1	3	1			23	24	25	26	27	PD Day	35
	1				30	31				30-Memorial Day	
	2	1					1	2	3		36
	4	1			6	7	8	9	10	MAP Testing	37
	4	1			13	14	15	16	17		38
2	2	1			20	21	22	23	24	TRIMESTER Last day of school end of year report cards go out	39
					27	28	29	30			
					Tot: ##						
25	135	46			Day	181		Total min:	62585		

**HIGH SCHOOL CALENDAR, 2016-2017**

Below is the proposed 2016 calendar which is an iteration of the above included 2015 calendar. We will work with staff and stakeholders to finalize the calendar. As noted, the high school calendar will include four 8-week long quarters plus three 2-week long Intensives, with a total of 182 instructional days.

S	R	M	I	M	T	W	Th	F	Week
				4	5	6	7	8	
				11	12	13	14	15	
				18	19	20	21	22	
				25	26	27	28	29	
5				1	2	3	4	5	PD
5				8	9	10	11	12	PD
5				15	16	17	18	19	PD
4	1			22	23	24	25	26	First Day of School
2				29	30				
2	1					1	2	3	
3	1			6	7	8	9	10	Labor Day
4	1			13	14	15	16	17	
4	1			20	21	22	23	24	
4	1			27	28	29	30	1	
4	1			3	4	5	6	7	
		4		10	11	12	13	14	Columbus
		5		17	18	19	20	21	Intensive Session
4	1			24	25	26	27	28	
1				31					
3	1				1	2	3	4	
3	1			7	8	9	10	11	Veterans' Day
4	1			14	15	16	17	18	
				21	22	23	24	25	Thanksgiving
2	1			28	29	30			



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

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

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

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

- Multiage grouping and looping (same teacher for two years) in grades TK/K-8 which allow the teachers to truly know their students;
- Ample instructional planning time so that teachers can collaborate and create lessons and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students;
- A culture among teachers of openness and collaboration, including team planning sessions and weekly professional development activities, allowing teachers to learn from each other's varying expertise in handling learning differences;
- An emphasis on communication between teachers and parents, and a commitment to work together for the education of their children;
- Various forms of online, project-based and benchmark assessments that are used to guide instruction;
- Learning goals and objectives that are clearly articulated;
- Intentional, systematic preparedness of high school students for life after high school ;and
- High expectations for all students.

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

### **1. INITIAL ASSESSMENT**

An entrance assessment, including a school-designed test derived from state standards and an English language assessment (where applicable) is administered to all new students, and a baseline assessment is administered to returning students. (See *Element 2: Measuring Pupil Outcomes* and *Element 3: Methods for Measuring Pupil Outcomes* for further details about assessments.) Throughout the year, teachers also assess students through informal measures such as checklists, class work and observations, and through more formal means, such as CAASPP testing and benchmark assessments both in writing and via online assessment (see also *Elements 2 and 3*, below). Throughout the year, formative and summative assessments, as well as data from computer programs are reviewed during shortened days and are implemented during Flex Time in grades TK-8 (where teachers group students based on data and provide just in time instruction) and Studio time for high school students. Grade level teams ensure that modifications such as differentiated instruction, scaffolding, and alternative assignments are used to address the needs of individual students. Throughout each school day, our model of instruction allows time for small group and individual instruction by teachers. In addition, students who are struggling are referred to our tutoring program for additional instructional assistance. These interventions are recorded in a log (or online database), which document the length of time and effectiveness of the modification.

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

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

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

Despite the many strengths of the school's programs, methods, and organizational design, additional support may be necessary in instances when students are not making satisfactory academic progress or when their behaviors are impeding their own progress or the progress of others. On those occasions, a referral to the Student Success Team (SST) opens a new pathway of support to students. The purpose of the SST is to ensure that the school and community are doing everything possible to make students successful at school. The SST mobilizes and coordinates the school's resources, and a request for assistance from the SST can be made by a teacher, administrator, parent or guardian. The SST process

is coordinated by the Deans of Students (one at the TK-8 level and one at the HS level), who organizes the SST process by managing the necessary paperwork, scheduling meetings, and inviting members (including parents/guardians) to SST meetings. All teachers receive professional development regarding identification of student needs, modifications and interventions, and the SST process. (See also, Professional Development, above.)

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

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

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

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

Thrive serves a significant number of English Learners. To address the significant academic needs of EL students, all of the major components of Thrive's instructional program have been carefully designed to promote the academic and social success of EL students. Thrive has an established English Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC) comprised of parents and staff. As the school expands into high school, additional parent and teacher representatives will be added to the ELAC.

Several key features of effective programs for English learners were identified during a study of 75 exemplary schools that successfully provide academic programs to English learners in California. ([www.sharingsuccess.org](http://www.sharingsuccess.org).) Many of those features have been incorporated within the program at Thrive, such as:

- **Inclusion** - The program for English learners is an integral part of the school, neither conceptually nor physically separated from the rest of the school.
- **Enrichment** – English learners are provided with a rich intellectual diet, not a remedial curriculum. The instructional approach for all students will emphasize critical thinking, hands-on learning, relevance, and connection across the disciplines.
- **Coordination** - A premium is placed on coordination and collaboration both horizontally and vertically across grade levels. Weekly schedules have been designed to provide common planning time for teachers.
- **Internal Impetus** – Thrive teachers and school leaders are the driving force and key players in designing and implementing innovative curricular and instructional approaches.

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

Thrive adheres to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations with respect to serving students who are English learners. In order to identify students who are English learners in a timely fashion and to provide appropriate instructional support and services, all parents are required to complete a *Home Language Survey* upon enrollment at the school. Cal. Education Code § 52164.1. Students whose primary language is not English are assessed using the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) or 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 CELDT/ELPAC test results. CELDT/ELPAC testing takes place within 30 days of the start of the school year or within two weeks after the date of first enrollment at the school.

The English language proficiency of all currently enrolled English learners are assessed in accordance with the test contractor's directions and California Education Code guidelines. Students with disabilities are 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 are administered to students who are unable to participate in the CELDT/ELPAC test, according to the guidelines set forth in the student's IEP. Thrive staff notifies parents of the school's responsibility to conduct CELDT/ELPAC testing and informs parents of CELDT/ELPAC testing results within 30 calendar days following receipt of test results from the test contractor. Students are monitored in conjunction with the California English Language Development Standards levels.

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

Students' CELDT/ELPAC scores and other assessments (such as NWEA MAP data, Online Learning Program data, etc.) are used for placement into small learning groups and to create students personalized learning plan to assure students are making appropriate progress towards their individual academic goals and towards the overall goal of English Proficiency and exiting ELD.

Placement procedures may change based on the needs of the individual learner as determined by the school site Director and/or Intervention Specialist.

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

All English learners receive daily EL/ELD instruction adjusted to the student's language proficiency level until they are reclassified. Thrive's schedule adjusts to meet the needs of students as based on real-time data and students' Personalized Learning Plan. Below is a sample schedule for ELD in grades TK/K-8:

- 8:30 Morning Meeting (whole group social emotional learning with emphasis on speaking and listening)
- 8:50 ELA (broken into small leveled learning groups with additional ELD push-in and services needed as based on Personalized Learning Plan)
- 10:00 Picnic Story Time (Speaking, Listening and Literacy Time)
- 10:35 Math Time (broken into small leveled learning groups with additional ELD push-in and services needed as based on Personalized Learning Plan)

- 11:45 Writers Workshop (applied literacy time)
- 12:15 Lunch
- 1:00 Afternoon Meeting (whole group social emotional learning with emphasis on speaking and listening)
- 1:15 Project Based Learning Time (applied History and Science learning with extra practice for BICS and CALPS)
- 2:10 Exploratory (elective class focused on Next Gen Science, Engineering, robotics, Arts and performance)
- 3:05 Choice Time (additional time for learning and growth as based on Personalized Learning Plan)
- 3:30 Dismissal

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

- 1) **Community meetings** focused on conversational language (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (“BICS”))
- 2) **Blended ELA** – Through the use of a blended rotation model, students move through independent, collaborative and small group instructional stations each day. At each station students’ learning is personalized and adapts to students’ needs based on continuously collected data. Each student has a personalized learning plan with their data and their goals, which are addressed with a laser like focus in the following ways
  - o Small group teacher instruction: where teachers work with groups of 4-5 students based on ELD levels and other data collected through the year
  - o Tech programs for individual practice of reading skills: RazzKids, Lexia Core 5 and Reading Plus
  - o Non-tech support such as Readers and Writer workshop, as well as supplemental support through programs like Reach (K-5) and Inside (6-8) (Hampton Brown)
  - o Parent handbooks provide tips for parents in Spanish and English to help understand the common core and what students are doing in class
  - o Literacy specialist built into budget to push in and support students in similar ways that a Special Education teacher would support special education students. The literary specialist shall hold an appropriate teaching credential and have experience working with ELs. The literary specialist receives 25 days of professional development around teaching practices, blended learning and other teaching methodology as well as ongoing training offered by the CDE, County Office of Education and others throughout the year.
- 3) **Blended Math**
  - Small group teacher instruction: where teachers work with groups of 4-5 students based on ELD levels, math ability and other data collected through the year

- Tech programs for individual practice, such as Think Through Math, ST Math, Khan and MangaHigh offer students the ability to see, hear, manipulate and practice math with immediate feedback.
  - Non-tech support such as Cognitively Guided Instruction and a high use of manipulatives and realia supports learners to see math with and without words and is focused on conceptual math aligned to Common Core
  - Parent handbooks provide tips for parents and to describe what the common core questions look like and reinforce what happens in class (based on Sacramento County Office of Education’s work)
  - Aids and specialized teacher are in class to support students as they work in small groups or individually
- 3) **Project Based Learning (“PBL”)**
- We are partnering with the Buck Institute for Education, a nationally recognized trainer for project based learning and have staff who are experienced in Project Based Learning
  - Through PBL students learn to use content specific English (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency “CALPS”)) and apply their learning
  - Real world connections help students have greater buy-in and work towards outcomes with an authentic audience

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

In the high school level, ELD instruction will take place based on students’ specific ELD needs. ELD courses may be assigned in place of Studio, PBL and Intensive Session courses. Thrive’s master schedule has the flexibility to both provide intensive ELD support and ensure that all students graduate meeting A-G.

**a. Six Key Strategies for Teachers of English-Language Learners<sup>9</sup>**

- 1) Vocabulary and Language Development
  - i) Teachers introduce new concepts by discussing vocabulary words key to that concept.
  - ii) Teachers build on student’s background knowledge.
  - iii) Classrooms reflect a language rich environment (i.e. language charts, shared reading and writing experiences, other writing displayed throughout the room and used daily by students).
- 2) Guided Interaction (collaborative learning)
  - i) Teachers structure lessons so students work together to understand what they read—by listening, speaking, reading, and writing collaboratively about the academic concepts in the text.
  - ii) Teachers provide students with opportunities to negotiate meaning from language and text and to work in cooperative pairs or groups to develop problem-solving and social skills.

