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SBE 2019-20 Academic Memo: Academia Avance

Local Educational Agency (LEA) Name	Contact Name and Title	Email and Phone	Date of Adoption
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Overview

Avance is focused on improvements in 3 key fields:

1. CAASPP/SBAC Performance
2. Math Aptitude
3. English Learner Academic Achievement & Reclassification Rates

Beginning in the 2019/2020 school year, we have implemented new programs to address these 3 areas specifically. We are continually monitoring the effectiveness of each program to determine their continued application moving forward. Below is a list of programs that have been implemented, or will be added in the 2020/2021 school year to address the three areas of concern:

General Academic Performance

1) **Success For All (SFA):** The SFA model promotes a team structure for every lesson. Teachers and administrators are trained on the cycle of effective instruction for our all and low-students groups and are continuously coached to deliver instruction in the SFA structure. This structure brings the following benefits to students:

- **Development of conversational skills** while working with teammates.
- **More individualized attention** as the heavy lifting is mainly on the students, pushing them to bring every team member to a deeper understanding
- More ability for teacher mobility, which enables **better progress monitoring and intervention.**
- **Higher expectations for class participation** as teams are given huddle-time to prepare all members to respond to each prompt.

**Due to proximity concerns during the COVID-19 crisis, the SFA strategy is limited to computer platforms such as Zoom breakout rooms or Google Hangout. A return to group classroom arrangements will commence when it is determined that such an arrangement is safe for students and staff.

2) **Teacher Coaching:** All 21 teachers are observed in their classrooms weekly by Avance's instructional coordinator. Teachers receive instant feedback and live coaching when appropriate during observation. Teachers also meet with the instructional coordinator every two weeks for a One on One (O3) meeting.

Response from Academia Avance Charter

This program brings the following benefits to students inclusive of our low-students groups:

- Stronger classroom management leads to more efficient use of class time.
- Stronger classroom management means students spend more time in the classroom and are not referred to the office unnecessarily.
- Data analysis sessions lead to data driven decision making across all classrooms.
- Content units are backwards planned for grade level standard alignment and appropriate rigor.
- Classroom oversight leads to more consistent practices and implementation school-wide.

3) **Los Angeles Public Library Student Success Cards:** Through the Los Angeles Public Library, every student has received a Student Success Card. Beyond access to all branches of the LA Public Library, LAPL's online resources include:

- Free online tutoring through tutor.com by Princeton Review
- Digital books, Audio Books, Music and Movies
- Language learning software by Mango Languages
- 215 research databases
- ESL software through CELL-ED

Math Comprehension

1) **IXL for Math:** This program creates mastery based practice activities for grade level skills as well as prior grade skills determined (through continuous diagnostic). This program brings the following benefits to Students:

- Personalized **identification of skill gaps**.
- Practice that ends at **mastery**, not completion.
- **Limitless time** to build to skill mastery through formative assessment.
- **Analytic tools** that give precise data to teachers to best respond to student need.

2) **Independent Review of Avance Math Program:** In compliance with the conditions for charter renewal, Academia Avance will be hiring an independent consultant to assess the root causes of low performance in math and. Avance will incorporate any changes that are recommended and will monitor the impact on student learning.

English Learner Reclassification

1) **Success For All (SFA):** See "General Academic Performance" This structure brings the following benefits to EL students:

- **Development of conversational skills** while working with teammates.
- **Higher expectations for class participation** because teams are given time to prepare all members to respond to each prompt. Class participation is one of the most frequently observed difficulties for English Learners. This structure speaks directly to this pain point.

2) **Parallel Teaching:** For one period each day at the high school, core-curriculum teachers are supported by a second teacher. The second teacher is able to co-teach; pull small groups; work one-on one with struggling students; or support behavior during direct instruction. EL students are specifically placed in these classes in order to get the extra support that they require. This program brings the following benefits to EL students:

- More individualized attention.
- Differentiated learning strategies.
- Translation available during lesson (when appropriate).

