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October 27, 2021

Re: Annual California Department of Education Academic Memo Request

Sweetwater Secondary School (SSS) is in its fifth year of operation and currently serves approximately 340 students with three resource centers located within the Sweetwater Union High School District in San Diego County. SSS is an independent study academic intervention program for students in grades 7-12 who are seeking an alternate educational setting. SSS is an approved Dashboard Alternative School Status (DASS) school due to its unduplicated count of at least 70 percent of the schools' total enrollment composed of a DASS-identified high-risk student group.

During Spring of 2021, SSS students participated in NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments in Reading, Language Usage, and Mathematics, and students in grades 7, 8, and 11 participated in the English Language Arts and Math CAASPP exams. Detailed in the charts below are the assessment results along with an analysis of the areas of greatest progress and need.

2020-2021 NWEA MAP Growth Results by Student Group (CBEDS)			
	Reading	Language Usage	Mathematics
Student Group	% Met Growth Target	% Met Growth Target	% Met Growth Target
All Students	87%	82%	77%
Hispanic/Latino	88%	84%	73%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SEDA)	84%	80%	77%
English Learner (EL)	83%	74%	65%
Students with Disabilities (SWD)	85%	73%	76%

This past school year, SSS exceeded the school's prior LCAP target that NWEA MAP progress results will maintain at 60% for all students and for all significant student groups. As compared to the 2018-2019 data (NWEA MAP testing did not take place in Spring 2020 due to Covid-19), the MAP Math growth results improved greatly for All Students (+9%), the SEDA student group (+10%), and English Learners (+6%). SSS saw some decreases in English Learner Reading (-4%) and Language Usage (-9%), which will be areas of instructional focus this school year.

In order to improve English Learner results in MAP Reading and Language Usage during the 2021-2022 school year, additional EL supports have been incorporated into the SSS English Learner Plan. The ELAD (English Language Achievement Department) is writing new curriculum for Designated ELD courses using National Geographic's Edge curriculum. This curriculum was selected for its focus on development of all language domains, multicultural and relevant content, grade level rigor, and alignment to Common Core State Standards. SSS recently partnered with ELlevation, a program

designed specifically to integrate all EL data points for closer monitoring, analysis, accountability, and immediate impact on differentiated instruction to better address English Learners' needs. In addition, the ELAD will continue to offer teachers monthly professional learning opportunities to provide support in both Integrated ELD and Designated ELD to ensure that all teaching staff receive ongoing training on how to best implement this coursework along with instructional strategies and resources. This school year, SSS has also partnered with The Ed Ladder to provide an Instructional Coach at each resource center who supports English Learners with one-on-one and small group tutoring, with the goal of working towards language proficiency and course credit completion.

CAASPP Average Distance from Standard (CBEDS)			
Assessment	18-19 DFS	20-21 DFS	Change
CAASPP ELA	-3.2	27.9	+31
CAASPP Math	-95.7	-75.7	+20

During the 2020-2021 school year, SSS's results on both the CAASPP ELA and CAASPP Math exams increased by 31 and 20 points respectively. If California School Dashboard results were to be published for the past school year, SSS would display a green status for ELA and a yellow status for Math, thus demonstrating improved outcomes in these Academic Performance Indicators. Although the 2020-2021 CAASPP results demonstrate growth, Math continues to be an area of focus for SSS, and the school has taken steps to increase supports in this area.

The Measurable Pupil Outcomes (MPOs) outlined in SSS's charter petition are continually monitored and refined as part of the goals, actions, and metrics in the school's LCAP and via monthly internal data reports. Overall, SSS continues to meet or exceed the annual goals and has implemented internal monitoring instruments to closely track and intervene with real-time measures when improvement is needed. As noted in the charts above, SSS made academic performance gains and did not experience a loss of learning this past school year. In addition, SSS also demonstrated growth on the California School Dashboard indicators as measured by internal reporting methods. For example, during the 2020-2021 school year, SSS improved the Chronic Absenteeism Rate by 4.5% and the DASS One-Year Graduation Rate by 12% as compared to the 2019 Dashboard. If California School Dashboard results were to be published for the past school year, these outcomes would result in a green status for both of these Academic Engagement Indicators, thus demonstrating improvement in both areas.