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<sup>9</sup> Adapted from Alliance for Excellent Education. (December 2005). Case study on the New Teacher Center, University of California at Santa Cruz; and Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design).

- iii) Teachers group students flexibly, at times working in heterogeneous groups and at times not.
- 3) Metacognition and Authentic Assessment
    - i) Rather than having students simply memorize information, teachers model and explicitly teach thinking skills (metacognition) crucial to learning new concepts.
    - ii) Teachers use a variety of activities to check for student understanding, acknowledging that students learning a second language need a variety of ways to demonstrate their understanding of concepts that are not wholly reliant on advanced language skills.
    - iii) Teachers “make thinking public,” the metacognitive aspect of teachers and students modeling how an answer was arrived at, not merely what the correct answer was.
  - 4) Explicit Instruction
    - i) Teachers utilize direct teaching methods to teach concepts, academic language, reading comprehension strategies, text patterns, vocabulary, writing patterns, and decoding skills needed to complete classroom tasks.
  - 5) Meaning-Based Context and Universal Themes
    - i) Teachers incorporate meaningful references from the students’ everyday lives and use them as springboards to interest them in academic concepts.
    - ii) Teachers create classroom environments that provide authentic opportunities for use of academic language.
    - iii) Teachers provide students with opportunities to activate and focus prior knowledge via inquiry charts, brainstorming, and clustering.
  - 6) Modeling, Graphic Organizers, and Visuals
    - i) Teachers regularly utilize a variety of visual aids, graphic organizers (such as *Thinking Maps*), pictures, diagrams, summaries, and charts to help English learners easily recognize essential information and its relationship to supporting ideas.

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

Sheltered instruction is also grounded in a pedagogical commitment to meeting the needs of diverse learners, in this case particularly those students who are English learners. The teachers at Thrive \engage in the following practices to support universal access of subject matter content for all students:<sup>10</sup>

- 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.

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<sup>10</sup> Based on the eight broad elements of sheltered instruction described by Echevarria, Vogt, and Short. *Making content comprehensible for English language learners: The SIOP model*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon (2004).

- 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 for a sixth grade social science unit on Ancient Greece might proceed as follows:

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

**Anticipatory Guide:** Students are given a series of statements that relate to concepts they 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 takes 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 on Ancient Greece. Graphic organizers used might include:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Before the issuance of each progress report card, teachers summarize students' mastery of standards for their current ELD level by looking at assessment material collected throughout the quarter. At the end of the semester teachers also go through the list of standards for a student's current ELD level and determine if the student has mastered every standard for his or her current level and is ready to move to the next ELD level. Teachers present evidence (e.g. scored writing samples, rubrics from oral presentations) to the Deans of Students, who works with teachers to make the final decision regarding progression to the next ELD level.

Students will be monitored in conjunction with the following 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 guide Thrive's teachers as they provide ELs with targeted instruction in English language development as well as differentiated instruction in academic content areas<sup>11</sup>:

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

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/>

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 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.

It is our philosophy that ELs at all proficiency levels are capable of high-level thinking and can engage in complex, cognitively demanding social and academic activities requiring language as long as they are provided appropriate linguistic support. The extent of support needed varies depending on the familiarity and complexity of the task and topic, as well as on the student’s English language proficiency level.

Within the PLDs, three general levels of support are identified: Substantial, Moderate, and Light:

Overall Proficiency: A general descriptor of ELs’ abilities at entry to, progress through, and exit from the level;

Early Stages: Descriptors of abilities in English language that ELs have at the early stages of the level; and

Exit Stages: Descriptors of abilities in English language students have at exit from the level.

The descriptors for early and exit stages of each proficiency level are detailed across:

Three Modes of Communication: collaborative (engagement in dialogue with others); interpretive (comprehension and analysis of written and spoken texts); and productive (creation of oral presentations and written texts); and

Two dimensions of Knowledge of Language: “Metalinguistic Awareness,” or the extent of language awareness and self-monitoring students have at the level; and “Accuracy of Production,” or the extent of accuracy in production ELs can be expected to exhibit at the level; English learners increase in accuracy of linguistic production as they develop proficiency in English. Accuracy may vary within a level depending on context, such as extent of cognitive demand or familiarity of a task.

English learners will continue to be re-evaluated annually using the CELDT / 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). Thrive sets a demanding reclassification target annually. The Intervention Coordinator serves as the CELDT / ELPAC testing coordinator and meets periodically with teachers to discuss the progress of English learners toward mastery of the CA ELD standards. The school Leadership Team 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.

To the extent Thrive enrolls any Long Term English Learners (LTELs), our individualized program will help to identify and address these students’ needs. LTELs will participate in ELD instruction as detailed above. These students’ academic language and specific academic vocabulary and language structures may be further developed through ESL classes at San Diego Continuing Education community college, or using computer programs to support language acquisition. Because the needs of LTELs are varied, we

will work with our Intervention Coordinators and classroom teachers 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. Students are made aware of their LTEL status and the risks associated with LTEL status, as well as specific barriers to reclassification and ways to address them.

### **C. SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS**

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

Thrive offers a whole day program from kindergarten on, with before and after-school care provided free of charge, both to best serve our students' needs and accommodate working families. As demonstrated by the success of countless schools in California and beyond serving students who are socio-economically disadvantaged, income is not a determinate factor in a student's ability to succeed academically. We have not found systematic research that correlates socioeconomic status with school achievement in a way that can lead to a pedagogical generalization. If students that are socioeconomically disadvantaged are low achieving or struggle with learning differences or are identified as English Learners, Thrive utilizes strategies described in other sections of this petition.

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

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

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

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

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

Students who are high achievers and/or identified as gifted benefit from differentiation and instruction that is flexible enough to meet their specific needs. According to Carol Ann Tomlinson, a recognized expert in the field of education for gifted students, "a class is not differentiated when all students are doing the same thing and no adjustments are being made to the difficulty levels of the assignments that

are given.” (Tomlinson, 1995.) Thrive has adopted many of the strategies recommended by Tomlinson and others for effective teaching in mixed-ability classrooms, such as:

- Providing alternative and/or extension activities for students who have already mastered the content being taught, including self-directed projects for deeper learning at the high school level, and online curriculum for more advanced study during Studio time;
- Allowing gifted and high achieving students to work at an accelerated pace, including, at the high school level, enrolling in dual enrollment college courses both online and at local colleges/universities;
- Providing opportunities for students to work in flexible groups with other intellectual peers;
- Creating graduated task rubrics and product criteria negotiated jointly by the student and teacher;
- Asking open-ended questions, both in the classroom and on homework assignments, that stimulate critical thinking;
- Incorporating a variety of the levels of thinking described in Bloom’s taxonomy – including the higher levels of analysis, evaluation, and synthesis – into lesson content and student work products.

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

High school students, at their readiness, will also be encouraged to take AP exams, with test prep and coaching available.

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Varied Assessment:* As all students possess and utilize different strengths for their learning, a teacher who allows for a variety of assessments is more apt to find out what students have truly learned, not just how they take a test. Portfolios, oral presentations, open-book tests, group projects and graphic maps are only some of the many avenues available for teachers to tap into their student's knowledge. The wider the variety of assessment the teacher uses and the more authentic and on-going it is, the truer the picture the teacher can get of their student's understandings. (See *Element 2: Assessment*, for explicit details about our assessment methodologies.)

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

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

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

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

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

- Their classroom performance is considered to be one or more years below grade level based on class assignments and/or assessments;
- They receive a Not Met or Nearly Met score in ELA or mathematics on the CAASPP;
- They fail to demonstrate a minimum of one year of academic growth in reading, writing, and/or mathematics during each year; or
- They have an existing IEP.

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

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

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

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

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

By offering a multi-session pathway that ensures that all students take A-G classes and receive necessary intervention support, Thrive is creating flexibility in student scheduling in grades 9-12. This will allow students to take a variety of elective courses beyond the minimum required for graduation, and it will allow students who need additional support in literacy, numeracy or social emotional development to receive that support without jeopardizing their graduation or college-readiness potential.

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **F. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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

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

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

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

As required by a student's IEP, modified courses and instructional approaches will be offered that lead to a Certification of Completion rather than a standard high school diploma. Alternate achievement standards are considered to be aligned with Common Core standards at a modified level. Thrive will rely on the National Center and State Collaborative's "Core Content Connectors"

[https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/Core\\_Content\\_Connectors](https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/Core_Content_Connectors)) to align California Common Core State Standards to IEP goals. In addition to academic goals, students working toward a Certificate of Completion will also address social, communication, behavior and transition/vocational goals within academic classes as well as on-campus and off-campus jobs and activities.

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

Thrive operates as a Local Education Agency (LEA) for the purposes of providing Special Education services and is a member in good standing of the El Dorado County Charter School SELPA. Parents are informed that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them.

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

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

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

Upon the commencement of each school year, all students are evaluated as a means of general class placement. Students may be evaluated from already-available data (i.e. school tests, teacher observations, grades, etc.) regarding the student's progress or lack of progress within the general program. No assessment or evaluation is used for admission purposes. Through collaboration between the faculty, parents and school leaders, Thrive works to identify any students who do not currently have an IEP but may be in need of pre-referral interventions. The Student Success Team convenes weekly to review all referred students as well as student data across sub-groups, classrooms and more. If the Student Success 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. Thrive may also choose to refer a student for services through the provisions of a Section 504 Plan, if appropriate. Please see section IV. A. 3. for details.

### ***3. ASSESSMENT***

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

After a student is referred for a special education assessment, Thrive provides the student's parent or guardian with a proposed assessment plan within 15 days of the referral. Parents are informed by the

Dean of Students for their child's grade level that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them. Thrive obtains informed consent from the parent/guardian before conducting the assessment, and the assessment is completed within 60 days of receipt of parental consent.

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

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

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

- Parents or guardians of any student referred for assessment must give their written consent for the school to administer the assessment;
- The student must be evaluated in all areas related to his/her suspected disability;
- The assessment is conducted by a professional with knowledge of the suspected disability.
- Multiple assessments are delivered by qualified professionals to measure the student's strengths and needs;
- Assessments are delivered without cultural, racial or gender bias;
- Assessment results are delivered to the parent/guardian in their primary language, and an interpreter will be provided if needed;
- Assessments are adapted as necessary for students with impaired sensory, physical or speaking skills; and
- A multidisciplinary team is assembled to assess the student, including a teacher knowledgeable in the disability.

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

If a student enrolls at Thrive with an existing IEP, Thrive will notify the SELPA and an IEP meeting is convened within 30 days to review the existing IEP, discuss the student's present levels of performance

and needs, and offer appropriate placement and services. Prior to such meeting and pending agreement on a new IEP, if needed, Thrive shall work to implement the existing IEP or as otherwise agreed upon by the parent/guardian. Within 30 days of each school year beginning, Thrive forwards a complete list of all new IEPs to students' home districts for reference, if required by law.