3) **Listenwise:** Listenwise provides listening practice based on rigorous audio materials provided by NPR. This speaks to EL difficulty with the speaking and listening task on the ELPAC exam. This program brings the following benefits to EL students:

- **Rigorous practice** of listening skills.
- **Data source for teachers** to identify and address the listening needs of their EL students

4) **EL Profiles:** Avance's EL coordinator has updated the methodology for tracking progress of every EL student based on the same practices used by LAUSD. This program brings the following benefits to EL students:

- **Personal support strategy** for each EL Student.
- **Small group tutoring** to prepare key students for ELPAC assessment.

5) **Monthly Progress Report:** Monthly progress reports are sent home to parents, and the EL coordinator checks in with every EL student each month to discuss their progress and next steps. This program brings the following benefits to EL Students:

- **Whole family support** for each step of reclassifying each EL student.
- **Open communication** for each student regarding the reclassification process.

7) **ELD Specific Classes:** Avance's administrative team has agreed to explore committing resources for the hiring of a specific ELD teacher beginning in the 2020-2021 school year. The ELD teacher would meet daily for 50 minutes with English Learners based on their reading levels as established by the MAP assessment, and revisited tri-annually.

Further to the above programs, Avance will be monitoring the drop in ELA and Math skills through use of the FALL NWEA MAP test. Mean scores will be measured against previous years' performance to determine the extent of any drops in performance. A rigorous curriculum is being planned utilizing novels, NewsELA and Frontier writing software as well as IXL to quickly address gaps in learning as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

It is the hope of Academia Avance that due to continued rigor and accountability remaining in place for students during remote learning, the drops in performance will not be overly severe nor will they be insurmountable. Avance will continue to engage all stakeholders to ensure this aligns with our 2020-2021 LCAP and COVID-19 Operations written report.

2020 Addendum to Academic Memo - Academia Avance Charter

1. A description of how the charter school will provide continuity of distance learning instruction during the school year to ensure pupils have access to curriculum.

Academia Avance will provide continuity of distance learning instruction during the school year to ensure pupils have access to curriculum by ensuring that all schedules and materials remain consistent both during distance and hybrid learning. All lesson plans track and ensure that every student receives the mandated daily instructional minutes through lessons taught either online or in person using materials that are accessible through the internet to ensure universal accessibility. Materials are posted to google classroom for student and parent access while adhering to social distancing guidelines.

During distant learning, students will have structured schedules to allow for clarity and consistency. Teachers will set clear expectations and communicate them to students and families. They will build continuity, routine, and connection for students. Students will regularly participate in live interaction, including class meetings and instruction from their teacher(s). Mondays will be set aside for teacher professional development, independent work, and some group instruction through the House class. Our distance Learning program will address the needs of the whole child by placing academic learning in the context of physical, mental and emotional well-being.

Our middle school students will have 4 periods of live instruction every day except Mondays where they'll meet for House. Our high school will operate on Semester terms. Each student will have 5 periods of live instruction every day, except Monday where they'll meet for House.

- Students' assignments will be from our adopted Common Core State Standards curriculum with supplemental online learning platforms
- Over the summer, staff worked on pacing guides for our curriculum to accommodate for distance learning and hybrid models identifying the essential standards, allowing for more focused instruction
- Students will continue to be offered instruction in all curricular areas as well as enrichment classes as offered prior to closures
- Our district has purchased a variety of online learning platforms to supplement our existing curriculum
- Assignments will be reviewed and graded by teachers. Students will receive A-F letter grades.

2. A description of how the charter school will ensure access to devices and connectivity for all pupils to support distance learning.

Avance distributed chromebooks in the month of March - June and in August 2020 via a drive-through model that allowed Avance families to pull in, pick up essential learning supplies, and head back home while staying safely inside their car. Chromebooks are always available at Avance for pick-up or exchange along with replacement cables. Hot spots are available for families who are not able to afford home Internet access.