SSS has remained focused on providing a personalized educational program that meets the needs of all students. SSS has worked tirelessly to ensure students are meeting academic standards and are prepared for graduation and post-secondary choices. As detailed in the 2020-2021 Learning and Continuity Plan, SSS's key process, the Pathways Personalized Education Plan (PPEP), coupled with the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework, provides instructional staff with a systematic approach to meet and respond to the academic, physical, social-emotional, and behavior needs of students. Throughout the COVID-19 emergency, school staff have continued to monitor and measure student engagement and achievement indicators, which are published in Monthly Storybook reports. As school stakeholders plan for the next school year, there is consensus that the goals and actions integrated into the 2021-2024 LCAP will need to address the following elements:

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- Utilize instructional strategies that meet the unique learning demands and needs of all students, which special emphasis on the lowest-achieving student groups
- Enhance the school curriculum so that it is standards aligned, culturally proficient, and preparing students for post-secondary career pathways
- Maintain a professional learning system that is responsive to the needs of school staff and increases teacher effectiveness
- Provide a safe and supportive school environment as more students begin attending in-person instruction
- Provide community-based resource centers to serve and engage students and family members

SSS has partnered with stakeholders to develop the 2021-2022 LCAP, which is focused on improving student outcomes. SSS has collected meaningful stakeholder feedback by surveying students and parents regularly and by analyzing the results to identify the academic, mental, and social-emotional needs of all students. This survey data is critical in the formulation of program goals, services, and allocation of resources. The design of the school allows for teachers, students, parents, counselors, School Leadership Team members, and the local community to meet, discuss, and plan for the needs of all students. Stakeholder involvement contributes to the LCAP development in several important ways: identification and refinement of needs based on data analysis, creation of goals, establishment of metrics, designation of activities, and resource allocation.

SSS has developed five LCAP goals for the 2021-2022 school year that address the Instructional Approach, Curriculum and Coursework, Professional Development, School Safety and Climate, and Family Engagement. These goals, along with their corresponding metrics, are aligned to State and Local Priorities. Metrics included in the 2021-2022 LCAP are focused on Status and Change, like the School Dashboard's Five-by-Five Placement approach, or a locally set target based upon historical outcomes and appropriate for a school that services a high-risk student population (DASS). Stakeholders agree that school staff will need additional professional development focused on increasing student achievement in Mathematics, effective instructional technology practices, and supporting the English language proficiency of ELs. Additional themes that emerged from multiple stakeholders were the need for increased mental health services for students and the continued elimination of learning barriers by providing the lowest-achieving students with school issued Chromebooks/Internet, bus passes, and food resources. These themes and key stakeholder input have been integrated into the 2021-2022 LCAP goals and metrics.

Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, SSS has utilized a Data Integration System to monitor, measure, and respond to student needs to mitigate any potential loss of learning. This Data Integration System includes both formative and summative assessments, which are integrated into the core curriculum, Smarter Balanced Interim and Summative Assessments to gauge student mastery of grade level ELA and Mathematics standards and key claims, and Measures of Academic Progress by NWEA that measure student growth over time in Reading, Language Usage, and Math. Additionally, SSS administered the Initial and Summative ELPAC to new students and classified English Learners to measure Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening skills. SSS has established clear protocols on how instructional staff disseminate student results to families and instructional practices that accelerate learning for those students who score below grade level or expected

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standards. Instructional staff will continue to receive professional learning on how to administer key assessments, conduct data analysis, and implement instructional strategies and curriculum resources focused on closing performance gaps for the lowest achieving students. School stakeholders are confident that this Data Integration System will be successful in addressing the current and ongoing needs of students.

SSS is an Independent Study (IS) program and will continue to offer only independent study to its students throughout the 2021-2022 school year.