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

Every student who is assessed by the school has an IEP that documents assessment results and eligibility determination for special education services. If the student is deemed eligible for services, Thrive is responsible for implementing the IEP and providing specialized services according to the student's IEP. Implementation is overseen and coordinated by the Resource Teacher with individual services provided based on the decisions of the IEP team and the services outlined in the IEP.

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

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

- Directors and Deans of Students
- The parent or guardian of the student for whom the IEP was developed;
- The student
- The student's special education/resource teacher
- At least one core classroom teacher who is familiar with the curriculum or progress appropriate to that student;
- If the student was recently assessed, the individual who conducted the assessment

Others familiar with the student may be invited as needed. Thrive views the parent as a key stakeholder in these meetings and make every effort to accommodate parents' schedules and needs so that they are able to participate effectively on the IEP team. Thrive provides an interpreter if necessary to ensure that all parents and/or guardians understand and can participate in the IEP process. When available, a Thrive teacher or staff member, fluent in the parent's native language, may serve as the interpreter with parent approval. If the parent(s) cannot attend the IEP meeting, the school ensures his/her participation using other methods, such as rescheduling the meeting, conferencing by telephone, conferencing via webcam, or meeting at the parent's home. A copy of the IEP is given to the parent in accordance with State law, Thrive and SELPA policies, as applicable.

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

The elements of the IEP include:

- A statement of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance
- The rationale for placement decisions;
- The services the student receives and the means for delivering those services;

- A description of when services begin, how often the student receives them, who will provide them, and where they are delivered;
- Measurable annual goals and short-term objectives focusing on the student's current level of performance;
- A description of how the student's progress is measured and monitored;
- An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student cannot participate in general education;
- Any accommodations necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the student on state and district assessments; and
- Transition goals for work-related skills.

IEP meetings are held according to the following schedule:

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

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

If a parent or faculty member feels the student's educational needs are not being met, they may request a reassessment or a review of the IEP by the IEP team at any time during the year via written notice to the school. Once the request is received, the IEP Team has thirty days, not including school vacations greater than five days, to hold the IEP meeting.

Parents are informed four times a year of the student's progress toward meeting annual goals and whether the student is expected to meet his/her annual goals. The Goals and Objectives section of the IEP is an attachment to the general progress report. This serves 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 achieves the annual goal prior to the next annual review, and where needed, the reasons the student did not meet the goal.

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

As detailed throughout this petition, Thrive employ a highly individualized model of instruction for all students, which benefits all students with learning challenges. Thrive utilizes a Response to Intervention

(RTI) model, and also complies with the federal mandate of the least restrictive environment (“LRE”). Thrive mainstreams all of its students as much as is appropriate according to each individual IEP. Each student’s IEP requires different kinds of modifications for instruction and services, therefore the educational strategies of the IEP is built around the student’s needs and how these fit within the general educational program of the school.

Thrive’s RTI program includes the three basic tiers:

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

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

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

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

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

Thrive may also contract with outside special education service providers depending on operational needs or specific requirements of the students’ IEPs. Some of the potential contracted services may include nurses, speech therapists, psychologists, autism behavioral or occupational therapists, and counselors. Thrive reassess its special education staffing, service providers, methods, and strategies on a continuous basis to assure that all services provided are effective and of the highest quality.

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

- Credentialed special education teachers/Resource specialists
- School psychologists
- Occupational therapists
- Physical therapists

- Speech-language pathologists
- School nurses
- Vision therapist
- Interpreters for students who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Orientation and mobility aides for students who are blind or visually impaired

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

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

## **6. REPORTING**

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

- A calculation of all school-age students with disabilities being provided special education services by age, grade, category of disability and the number of students with disabilities who are English Language Learners;
- The number of students provided with test modifications and the types and the number of students exempted from assessments;
- The settings in which students with disabilities receive their services, specifically including the portion of the school day they receive services with non-disabled peers and time away from the regular classroom;
- The number of students with disabilities suspended "in-school" and out of school, organized by disability and length of suspensions; and
- The basis of exit from Thrive of students with disabilities (i.e., attainment of diploma and type, declassified, moved, etc.).

All necessary procedures and practices to ensure confidentiality and accurate/timely reporting are the responsibility of each site Director (or his/her designee). The Directors 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 Directors oversee access to these records, and is responsible for ensuring that all providers responsible for the implementation of a student's IEP has access to a copy of the IEP and is informed of their specific responsibilities in implementing the IEP.

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

Parents or guardians of students with IEPs at Thrive must give written consent for the evaluation and placement of their child; is included in the decision-making process when change in placement is under

consideration; and is invited, along with teachers, to all conferences and meetings to develop their child's IEP.

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

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

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

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

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

Thrive recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program of Thrive Public School. Any student, who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity including but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodation by the school.

A 504 team is assembled by the school site Directors and shall include the Director (or his/her designee), parent/guardian, the student if needed, a qualified faculty member, and other qualified persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and accommodations. The 504 team reviews 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 IDEIA but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under the IDEIA, those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team who evaluates the nature of the student's disability and the impact upon the student's education. This evaluation includes 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 or is not be identified as a person with a disability is made by the 504 team in writing and notice is given in writing to the parent or guardian of the student in their primary language along with the procedural safeguards available to them. If during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information indicating possible eligibility of the student for special education per the IDEIA, a referral for assessment under the IDEIA is made by the 504 team.

If the student is found by the 504 team to have a disability under Section 504, the 504 team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations or services are needed to ensure that the student receives the free and appropriate public education (“FAPE”). In developing the 504 Plan, the 504 team shall consider all relevant information utilized during the evaluation of the student, drawing upon a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, assessments conducted by the School’s professional staff.

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

All 504 team participants, parents, guardians, teachers and any other participants in the student’s education, including substitutes and tutors, must have a copy of each student’s 504 Plan. The Special Education Coordinator ensures that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that he/she review the 504 Plan with any long-term substitutes. A copy of the 504 Plan shall be maintained in the student’s file. Each student’s 504 Plan is reviewed at least once per year to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, needed modifications to the plan, and continued eligibility.

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

As noted throughout this charter petition and in particular this section, Thrive utilizes a student-centered approach in all aspects of instruction.. All members of our faculty and our instructional leaders assist each family to ensure the educational success of their child, including making appropriate referrals to community organizations such as our partners Operation Samahan which offers an on-site clinic and the San Diego Community College District which offers adult education, and the County office of Educating which does extensive work with homeless youth. We also have a relationship with Voices for Children which provides educational advocacy for foster youth. These and other organizations offer a variety of on- and off-campus supports for students with extraordinary needs, including foster youth, student who are homeless or experiencing housing instability, students in rehabilitation, or those who are pregnant or parenting. As the school grows, we hope to offer on-site counseling services either in partnership with a local counseling service or via hiring a therapeutic counselor directly to work on campus.

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

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As discussed throughout the preceding sections, the educational program describes in detail how the content standards are taught (i.e. the methodology, organizational structures, and resources). Assessing whether or not the school has achieved its goals is critical to determining the overall effectiveness of the program’s design. Frequent and varied assessments, including pre- and post-assessments of student achievement, provides valuable information to teachers when planning instruction and serves as relevant data for use by school leadership when making decisions leading to program evaluation and

improvement. Regular assessment and reporting of student outcomes also allow interested parties outside of the school to evaluate the academic success of Thrive. For further discussion, see *Element 2*.

## **VII. INDEPENDENT STUDY**

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

## **VIII. THRIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL MEETS THE STATE'S EIGHT PRIORITIES AND HAS A COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL CONTROL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP)**

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Thrive complies with all requirements under the new provisions of California Education Code §47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), including developing annual schoolwide and subgroup goals for each of the applicable eight state priorities defined in California Education Code §52060.

In Element 2, Thrive provides extensive details about intended outcomes that align with the eight state priorities and the actions to achieve the state priorities, based on Thrive's current 2015-16 LCAP for grades TK/K-8 and anticipated goals for the new high school. By June 30, 2016, Thrive will engage stakeholders in drafting an annual update to the LCAP and will include high school goals in more detail. Thrive will comply with all elements of the LCAP, including the adoption of any templates required by the State Board of Education.

## Element 2: Measurable Student Outcomes

*"The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. "Pupil outcomes," for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school's educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 47607. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school." CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(B).*

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

Thrive adopts a comprehensive set of benchmarks for student and school outcomes that support the achievement of the school's vision and mission, based on the state and common core standards, state priorities, and our definition of an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Full implementation of the educational program and frequent monitoring of student and school outcomes ensure that the school is an academic success and is achieving all of its overarching goals. To make certain that the school's primary goal of increased academic achievement for all students is met, student achievement data obtained from standardized assessments is disaggregated annually to clearly identify the academic performance of students by sub-groups (e.g., by ethnicity, gender, English Learners, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities). (See Element 3 for additional details about assessments utilized to monitor student achievement, teacher efficacy and overall school performance.)

At the high school level, additional metrics for success are used. In addition to success at the course level, Thrive monitors graduation and dropout rates; GPA's; college entrance examination scores; college application, acceptance, matriculation and graduation rates. These measures are essential to quantifying the success of Thrive's program in preparing students for college and career.

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

### **I. SCHOOL OUTCOME GOALS, ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES THAT ALIGN WITH THE EIGHT STATE PRIORITIES**

Thrive has clearly defined schoolwide outcome goals in compliance with California Education code sections 47605(b)(5)(B) and 52060(d).

Thrive will pursue the following school-wide and subgroup outcome goals, as measured by multiple and varied benchmark assessments that are aligned to state and federal standards (including the new Common Core) and reflect proficiency measures required as well as applicable state priorities detailed in California Education Code § 52060(d) that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school.

For purposes of measuring achievement of these goals, a numerically significant pupil subgroup is defined as one that consists of at least 30 pupils, each of whom has a valid test score; or, for a subgroup of pupils who are foster youth or homeless youth, a numerically significant pupil subgroup is one that consists of at least 15 pupils. Cal. Education Code § 52052(a)(3).

The following chart delineates Thrive’s school-wide and subgroup outcome goals and performance targets aligned to the state’s priorities based on Thrive’s current TK/K-8 operations and planned 9-12 launch. The chart also includes methods for measuring progress and the individual(s) with primary responsibility for each, all aligned with the state’s priorities defined in Cal. Ed. Code Section 52060(d). As new school performance measures (e.g., API), and revisions to LCAP formats are developed, Thrive will work with the authorizer to ensure that it creates and updates its plans and goals accordingly. The LCAP shall not be deemed part of the charter, and therefore, annual amendments to the LCAP shall not be considered a “material revision to the charter” as defined on section 47607. Actions intended to ensure that the school meets these goals and targets are delineated throughout this charter petition (e.g., Element 1: Educational Program; Element 4: Governance and parental involvement; etc.) See the following chart for specific actions and their corresponding assessments.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5, Thrive shall annually update the LCAP, including the goals and annual actions identified therein. As required by Education Code Section 47604.33, Thrive shall submit the LCAP to the SBE and the San Diego County Superintendent of Schools annually on or before July 1.