Response from Academia Avance Charter

Academia Avance will continue to ensure access to devices and connectivity for all pupils to support distance learning whenever it occurs, including:

- Students and families were surveyed, as well as provided an email and a phone number to contact if they needed a Chromebook or HotSpot.
- Students and families were surveyed, as well as provided an email and a phone number to contact if they needed a Chromebook or HotSpot.
- 300 Chromebooks were provided to students before school ended in June 2020
- The main campus was open Monday - Friday, 8am - 12pm starting March 23, 2020 throughout the summer. Operating hours for the 2020-2021 school year are Monday - Friday, 8am - 4pm starting August 1, 2020.
- As of September 17, 300 Chromebooks had been lent to families, as well as 42 TMobile & Verizon HotSpots

3. A description of how the charter school will address pupil-learning loss that results from COVID-19 during the 2019–20 and 2020–21 school years with consideration to the charter’s demographics and grade levels served.

During the 2019-20 school year, students participated in Distance Learning for the last three months of school. During that time, we observed patterns in participation rates. Notably, participation was lowest across our high school program, especially for students experiencing homelessness, students experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, and students with IEPs. As we begin the 2020-21 school year, it is important to determine how COVID-19, distance learning, and participation rates affected the academic mastery of our students at every grade level. Avance intends to administer the NWEA MAP Reading and Mathematics Assessments.

For both our hybrid models and distance learning models, time will be embedded in the schedule for equity based small groups led by the classroom teacher. This time is for the purpose of providing additional support to students who most need it. Teachers will track student progress and submit logs of these activities. Staff will have structured collaboration time to engage in improvement cycles including reviewing student assessments, planning instructional shifts and strategies based on data, establishing clear outcome goals, debriefing lessons as a team, and reflecting on their practice. All of this will be done electronically, using a video conferencing platform if in the distance learning model.

In addition, site specialists including Response to Intervention Teachers, will track achievement data and meet to coordinate potential services for students performing below grade level standards. Teams can consist of specialist teachers as well as the Principal, School Counselor, Special Education Teacher(s), School Psychologist, Counselor, and the School Social Worker. Academic services include small group targeted instruction consisting of strategically placed students. These small groups of students will be assessed to determine growth in six-week cycles. If a student is not making progress, the team will collaborate to regroup students and try different researched based interventions and strategies.

4. A description of how the charter school will monitor and support mental health and social and emotional well being of pupils during the school year.

Academia Avance will continue to monitor and support students' mental health and social and emotional well being during the school year by resuming evidence-based multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) framework to address students' needs holistically. Through MTSS, Avance is able to identify and provide support to struggling students.

Upon a review and analysis of our school's profile, surveys, and discussions with teachers, students, and parents, our school has established the following programs and resources to support our students' social-emotional wellbeing and/or behavioral needs. The following includes staffing, program, and supplemental curriculums to target social and emotional support and to promote positive mental health for our entire school community.

- Social-emotional counseling services offered individually and/or in a group setting
- Implementation of Conflict Mediation & Resolution and Restorative Practices
- Parent Support Group and Parent Wellness Group that provides parents and community stakeholders with emotional support, information regarding factors that affect a student's academic and emotional state e.g cultural, societal, trauma and more. These groups are led by our school social worker.
- Student welfare checks using a teacher referral system and routine monitoring of attendance to ensure social, physical and emotional well-being of students.
- Onsite counselors (1 credentialed school counselor and 1counseling intern) and a school-based social worker that provide social-emotional, and/or behavioral counseling services.
- All students are enrolled in a "House" course. This program has successfully resulted in students developing a relationship of trust and respect with their House Advisor (teacher). As a result, our students feel comfortable seeking social-emotional support from their Advisor. Also, appropriate referrals/and or consultations will be made by the Advisor to our counselors, school psychologist, and school social worker.
- Avance has established partnerships with community counseling and therapeutic services. Students with intensive needs are referred to these services via Avance counseling staff and offer off-site and school-based therapeutic services.

Our priority and goal is to ensure students have at least one adult they can trust, and can proactively seek assistance and/or counseling services. We strive to have successful and positive outcomes rather than use punitive practices.

5. A description of how the charter school will address the anticipated apportionment deferrals.

Academia Avance will continue to monitor it's 2020-2021 budget and spending, but will continue its partnership with Charter School Capital (or seek other external funding options) to mitigate the anticipated apportionment deferrals when needed.

Our board of directors, finance committee, and back office provider Charter Impact team closely monitor and approve any external funding when needed.