***California’s Eight State Priorities:  
Thrive’s Goals, Actions and Outcomes***

***ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #1 -- BASIC SERVICES:*** *The degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned (E.C. §44258.9) and fully credentialed, and every pupil has sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials (E.C. § 60119, and school facilities are maintained in good repair.*

**ANNUAL GOAL:** All students including numerically significant subgroups (socioeconomically disadvantaged, Hispanic/Latino, African American, EL, foster youth), will receive a 21<sup>st</sup> century education that includes access to high qualified teachers, standards aligned materials (including Common Core) and additional instructional materials as outlined in the charter petition; and facilities maintained in good repair.

**ACTIONS:**

Teachers

Director of Operations will verify teacher credentials, CLAD certifications and ensure live scans are completed and documented in employee’s personnel file.

Hire, develop and retain highly qualified teachers and Resource Specialist to provide a rigorous academic program and attend ongoing Professional Development; offer BTSA Program for 4-6 teachers; offer opportunities for teachers/Leadership Team to attend Workshops, symposiums and/or conferences.

Provide Professional development opportunities for members of the Leadership Team as part of their Capacity Building and supporting their roles at the school.

Instructional Materials

Retain IT Consultant to install all technology devices, provide maintenance and technical support to ensure updates of all computers for instructional and assessment use. IT will also assess schoolwide

bandwidth to ensure appropriate implementation of web-based curricular programs and expansion of technology devices.

Purchase classroom furniture (desks, tables, chairs, bookcases, etc.), instructional materials (projects, art, science, etc.), technology devices for student and faculty use.

#### Facilities

Upgrade bathrooms, playground equipment, paint school building, and campus beautification.

Expand security system to include all classrooms and school entrance/exit.

Provide full-time janitorial services to maintain a clean and safe school site, with daily spot checks and Site Inspection Lists with >90% of items in compliance or good standing.

#### **MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

1. 100% of teachers will be appropriately credentialed and assigned.
3. Ensure facilities are in good repair as documented in annual FIT Report
4. Student access to technology – Student to Computer ratio: 1:1

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT:** Employee files, inventory lists/invoices, Site Inspection Lists and annual FIT Report.

***ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #2 -- IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:*** *The charter school will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as district schools regarding the implementation of Common Core State Standards, including how EL students will be enabled to gain academic content knowledge and English language proficiency.*

**ANNUAL GOAL:** Fully implement Thrive model of instruction for all students, including numerically significant subgroups (socioeconomically disadvantaged, Hispanic/Latino, African American, EL, foster youth), with CA CCSS-aligned curriculum in ELA and Math across all grades.

#### **ACTIONS:**

Purchase CCSS-aligned text and digital curricular materials for all grades served (e.g., ST Math, Lexia Learning, Reading Plus, Think Through Math, Brain Pop, etc.) and classroom project-based instructional materials (art, robotics, engineering, etc.).

Develop curriculum pacing, lessons and interventions aligned to CCSS and organizational goals for each new grade level served, including hands-on and project-based learning activities.

Ensure appropriate and comprehensive professional development and coaching for all faculty.

#### **MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- 1, 100% of students, including all subgroups and all grade levels served, have access to a rigorous CCSS-aligned instructional program.
2. 100% of faculty participate in comprehensive PD regarding Common Core and aligning instruction, including project-based activities, to grade level standards; see additional outcomes below.

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT:** Inventory/invoices, student folders, teacher PD agendas and attendance logs

***ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #3 – PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:*** *The charter school will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as district schools for parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for schools, and how the school will promote parent participation.*

**ANNUAL GOAL:** Engage parents as partners through education, communication, and collaboration to promote student academic success & engagement; and ensure parent/guardian involvement in decision-making.

#### **ACTIONS:**

Provides parents with newsletters that convey important details about upcoming school events, and news, celebrate student successes, and provides tips and strategies for parents.

Parent participation will include schoolwide events such as Campus Beautification, Student Led Conferences, Exhibitions, and various other activities.

Host an annual Parent/Student Orientation to meet families, discuss school's educational program, policies and procedures schoolwide expectations, and tour the school

Provide parent volunteer program that includes assisting with outreach, planning family events, volunteering in the classrooms reading with children, etc.

Host monthly Coffee with the Director, an informal setting to answer questions from parents.

Parent/student/teacher conferences take place twice per year. Parents have access to Illuminate parent portal

Administer annual parent surveys in order to obtain input and feedback.

Parent decision-making input will take place through:

1. School Site Council (SSC): to address the school's Title I program, and the academic support programs to increase ELA & Math student academic achievement.
2. English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC): to address the school's Title III/ELL/LTEL Educational Program; address the ELD program and develop methods to support student learning.
3. Thrive's Family Action Network (FAN) parent group provides parents/families the opportunities to participate in local and statewide advocacy, communicate about schoolwide events.

**MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

1. Provide parents with opportunities for decision-making input in the school's program.
2. Increase parent participation in schoolwide programs/events.
3. Administer annual parent surveys to obtain feedback/input.

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT:** Parent attendance records at school events, conferences, volunteer hours, etc.; home-school communication samples; annual parent surveys.

***ACHIEVEMENT GOAL # 4 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT:*** *The charter school will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as district schools for pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following as applicable:*

- A. CA Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)
- B. The Academic Performance Index (API) (as available)
- C. Percentage of pupils who are college and career ready
- D. Percentage of ELs who make progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and/or English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC)
- E. EL reclassification rate
- F. Percentage of pupils who have passed an AP exam with a score of 3 or higher
- G. Percentage of pupils who participate in and demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the Early Assessment Program (E.C. §99300 et seq.) or any subsequent assessment of college preparedness.

**ANNUAL GOALS:** All students, including all numerically significant subgroups, will meet or exceed state and federal targets for growth, or, where targets are unavailable, will meet or exceed surrounding comparable school's performance, on the CAASPP and API/AYP (if available, or new comparable measures) and EL proficiency and reclassification rates; all students, including all numerically significant subgroups, will meet or exceed surrounding comparable schools' graduation rates and a-g course completion rates for high school students.

Develop an infrastructure for ongoing analysis of student achievement & performance data to ensure efficacy of program services and maximize use of resources.

**ACTIONS:**

Thrive Public School will provide all teachers with Professional Development (3 weeks in Summer, 8 days throughout the year, weekly PD time during early release) on the following topics:

- Common Core State Standards (CCSS): ELA/ELD Frameworks
- CCSS Math
- NGSS
- Project Based Learning
- Personal Learning Plans
- School Culture
- Student Character
- Responsive Classroom

Director & teachers as a PLC will analyze data and discuss student progress during weekly PD/staff collaboration time and 8 pupil-free days throughout the year, and routinely use data to:

- Assess student progress, including all subgroups (e.g., the ELD progress of ELs, LTELs and RFEP students) and determine individual student needs and action plans;
- Assess school culture (e.g., student suspensions or other disciplinary actions, student engagement, etc.)

Provide learning opportunities for teachers and Leadership Team through Conferences such as CCSA and as requested that align with the Common Core State Standards.

Instruction and support for EL students, including LTEL and RFEP, will be provided as detailed in the charter petition.

**MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

- SBAC/CAASPP results will demonstrate schoolwide and subgroup growth each year based on annual goals (anticipated to be 2-3%), meeting or exceeding comparable schools' results.
- API (or comparable measure) growth targets set by the State will be met annually.
- EL reclassification rate benchmarks will be established at the end of 2016-17 with a goal of meeting or exceeding District reclassification rates; specific growth targets set annually (anticipated to be 2-3%);
- English Learners will progress at least one grade level on the CELDT/ELPAC each year.
- 100% of Thrive seniors will graduate college-ready.
- A-G completion rates benchmarks will be set at the end of 2020-2021 with the first graduating class of seniors with a goal of 100%, with specific schoolwide and subgroup growth targets set annually (anticipated to be 3-5%).
- Special education students will demonstrate appropriate progress toward stated goals in their IEPs each year.

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT:** State test results (CAASPP, science CST, etc.) and API (or comparable measure); NWEA MAPs, Dibels; online curriculum/assessments; student portfolios, projects and presentations of learning; EL reclassification rates, CELDT/ELPAC scores; graduation rates and a-g completion rates for high school students; IEPs/updates

**ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #5 – STUDENT ENGAGEMENT:** *The charter school will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as district schools regarding pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:*

- A. School attendance rates
- B. Chronic absenteeism rates
- C. Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3))

- D. High school dropout rates
- E. High school graduation rates

**GOAL:** Students will be engaged through the use of effective pedagogical strategies including behavioral supports and interventions to maintain a high ADA rate (95%), low chronic absenteeism rate and low dropout rates. Achieve a high graduation rate for all student subgroups which meets or exceeds surrounding comparable schools.

**ACTIONS:**

Implement a Character Education Program, Responsive Classroom and other strategies detailed in the charter petition to establish a strong and welcoming school culture.

Implement personalized learning, project-based learning, exploratory/electives and other engaging learning strategies detailed in the charter petition to motivate students to be active and engaged learners and persist in their education.

Implement SARB Process for students with chronic absenteeism

The Coordination of Services Team (COST)/SST meetings will be used to monitor student progress, including credits earned towards graduation for high school students falling behind or in need of extra supports/interventions.

Thrive will provide all students with access to before/after school tutoring, clubs and organizations. Students and their parents/guardians will have access to Illuminate, Student Information System to access their Personalized Learning Plans and academic progress.

**MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

Increase ADA from 95% to 96% by 2017-18 (.33% increase annually)

Decrease chronic absenteeism from 14.6% to 10% by 2017-18.

Middle and high school dropout rates will be lower than surrounding comparison schools with a goal of 0%.

Graduation rates, starting in 2019-20 with the first graduating class, will meet or exceed surrounding comparison schools, with a goal of 100%, with specific schoolwide and subgroup growth targets set annually (anticipated to be 3-5%).

Parent and students will indicate 80% overall satisfaction with school programs.

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT:** ADA, chronic absenteeism and truancy rates; dropout rates; graduation rates; parent and student annual survey results.

**ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #6 – SCHOOL CLIMATE:** *The charter school will meet the same accountability standards as district schools regarding school climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:*

- A. Pupil suspension rates
- B. Pupil expulsion rates
- C. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness

**GOAL:** Maintain a low suspension and expulsion rate that meets or is lower than surrounding comparable schools. Achieve 85% satisfaction on surveys regarding safety and school connectedness.

**ACTIONS:** Provide training and support for Advisory and other non-scholastic support for students.

**MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:**

1. Maintain suspension rates below 3%
2. Maintain expulsion rates below .5%
3. At least 85% of parents and students will indicate a sense of safety and connectedness on annual surveys.

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT:** Suspension and expulsion rates; parent and student annual surveys.

***ACHIEVEMENT GOAL # 7 – COURSE ACCESS:*** *The charter school will meet the same standards district schools are held to regarding the extent to which pupils have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, including programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated students (classified as EL, FRPM-eligible, or foster youth; E.C. §42238.02) and students with exceptional needs.*

**GOAL:** All students in all grades, including all numerically significant subgroups, will have access to academic and educational enrichment programs as outlined in the school’s charter.

**ACTIONS:** Ensure all grades have exposure to a wide variety of enrichment opportunities, college-preparatory courses and experiences, “real world” learning and career preparation, including project-based learning, opportunities to engage in arts, technology and field trips/excursions in the community, and a full array of a-g course selections for high school grades.

**MEASURABLE OUTCOMES:** 100% of students, including all subgroups, will have full access to enrichment classes and opportunities both in school and after-school; all years.

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT:** Student portfolios, high school course listings.

***ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #8 –OTHER PUPIL OUTCOMES:***

See Thrive’s goals, actions and outcomes under Achievement Goal #4: Student Achievement, above.

## II. ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES

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

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

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

### Element 3: Methodologies for Measuring Student Outcomes

*“A description of the method by which pupil progress in meeting pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(C).*

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

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

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

As students become increasingly able to produce independent work samples such as journal entries, written reports, project work and presentations, these products also be evaluated by teachers. By the end of the third grade we expect that most students perform at the proficient level or above in reading, writing and speaking according to the school’s identified assessment measures. Ongoing assessment of daily work and formal evaluation using online assessments, scoring guides, tests and checklists provide the teacher, parent and student with feedback on student achievement and progress. As students progress into and through middle grades and high school, student evaluation becomes more formal, including student-produced book projects, final draft writing, science experiments and presentations of research. Portfolios, public Presentations of Learning, and project Exhibits are used to assess student growth and to assist both the student and the teacher in identifying the next steps for growth. Students are assessed in a summative manner on a weekly basis in the form of a quiz, test (both written and online), essay, research paper, presentation or project.

Measure of Success		
<i>How we measure our success</i>		
<b>Outcomes for tomorrow today:</b> Prep for Next Level (on grade)	<b>Ambitious and multidimensional teaching</b>	<b>Engaging and Supporting Families:</b>

level) Measure of Academic Progress NWEA/CC Dra/f&p/ STEP	<b>and learning:</b> Presentations of Learning Exhibitions <i>(also see outcomes for tomorrow)</i>	Parent Satisfaction Partnership with local agencies Membership and involvement Self-Efficacy of families and staff
<b>Supportive environment:</b> Observations /Class Dojo Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support Habits of Mind Social Emotional Growth Minimal Behavior referrals	<b>Collaborative and engaged staff:</b> - Staff Engagement in Learning Community - Leadership Team - Cognitive Coaching - Staff Satisfaction Survey - Credentials / Ed Level - Bi-yearly Evaluation - Retention of employees	<b>Effective Leaders and Operations:</b> Community Engagement Budget and Reserves Ratios of staff, budget items Class size Student teacher ratio

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

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

## I. PROGRESS REPORTS

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

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

## II. MEASURING ACADEMIC PROGRESS (MAPs)

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

## III. ASSESSMENT DESIGN

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

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

## IV. USE AND REPORTING OF DATA

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

Thrive's teachers and school leaders also analyze trends, significant changes, apparent conflicts, and anomalies to track individual student growth over time, evaluate specific, aggregated and disaggregated groups of students, measure performance on the state tests, API, and school-based growth data and authentic assessments to assess the whole school from year to year. Our data analysis also includes attendance rates, discipline records, and comparative data, as appropriate. Thrive also surveys major

stakeholder groups (e.g., parents/guardians, students and teachers) at least once annually about our effectiveness and opportunities for improvement. This data is used by school leaders and staff to address challenges and areas of improvement; all results are reported to the Board and school community to ensure transparency and accountability.

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

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

## Element 4: Governance Structure

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

### I. NON-PROFIT PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION

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Thrive Public School is a direct-funded independent charter school, operated by Thrive Public Schools, a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation, pursuant to California law, with 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS. Members of Thrive Public Schools’ Board of Governors, any administrators, managers or employees, and any other committees of the School shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards and policies and regulations regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

Thrive Public School operates autonomously from the SBE, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute.

The governing board of Thrive complies with the Brown Act.

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

### II. BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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Thrive Public School is governed by the corporate Board of Governors for Thrive Public Schools, who maintain active and effective governance in accordance with its adopted corporate bylaws that shall be consistent with the terms of this charter.<sup>12</sup>

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

Except for the initial Board of Governors, each individual Board Member shall hold office unless otherwise removed from office in accordance with the bylaws for terms of two (2) years and until a successor member has been appointed or elected as required by the position as described below. Board terms are renewable upon mutual consent between the Board and the member.

Each member of the founding Board was carefully chosen for his or her passion and commitment to our mission, dedication to education, area of professional expertise, service to the community, and ability to

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<sup>12</sup> In the event Thrive Public Schools later operates more than one public charter school, the corporate/governance structure will be modeled after such highly successful multi-school operators as High Tech High, with centralized governance and school-site stakeholder input as detailed here.

support the vision and mission of Thrive. Founding/Initial Board members transition to the permanent Board of Governors. Although not required, the Board strives to create an odd number of members for voting purposes. The terms of the initial Board of Governors shall be staggered, with two members serving for one (1) year and three members serving for two (2) years. The staggering of the initial members' terms of service are determined by a lot drawing. Please see Element 1: The Educational Program, Section I.C, "Founders, Board of Governors, and Partners," for more information on the initial Board of Governors.

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

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

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

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

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

- Promote, guard and guide the vision and mission of the school;
- Ensure the school meets its mission and goals;
- Hire, supervise, and evaluate the CEO;
- Hire, per CEO's recommendations, the Directors and Business Manager;
- Approve contractual agreements;
- Approve and monitor the school's annual budget, budget revisions, and monthly cash flow statements;
- Act as a fiscal agent. This includes but is not limited to the receipt of funds for the operation of Thrive Public School in accordance with applicable laws and the receipt of grants and donations consistent with the mission of the school;
- Contract with an external independent auditor to produce an annual financial audit according to generally accepted accounting practices;

- Establish operational committees as needed;
- Recruit and appoint new Board members and provide orientation training;
- Participate in fundraising;
- Execute all applicable responsibilities provided for in the California Corporations Code;
- Monitor student achievement to ensure progress toward fulfillment of the school's mission;
- Engage in ongoing strategic planning;
- Approve the schedule of Board meetings;
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and complaint procedures when necessary;
- Approve charter amendments as necessary and submit requests for material revisions as necessary to the SBE for consideration;
- Approve annual independent fiscal audit and performance report;
- Appoint an administrative panel or act as a hearing body and take action on recommended student expulsions.

#### IV. SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

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

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

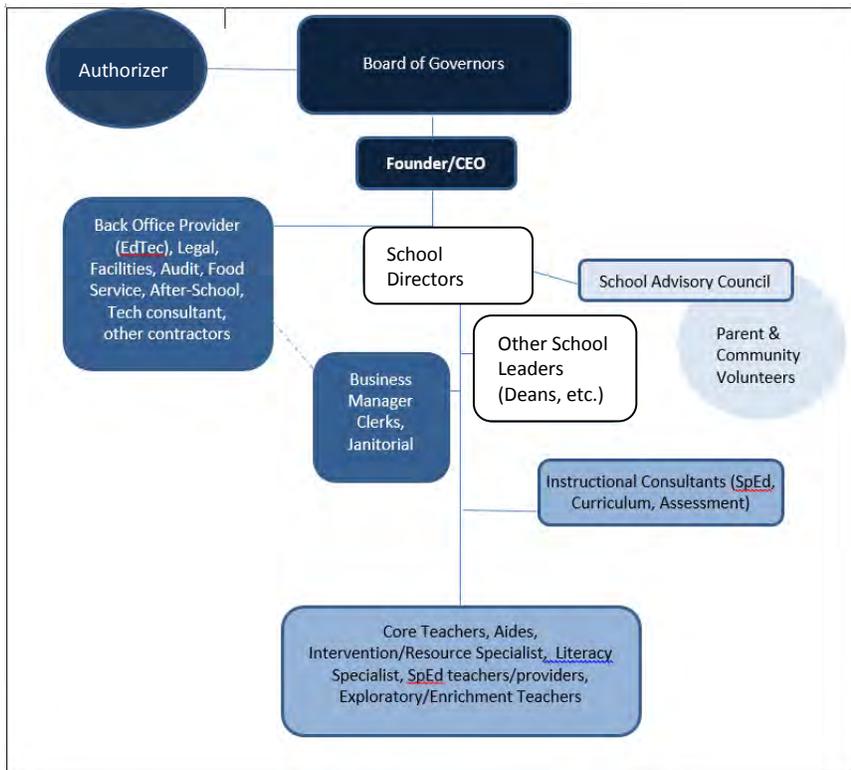
The School Advisory Council meets regularly and as needed for a minimum of four (4) times each year (when school is in session). The Council makes recommendations and participate in a shared decision making process regarding matters of interest to families and teachers, including budget priorities, resource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

#### V. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

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Our organization has been designed to ensure the entire school community works effectively and efficiently to achieve our mission. The organizational structure was developed based on the

recommendations and best practices of other highly successful charter schools and similar organizations and meets all legal and SBE mandates, as illustrated below:



## Element 5: Employee Qualifications

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

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

### I. QUALIFICATIONS OF EMPLOYEES

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

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

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

The CEO hires, supervises, disciplines and, as needed, dismisses the school’s Directors. The Directors may, in collaboration with the CEO, hire, promote, discipline and, as needed, dismiss staff and teachers at the school. A formal evaluation process has been developed and the Board ensures that the CEO is evaluated formally at least once annually, and the CEO, in turn, evaluates central office and lead school staff.

#### A. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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

Responsibilities include:

#### *Planning and Operations:*

- Collaborate with the Board of Governors to plan and publicize all Board meetings, prepare agendas, arrange logistics, and attend all regularly scheduled Board meetings
- Facilitate strategic planning with the Board of Governors

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

*Fundraising and Financial Oversight:*

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

*Facilities:*

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

*Outreach and Collaboration:*

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

- Establish and maintain partnerships with community service organizations, businesses and local councils and resident.
- Assist Directors as requested in coordinating parent involvement and volunteering.

*Communications:*

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

*Qualifications include:*

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

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

## **B. BUSINESS MANAGER**

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

*Qualifications include:*

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

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

Responsibilities of the Business Manager include:

*Planning and Operations:*

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

*Fundraising and Financial Oversight:*

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

*Outreach and Communications*

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

**C. DIRECTORS**

Each Director is the educational and instructional leader of a Thrive school level (TK/K-8 and high school), and also collaborates with the CEO on school operations and management. Director responsibilities include:

*Educational Leadership:*

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

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

*Communications and Outreach:*

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

*School Management:*

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

*Qualifications include:*

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

The ideal candidate has:

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

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

Each Director, in collaboration with the CEO, recruits and hires a Deans of Students. By year 5, Thrive will have two-three Deans between TK-12. Selection of the Dean(s) is based on proven experience in educational leadership, educational vision and relevant experience with diverse children, demonstrated ability in program design and/or development, entrepreneurial ability, and interest and commitment to educational reform.

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

*Responsibilities include:*

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

- Attending trainings related to the administration of state tests
- Training staff in preparation for test administration
- Ensuring the security of test documents
- Scheduling and supervising test administration
- Coordinating the submission of test materials
- Supporting teachers with test administration (make-up tests, etc.)

*Qualifications include:*

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

**E. COLLEGE COUNSELOR (YEAR 3)**

Responsible for ensuring students meet all requirements necessary to successfully graduate and get accepted into a college or university, also assisting with the development of course offering list, student scheduling, and completion of student Individual Graduation Plans;

- Counsels students in the areas of educational, personal, physical, social and career needs.
- Provides guidance to students and their families in matters regarding graduation, college entrance requirements and scholarships.
- Helps students effectively utilize the educational opportunities of the school; recommends available resources within the school, school system and community to meet the needs of individual students, assists in making such referrals and contacts
- Assists in coordinating the gathering of important student records and cooperates with other staff in scheduled student case conferences.
- Participates in Student Success Team and other problem-solving conferences as needed.
- Serves as a resource person to school personnel and parents regarding the college counseling program.
- Assists in preparation of information for entry on student cumulative records and contributes data concerning student need to assist in the development of the total educational plan of the school.

**Qualifications**

- Bachelor's degree
- Pupil Personnel Credential required.
- Five years' experience in high school setting including three years of counseling.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills and the ability to interact and forge relationships with students, parents, staff and community members
- Possess a work ethic and personal belief system that aligns with the mission and vision of Thrive.

## F. TEACHING STAFF

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

### *Responsibilities include:*

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

### *Qualifications Include:*

Selection of teachers is based on their teaching experience and their ability to demonstrate curriculum creation, implementation and assessment and classroom instructional capabilities in the context of the Thrive instructional model. All teachers are required to possess and maintain a current California Commission on Teacher Credentialing Certificate, permit, or other document that would satisfy school district requirements and meet all legal requirements to teach in California public schools. All core subject teachers are "highly qualified" as that term is defined under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), and further defined by California state regulations implementing the NCLB requirements, unless such requirements are not deemed by the federal or state government to apply to charter schools such as Thrive. In addition, Thrive places priority on hiring teachers who possess a Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development (CLAD) certificate (or equivalent California Commission on Teacher Credentialing EL certification) to ensure that they have appropriate academic preparation to address the needs of students who are English learners. Thrive also actively seeks to recruit and hire teachers who possess a Bilingual Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development (BCLAD) certificate (or equivalent). The ideal teaching candidate has:

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

## G. INTERVENTION/RESOURCE SPECIALIST AND LITERACY SPECIALIST

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

- Provide direct instruction/support to students as identified by the Student Success Team

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

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

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

#### H. ACADEMIC COACHES

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

#### Additional Staff

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

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

Responsibilities include:

- Answering phones
- Filing reports
- Enrolling students

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

## **II. ASSURANCES REGARDING APPLICABLE LAW**

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Thrive believes that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. Thrive shall not discriminate against qualified applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, or any other characteristic protected by California or federal law. Thrive also is committed to providing a school that is free from sexual harassment and any other type of harassment based upon protected characteristics (race, age, gender, etc.). Thrive implements a harassment policy to prevent sexual and other types of harassment and to immediately resolve any concerns or complaints of a harassment nature, including employee to employee, employee to student, student to student, and student to employee. School staff are trained on the harassment policy annually.

Thrive Public School complies with all applicable state and federal laws regarding background checks and clearance of all personnel, and prohibitions regarding the employment of any person who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony. Thrive Public School teachers and all para-professionals meet the requirements for employment of California Education Code § 47605(l) and the applicable provisions of *No Child Left Behind*. The school shall ensure that all teachers hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit or other document that a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. The school actively recruits credentialed teachers to minimize the use of teachers holding emergency credentials.

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

Thrive Public School complies with all applicable State and federal mandates and legal guidelines relative to NCLB.

## Element 6: Health and Safety Procedures

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

The school has adopted and implemented a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies, developed in consultation with the school's insurance carriers. (The 2015-16 Health and Safety Plan is included in Appendix G.) The Health and Safety Plan is reviewed and revised (as needed) annually. Copies maybe provided to school police, local police or authorizer as appropriate. The Health and Safety Plan is also kept on file in the main office and is available for review upon request. All school staff are trained annually on safety procedures. The policies are reviewed on an ongoing basis in the school's staff development efforts and governing board policies. At a minimum, the Policy addresses the following topics:

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

### A. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

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

record summary. Thrive has contracted with the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) to provide this service when requested. SDCOE is designated as the Custodian of Records for Thrive.

In addition, any volunteers who may have the occasion to be alone with a Thrive pupil while not in the presence of a school employee must receive fingerprint clearance prior to volunteering on campus. Volunteers do not have to be fingerprinted only if they are working under the direct and continual supervision of a school employee in the same room, and have no occasion to be alone with a Thrive pupil. This policy also applies to parents/guardians of Thrive students who volunteer at the school and may have the occasion to be alone with any pupil other than their own child.

## **B. FACILITY**

In 2015-16, Thrive occupies a private facility located at 4260 54<sup>th</sup> Street, San Diego, California 92115, that includes:

- 8 core classrooms
- Office space for the CEO, Director, Intervention/Resource Specialist, Business Manager and front office (Admin/Clerical)
- Outdoor play space
- Parking

Ultimately, we plan to operate on two campuses within the boundaries of the San Diego Unified School District in order to accommodate our students TK/K-12. For the immediate future, one of those two sites may be our current private facility. We are also looking for other spaces to lease. Additionally, we have applied for Prop 39 with SDUSD and waiting to receive facilities offers from them in the spring of 2016.

By the time we open the doors of the high school, in the fall of 2016, we anticipate needing 20 classroom spaces. Once reach TK/K-12 capacity, with 1,124 students enrolled, we anticipate we will need a minimum of 45 core classrooms. We will also need to expand our office space and ensure adequate access to science labs, common spaces (such as a multi-purpose room) and resource facilities. In anticipation of operating needs, we are working with foundations, realtors and banks to purchase a facility. We have some very strong leads and hope to ultimately own, rather than lease, the two campuses we need to serve our students. Until that time, we will continue to work with the district and the private sector to secure school facilities that provide the required zoning, occupancy and amenities necessary to serve our students. We have a \$2 million commitment from a local foundation to support our facilities acquisition.

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

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

year but the other two could accommodate at least some growth until we secure a permanent home. Thrive is aggressively pursuing these options.

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

### **C. AUXILIARY SERVICES**

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

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

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

### **E. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS**

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

1. Commercial General Liability, including Fire Legal Liability, coverage of \$5,000,000 per Occurrence and in the Aggregate.
2. Workers' Compensation Insurance in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code adequate to protect the Thrive Public School from claims that may arise from its operations pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Act (Statutory Coverage). The Workers' Compensation

Insurance coverage must also include Employers Liability coverage with limits of \$1,000,000/\$1,000,000/\$1,000,000.

3. Commercial Auto Liability, including Owned, Leased, Hired, and Non-owned, coverage with limits of \$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.
4. Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by Thrive Public School to cover all charter school employees who handle, process or otherwise have responsibility for charter school funds, supplies, equipment or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be \$50,000 per occurrence, with no self-insured retention.
5. Professional Educators Errors and Omissions liability coverage with minimum limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate.
6. Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage with minimum limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate. Coverage may be held as a separate policy or included by endorsement in the Commercial General Liability or the Errors and Omissions Policy.
7. Employment Practices Legal Liability coverage with limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate.

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

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

## Element 7: Racial and Ethnic Balance

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

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

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Our students reflect the current community demographics as described in *Element 1, Section A: Targeted Student Population*; Thrive strives to meet the broader demographics of the diverse state of California and general population residing within the San Diego Unified School District. Thrive Public School continually reviews and expands its outreach efforts in order to achieve its goal of enrolling a student population that reflects the economic and academic balance of the community.

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

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

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

#### K-8 Charter Schools near us without a high school feeder school

KIPP Adelante Preparatory Academy  
Elevate  
Keiller Leadership Academy  
Museum School  
Urban Discovery Academy  
Darnall  
SD Global Vision  
Old Town Academy  
The Learning Choice Academy  
SD Cooperative Charter School

Harriet Tubman Village Charter  
School  
America's Finest  
IFTIN  
Holly Drive Leadership Academy  
Method Schools  
SD Virtual  
College Prep  
Integrity  
Albert Einstein Academies

Community Associations/Councils

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

Service Organizations

Alliance for African Assistance  
Boys & Girls Club, Encanto  
Copley YMCA  
Episcopal Community Services  
Kensington's Garden Angels  
Mid-City Community Action Network (midcitycan.org)  
Neighborhood House Association  
Speak City Heights  
Public Libraries (especially parent education/literacy programs)

Community Events

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

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

#### A. FEDERAL COMPLIANCE

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

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

## Element 8: Admissions Requirements

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

Thrive Public School is open to all students residing in California who wish to attend the school, as outlined in Education Code § 47605(d)(2)(A). Thrive Public School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220, including actual or perceived disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics.

### A. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS & PREFERENCES

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

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

As a charter school, Thrive Public School is a school of choice, and Thrive Public School may have more students interested in attending the school than there are spaces available. If the number of students who wish to attend the school exceeds the openings available, admission shall be determined by random public drawing in accordance with Education Code §47605(d)(2) and all federal requirements.

During any period of funding for the Public Charter Schools Grant Program (“PCSGP”), requirements of the PCSGP program will be followed.

In accordance with the applicable law and federal guidelines, admission preferences shall be given to the following students in the following order: (1) pupils currently attending the charter school, and 2) pupils who reside within the boundaries of the district.

### B. ADMISSION PROCESS AND OPEN ENROLLMENT

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

Open Enrollment typically begins the first business day after January 1 and continues through the last Friday of April of the same year.<sup>13</sup> All interested families are required to submit a completed Admissions Application Form directly to the school before 4:30 p.m. on the date of the annual deadline, which is clearly indicated on the form and in all communications and notices (websites, flyers, etc.) regarding admission to the school. Submitted Admission Application Forms are date- and time-stamped and student names re added to an application roster to track receipt. Families who apply after the enrollment deadline are added to the wait list in the order the applications are received.

Following the open enrollment period, applications are counted to determine if any grade level has received a number of applications that exceed available seats. If the number of students who have applied for any grade exceed capacity as of the date of the application deadline the school holds a public random lottery to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level.

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

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

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

A member of the Thrive school Leadership Team and at least one other school employee conducts the admissions lottery as a public event to ensure that lottery procedures are fairly executed.

The Thrive Public School lottery is set annually by the Board of Governors and is posted on our website and in the school office. The lottery is conducted at a time that is convenient for a majority of interested parties and is open to the public. The school informs parents of all applicants and all interested parties of the rules to be followed during the lottery process, location, date and time of the lottery both on the application for enrollment and our school website two weeks prior to the lottery date. The school chooses a date and time for the lottery (either on the weekend or after 5:30pm on a weekday) so that most interested parties are able to attend. The lottery is held at the school site if the school facility can accommodate all interested parties. Thrive authorizer representatives and respected members of the community are welcome to come to officially observe the lottery to verify lottery procedures are fairly executed.

Admissions Application Forms, the manual record of all lottery participants and their assigned lottery numbers, and other lottery-related documents are physically filed on campus, and lottery results and waiting lists are readily available in the school's main office for inspection upon request. Each applicant's

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<sup>13</sup> For the first year, depending on the timing of charter approval, the open enrollment period may be extended to allot sufficient time for thorough outreach and recruitment.

admissions application is kept on file for the academic year with his or her assigned lottery number in the school database and on his or her enrollment application.

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

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

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

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

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

Thrive Public School adheres to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth.

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

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

## Element 9: Financial Audits

*“The manner in which annual, independent, financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority.” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(I).*

### I. BUDGETS

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Each spring, Thrive engages stakeholders as part of the annual LCAP update and budget setting process and establishes an annual budget, monthly cash flow projections, and a three-year financial projection. The CEO prepares the budget in collaboration with the Business Manager and back-office services provider, and works with the Finance Committee of the Board to ensure the budget meets the programmatic needs of the school within the anticipated revenue. The annual budget includes all estimated revenues and expenditures for the year in accordance with LCAP goals and action plans, and also includes ample reserves to accommodate cash flow challenges. At this time, a number of contingency budgets are prepared to provide a framework in the case of an unexpected increase in expenses or cut in revenue. The budget and three-year projections are then presented to the Thrive Public School Board of Governors for discussion and approval. Thrive maintains a reserve of at least 3% at all times to cover any contingencies.

The CEO and Finance Committee reviews monthly cash flow statements and presents comprehensive budget updates to the Board at least four times each fiscal year. The CEO and Board of Governors also recommend formal budget revisions as needed to ensure financial stability and adequate cash flow. The Thrive Public School Board adopts formal policies regarding the deposit of funds, investment procedures, and internal financial controls. Thrive Public School’s updated November 2015 operational budget, as well as cash flow and financial projections for the next five years can be found in Appendix E. An updated budget has been submitted to reflect the revisions contained herein in this request for material revision of the charter to add grades 9-12.

#### A. BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

As noted in Element 5, above, the CEO has ultimate responsibility for financial matters at the school under the policies adopted by and oversight provided by the school’s Board of Governors. The CEO supervises the Business Manager, who manages the day-to-day financial operations of the school in collaboration with the school’s back-office services provider. Currently, Thrive contracts with ExEd for back-office services including, but not limited to, the following:

- Finance & Accounting
- School Start-Up
- Governance & Board Support
- Compliance & Accountability
- Payroll Processing & Reporting
- Grants Administration
- Human Resources & Insurance
- Attendance & SIS
- Business Consulting

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

## B. ANNUAL AUDIT

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

To the extent required under applicable federal laws for audits of the major federal programs, the audit scope expands to be in compliance with the requirements described in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133, audits of states, local governments, and nonprofit organizations. Should OMB Circular A-133 be rescinded, audits of the major federal programs is conducted in compliance with standards and provisions approved by OMB.

Thrive Public School engages an independent public accountant with education finance experience certified by the State of California and approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider, to audit the school's financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing standards and the audit guide issued by the Controller of the State of California. The Thrive Board of Governors is responsible for contracting and overseeing the independent audit. The school's plan for providing information is to gather, prepare, and organize documents, materials, and other information as requested by the independent auditor. Fiscal statements audited by the auditor, who is a Certified Public Accountant, are submitted to the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The CEO reviews any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Charter School Board of Governors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board submits a report to the SBE describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the SBE along with an anticipated timeline for the same. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel ("EAAP") in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit of the Charter School is public record to be provided to the public upon request.

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

- Provisional Budget – Spring prior to the operating fiscal year
- Final Budget – July of the budget fiscal year
- First Interim Projections – November of operating fiscal year
- Second Interim Projections – February of operating fiscal year
- Unaudited Actuals – July following the end of the fiscal year
- Audited Actuals – December 15 following the end of the fiscal year
- Classification Report – monthly the Monday after close of the last day of the school month
- Statistical Report – monthly the Friday after the last day of the school month
- P1 Report - first week of January
- P2 Report - first week of April
- Calendar and Bell Schedule – annually five weeks prior to first day of instruction
- Other reports as requested by the CDE/SBE

### **C. SBE OVERSIGHT COSTS**

In accordance with applicable law, the SBE may charge for the actual costs of supervisory oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 1% of the Charter School's revenue. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the SBE may charge the maximum supervisory oversight fee allowed under the law as it may change from time to time.

### **D. POTENTIAL CIVIL LIABILITY EFFECTS**

Thrive shall be operated by a California non-profit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701(d).

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c), an authority that grants a charter to a charter school operated by or as a non-profit public benefit corporation shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors or omissions by the charter school if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. Thrive shall work diligently to assist the SBE in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including reporting, or other SBE-requested protocol to ensure the SBE shall not be liable for the operation of Thrive.

Further, Thrive and the SBE shall enter into a memorandum of understanding, wherein Thrive shall indemnify the SBE for the actions of Thrive under this charter.

The corporate bylaws of Thrive shall provide for indemnification of the Thrive Board, officers, agents, and employees, and Thrive will purchase and maintain general liability insurance, Board Members and Officers insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks.

As stated earlier in this charter, insurance amounts are determined by recommendation of the SBE and the Charter School's insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and student population. The SBE shall be named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of Thrive.

The Thrive Board shall institute appropriate risk management practices as discussed herein, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for students, and dispute resolution.

## Element 10: Student Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

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

### I. DISCIPLINE POLICY

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

"Restorative justice's three main goals are:

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

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

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

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

The Board of Governors has approved a formal discipline policy that seeks to reinforce the strength of the school's culture and to protect the safety and best interests of the school's students and staff. This policy –which is fully compliant with all applicable State and federal law and updated annually as needed -- clearly describes various disciplinary measures, grounds for suspension and expulsion, minimum and

maximum number of consecutive days of suspension, notification process to parents of suspension, reason for suspension, appeal process, length of suspension, provision for student's education while suspended, and other pertinent details regarding the discipline policy. This policy, and the list of offenses for which students may be suspended or expelled, is reviewed and modified annually by a Student Discipline Committee comprised of the Director, teachers, parents, students, CEO and community members, with additional opportunities for input from all staff, families, and students as appropriate.<sup>14</sup> It is our intention to be transparent and inclusive as we formulate and implement our student discipline program and expectations for student conduct. We believe empowering all of the stakeholders in this process – including students – helps to create a policy and culture at the school of respect.

## **II. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and wellbeing of all students at the Charter School. In creating this policy, the Charter School has reviewed Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* which describes the noncharter schools' list of offenses and procedures to establish its list of offenses and procedures for suspensions and expulsions. The language that follows closely mirrors the language of Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* The Charter School is committed to annual review of policies and procedures surrounding suspensions and expulsions and, as necessary, modification of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion.

When the Policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy shall serve as the Charter School's policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements. Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This policy and its procedures clearly describe discipline expectations, and it is printed and distributed as part of the Family Handbook which is sent to each student at the beginning of the school year. The school leaders shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures.

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

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

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

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<sup>14</sup> Of course, stakeholder preference does not trump applicable law, and school leaders ensure that all stakeholders who participate in this process understand the school's obligations under the law.

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

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

#### **A. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students**

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at any time including but not limited to: a) while on school grounds; b) while going to or coming from school; c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

#### **B. Enumerated Offenses**

1. Discretionary Suspension Offenses. Students may be suspended for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:
  - a) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
  - b) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
  - c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
  - d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
  - e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
  - f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
  - g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.

- h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5.
- k) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
  - (1) Except as provided in Education Code Section 48910, a pupil enrolled in kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 3, inclusive, shall not be suspended for any of the acts enumerated in this subdivision.
- l) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- m) 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 reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4.
- o) 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.
- p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- q) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- r) Made terroristic threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the

circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.

- s) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, 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 apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- t) Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- u) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- v) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.
  - 1) "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
    - i. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
    - ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
    - iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
    - iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.

- 2) "Electronic Act" means the creation and transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
    - i. A message, text, sound, or image.
    - ii. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
      - (a) Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
      - (b) Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
      - (c) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
    - iii. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
  - w) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1).
  - x) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director or designee's concurrence.
2. Non-Discretionary Suspension Offenses: Students must be suspended and recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:
    - a) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director or designee's concurrence.
  3. Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students may be recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:
    - a) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.

- b) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
- c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
- e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5.
- k) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- l) 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 reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- m) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4.
- n) 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.
- o) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- p) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational

institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

- q) Made terroristic threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, “terroristic threat” shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family’s safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
- r) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, 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 apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- s) Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- t) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- u) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.
  - 1) “Bullying” means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
    - i. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person

- of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
- ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
  - iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
  - iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.
- 2) "Electronic Act" means the creation and transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
- i. A message, text, sound, or image.
  - ii. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
    - (a) Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
    - (b) Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
    - (c) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
  - iii. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
- v) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1).
- w) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director or designee's concurrence.
4. Non-Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students must be recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined pursuant to the procedures below that the pupil:

- a) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director or designee's concurrence.

If it is determined by the Administrative Panel and/or Thrive Board that a student has brought a fire arm or destructive device, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, on to campus or to have possessed a firearm or dangerous device on campus, the student shall be expelled for one year, pursuant to the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994. In such instances, the pupil shall be provided due process rights of notice and a hearing as required in this policy.

The term "firearm" means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.

The term "destructive device" means (A) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, including but not limited to: (i) bomb, (ii) grenade, (iii) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, (iv) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, (v) mine, or (vi) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses.

### **C. Suspension Procedure**

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

#### *Step 1: Conference*

Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Director and/or Dean of Students for the appropriate grade level, with the student and the student's parent/guardian and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or Charter School employee who referred the student to the Director and/or Dean of Students or designee. The conference may be omitted if the Director and/or Dean of Students determine that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If the student is suspended without a conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of 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 (2) 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 Charter School officials. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil's parent or guardian at the conference.

#### *Step 2: Notice to Parents/Guardians*

At the time of a student's suspension, a school employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parents by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time

when the student may return to school. If Charter School officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

*Step 3: Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion*

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension. Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Director and/or Dean of Students or designee, the pupil and the pupil's guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. In such instances when the Charter School has determined a suspension period shall be extended, such extension shall be made only after a conference is held with the pupil or the pupil's parents, unless the pupil and the pupil's parents fail to attend the conference.

This determination will be made by the Director and/or Dean of Students or designee upon either of the following: 1) the pupil's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

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

**C.1. In-School Suspension**

For In-School suspension, the student remains on campus for the length of the suspension. During in-school suspensions, teachers provide the students with assignments to complete by the end of the school day. If the student has questions about the assignments, the Dean of Students or other certificated personnel provide support. During the day of the suspension, the student's teachers address behaviors that may have contributed to the student's in-school suspension. In addition to completing assigned work, the student is 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.

**D. Authority to Expel**

A student may be expelled either by the Thrive Board following a hearing before it or by the Thrive Board upon the recommendation of an Administrative Panel, to be assigned by the Board as needed. The Administrative Panel should consist of at least three members who are certificated and neither a teacher of the pupil or a member of the Thrive Board. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an expellable offense.

**E. Expulsion Procedures**

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Director and/or Dean of Students or designee determines that the pupil has committed an expellable offense.

In the event an Administrative Panel hears the case, it will make a recommendation to the Thrive Board for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session (complying with all pupil

confidentiality rules under FERPA) unless the pupil makes a written request for a public hearing in open session three (3) days prior to the date of the scheduled hearing.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil. The notice shall include:

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
2. A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
3. A copy of the Charter School's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
4. Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the Charter School to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
5. The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

#### **F. 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' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the entity conducting the expulsion 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 entity 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 entity 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 entity presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The entity 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' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to the Charter School. The entity 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 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 no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by means of closed-circuit television.
10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' 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 circumstance 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.

#### **G. Record of Hearing**

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

#### **H. Presentation of Evidence**

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of

serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed an expellable offense. Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay. Sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Board or Administrative Panel determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

If, due to a written request by the expelled pupil, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact and a written recommendation to the Thrive Board, which will make a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the Thrive Board shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing. The decision of the Thrive Board is final.

If the Administrative Panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the pupil shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

#### **I. Written Notice to Expel**

The Director and/or Dean of Students or designee, following a decision of the Thrive Board to expel, shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Thrive Board's adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall also include the following: (a) Notice of the specific offense committed by the student; and (b) Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with the Charter School.

The Director and/or Dean of Students or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the authorizer. This notice shall include the following: (a) The student's name; and (b) The specific expellable offense committed by the student.

#### **J. Disciplinary Records**

The Charter School shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the Charter School. Such records shall be made available to the authorizer upon request.

#### **K. No Right to Appeal**

The pupil shall have no right of appeal from expulsion from the Charter School as the Thrive Board's decision to expel shall be final.

#### **L. Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education**

Parents/guardians of pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the County or their school district of residence. The Charter 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.

### **M. Rehabilitation Plans**

Students who are expelled from the Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Board of Directors 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.

### **N. 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 Thrive Board following a meeting with the Director and/or Dean of Students 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 Director and/or Dean of Students or designee shall make a recommendation to the Thrive Board following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The Board shall then make a final decision regarding readmission during the closed session of a public meeting, reporting out any action taken during closed session consistent with the requirements of the Brown Act. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon the Charter School's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

### **O. Special Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities**

#### **1. Notification of SELPA**

Thrive 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 Thrive or the SELPA would be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability.

#### **2. Services During Suspension**

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP/504 Plan; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

#### **3. 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 Plan, 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 Plan.

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 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 Plan, 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.

#### **4. Due Process Appeals**

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or the Charter School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings or by utilizing the dispute provisions of the 504 Policy and Procedures.

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

#### **5. Special Circumstances**

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

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

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

**6. Interim Alternative Educational Setting**

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP/504 Team.

**7. Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Element 11: Retirement Programs

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

### RETIREMENT BENEFITS

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

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

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

### OVERSIGHT OF BENEFITS

Thrive has contracted with an experienced back-office services provider to handle our payroll and accounting services. The Business Manager is responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements for coverage have been made. The Board of Governors may, in its discretion, contract with another qualified provider of payroll and accounting services.

### EMPLOYEE POLICIES

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

## Element 12: Public School Attendance Alternatives

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

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

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

## Element 13: Rights of District Employees

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

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

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

Employees of the District who choose to leave the employment of the District to work at Thrive will have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment by Thrive unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement. Thrive employees shall have any right upon leaving the District to work in Thrive that the District may specify, any rights of return to employment in a school district after employment in Thrive that the District may specify, and any other rights upon leaving employment to work in Thrive that the District determines to be reasonable and not in conflict with any law.

All employees of Thrive will be considered the exclusive employees of Thrive and not of the District, unless otherwise mutually agreed in writing. Sick or vacation leave or years of service credit at the District or any other school district will not be transferred to Thrive. Employment by Thrive provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of Thrive.

## Element 14: Dispute Resolution

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

The intent of this dispute resolution process is to (1) resolve disputes within the school pursuant to the school's policies, (2) minimize the oversight burden on the SBE, (3) ensure a fair and timely resolution to disputes, and (4) frame a charter oversight and renewal process and timeline so as to avoid disputes regarding oversight and renewal matters.

Should any section of this element pertaining to resolving disputes, be in conflict with the SBE's policies or desired protocols, then Thrive Public School is amenable to altering said areas through an addendum, to be mutually agreed upon, and considered in addition to the original petition. Any such areas of conflict can also be resolved in the Memorandum of Understanding that will be drafted and agreed upon by the authorizing entity and Thrive.

The staff and governing board members of Thrive and the SBE agree to attempt to resolve all disputes regarding this charter pursuant to the terms of this section.

### **Disputes Arising from Within the School**

Disputes arising from within Thrive, including all disputes among and between parents, students, staff, volunteers, advisors, partner organizations, and governing board members of the school, shall be resolved pursuant to policies and processes developed by Thrive and in accordance with the law.

### **Disputes between the School and the SBE**

In the event of a dispute between Thrive and the SBE regarding the terms of this charter or any other issue regarding the school and SBE relationship, both parties agree to apprise the other, in writing, of the specific disputed issue(s). All communications from the SBE to the School regarding any dispute shall be addressed to both the Founder/CEO and the appropriate Director. In the event the initiating party believes the dispute relates to an issue that could potentially lead to revocation of the charter, this must be explicitly stated in written notice of the dispute. Not later than five (5) business days from receipt of the dispute statement, a Thrive representative and a SBE representative shall informally meet and confer to attempt to resolve the dispute. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Thrive representative and the SBE representative shall meet again within fifteen (15) business days to identify a neutral third-party mediator to assist in dispute resolution. The format of the third-party mediation process shall be developed jointly by the representatives. The mediation shall be held within thirty (30) business days of receipt of the dispute statement. All timelines in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement.

The cost of the mediation shall be shared equally by Thrive and the SBE; each party shall bear its own attorney's fees and costs and all other costs associated with the dispute resolution.

In the event that the third-party mediation process does not result in the resolution of the dispute, both parties agree to continue good faith negotiations. If the matter cannot be mutually resolved, Thrive shall be given a reasonable amount of time to correct the violation, unless the SBE indicates in writing the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health and safety of the Thrive's students. The SBE reserves the right to take any action it deems appropriate, and Thrive reserves the right to seek legal redress for any such actions under the law. In addition, the dispute is not required to

be referred to mediation in those cases where the SBE determines the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health and safety of the Thrive students.

As an SBE-authorized Charter School:

Each party will bear their own costs, including but not limited to attorneys' fees in dispute resolution.

The Charter School recognizes that, because the SBE is not a local educational agency, the State Board of Education may choose to resolve a dispute directly instead of pursuing the dispute resolution process specified in the charter, it must first hold a public hearing to consider arguments for and against the direct resolution of the dispute instead of pursuing the dispute resolution process specified in the charter.

The Charter School further recognizes that if the substance of a dispute is a matter that could result in the taking of appropriate action, including, but not limited to, revocation of the charter, the matter will be addressed at the SBE's discretion.

## Element 15: Employer Status and Collective Bargaining

*“A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (Chapter 10.7 (commencing with § 3540) of division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code).” CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(O).*

Thrive Public School is the exclusive public school employer of all employees of the charter school for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (“EERA”). Thrive Public School shall comply with the EERA, as applicable to charter schools.

## Element 16: Charter School Closure

*“A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records.”  
CA Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(P).*

Closure of Thrive Public School will be documented by official action of the Board of Governors. The action will identify the reason for closure. The official action will also identify an entity and person or persons responsible for closure-related activities.

The Board of Governors will promptly notify parents and students of Thrive, the SBE, the San Diego County Office of Education, Thrive’s Special Education Local Plan Area (“SELPA”), the retirement systems in which Thrive’s employees participate (e.g., State Teachers’ Retirement System, and federal social security), and the California Department of Education of the closure as well as the effective date of the closure. This notice will also include the name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure; the students’ school Districts of residence; and the manner in which parents/guardians may obtain copies of student records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements.

The Board of Governors will ensure that the notification to the parents and students of Thrive of the closure provides information to assist parents and students in locating suitable alternative programs. This notice will be provided promptly following the Board's decision to close Thrive.

The Board of Governors will also develop a list of students in each grade level and the classes they have completed, together with information on the students’ Districts of residence, which they will provide to the entity responsible for closure-related activities.

As applicable, Thrive will provide parents, students, and the SBE with copies of all appropriate student records and will otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. All transfers of student records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”), 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g. Thrive will ask the SBE to store original records of Thrive students. All student records of Thrive shall be transferred to the SBE upon school closure. If the District will not or cannot store the records, Thrive shall work with the SBE to determine a suitable alternative location for storage.

All state assessment results, special education records, and personnel records will be transferred to and maintained by the entity responsible for closure-related activities in accordance with applicable law.

As soon as reasonably practical, Thrive will prepare final financial records. Thrive will also have an independent audit completed within six months after closure. Thrive will pay for the final audit. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by Thrive and will be provided to the SBE promptly upon its completion. The final audit will include an accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value, an accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable and any

reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid staff compensation, and an assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to Thrive.

Thrive will complete and file any annual reports required pursuant to Education Code Section 47604.33.

On closure of the school, Thrive will distribute any restricted assets of the school to the to their source in accordance with the terms of the grant or state and federal law, as appropriate, which may include submission of final expenditure reports for entitlement grants and the filing of any required Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as well as the return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any conditions established when the donation of such materials or property was accepted.

On closure, Thrive shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of Thrive.

As Thrive is operated by a non-profit public benefit corporation, should the corporation dissolve with the closure of Thrive, the Board of Governors will follow the procedures set forth in the California Corporations Code for the dissolution of a non-profit public benefit corporation and file all necessary filings with the appropriate state and federal agencies. The Board may, at its discretion, retain staff to complete appropriate closure activities as needed. As specified by the proposed budget (Appendix D), Thrive will utilize the reserve fund to undertake any expenses associated with the closure.