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# **Synergy School Charter Petition**



**Synergy  
Education Project**

**Submitted on Appeal to the State Board of Education  
March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

**Material Revision submitted to the State Board of  
Education April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

## Executive Summary

The Founders of Synergy School submit this revised charter petition to the California State Board of Education (SBE), in their efforts to create a high quality public charter school serving 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students residing in the city of Pittsburg and its surrounding communities.

Synergy is now completing its third year of operation under its original charter, authorized by the State Board of Education in 2011 for five years (2012-13 through 2016-17).

Due to lower than anticipated enrollment for all three years of operation to date, the School has not been able to fully fund its educational program as outlined in its original charter, jeopardizing the School's educational achievement progress.

Synergy began in 2012-13 serving approximately 95 students in grades 6-8, and increased to approximately 200 students in 2013-14 in grades 6-9. For the current 2014-15 school year, enrollment remains at approximately 200 students in grades 6-10. Based on returning and pre-enrollments for Fall 2015, and assuming no programmatic changes, enrollment is anticipated to remain at or below current levels (190-200) even with the addition of an 11th grade.

While the School has reduced expenditures in every available area and maximized the revenue sources available, projected enrollment for 2015-16 and 2016-17 remains insufficient to fully fund the educational program in the original charter petition, especially in the areas of individualized student technology and additional certificated and non-certificated instructional mentoring and support staff.

Because of this, it is necessary at this point to make targeted adjustments to Synergy's educational program that will allow the school to fully meet its original educational goals at current enrollment levels, while restoring fiscal solvency. The original Synergy program was designed for higher enrollment levels than can currently be realized, and to maintain solvency and a full program at current ADA levels requires a material revision in Synergy's program.

To accomplish these goals, the most significant change to the petition involves a new partnership between Synergy and Encore Education Corporation ("Encore"), entering into a services agreement for at least the remaining two years of its existing charter. This partnership will ensure continuity for Synergy students and stakeholders while modifying those aspects of Synergy's program necessary to ensure educational goals are met and fiscal solvency is maintained.

Encore Education Corporation is an independent nonprofit corporation currently operating two charter schools in California. Encore has demonstrated academic and enrollment success in operating middle/high school California charter schools with an arts focus, and currently operates two charter schools serving middle and high school

students (Encore Jr/Sr High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, and Encore High School For The Arts – Riverside, opening Fall 2015). Encore's initial campus opened with 500 students in 2008 and grew to capacity of 1,100, simultaneously maintaining the highest API score of any high school in the Hesperia area. Encore's second campus is projected to open at capacity, serving 600 middle and high school students.

The partnership with Encore will provide Synergy the following direct advantages:

1. As Encore already operates a larger existing program, substantial administrative and operational cost savings can be realized by contracting with Encore. These savings are a key factor in allowing Synergy to fully fund its program even at current enrollment levels, and to restore Synergy's reserves if enrollment is increased. Any excess revenues or savings resulting from the partnership remain with Synergy.
2. The Pittsburg area has substantial demand for an arts-based program that also offers proven academic achievement in core subject areas. Synergy's arts-based program in partnership with Encore will attract a targeted subset of students highly motivated to obtain an arts-based education, increasing student demand.
3. Encore has seven years of direct experience in developing, refining, and successfully marketing its arts-based program, growing from 500 to over 1,700 students across two campuses in the past seven years – this expertise can be directly transferred and immediately applied to the new Synergy arts-based program for the 2015-16 school year.

Through this partnership, Synergy will maintain its current facility, technology, and student services, but will also offer an arts-based program designed to attract a higher number of local students than the current program as well as ensuring a return to fiscal solvency. However, the core demographics of Synergy's target student population are unchanged, and Synergy will be maintaining its existing commitment to serving all subgroups as required by law.

The material revisions included in the attached petition detail how Synergy's current program is being modified to reflect the changes to the educational approach, as well as to update the original petition to be compliant with Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) legal updates and other technical changes introduced since the original petition was approved.

Synergy School understands the need to offer this education alternative based on the demographics and academic performance histories of students residing in Pittsburg and its surrounding communities. Synergy seeks to complement the efforts of the district in serving the needs of all Pittsburg students by offering an alternative that better meets the education needs of many struggling students.

The education design of the school offers an alternative education delivery. The alternative method planned for, namely Project Based Learning, is an education methodology that is well researched and considered proven best practice in the

classroom. It is currently the education foundation for a number of highly successful charter schools state and nationwide.

Synergy School plans for an extended school day. More time in school allows Synergy students more time for meaningful learning experiences in core subject areas as well as access to elective and extracurricular activities. It also allows staff extended time during regular school hours to work on behalf of the many Synergy students who will struggle with any number of personal and academic issues. An extended school day means that services may be provided to students in need with minimal or no interruption to their academic program.

Synergy's Founders have planned for a well developed set of support systems to ensure that barriers to learning are removed to the extent possible regardless of whether they are academic or personal in nature.

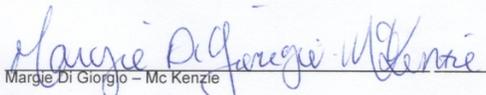
The foundation upon which Synergy School's education program rests is the commitment to employing and training highly effective school leaders, faculty and staff dedicated to educating children successfully and committed to the realization of Synergy's mission, vision and core values. This team will guide Synergy students to success by teaching them what they need to know, allowing them to discover on their own and modeling and expecting the behaviors and attitudes needed to accomplish their life goals.

**Assurances**

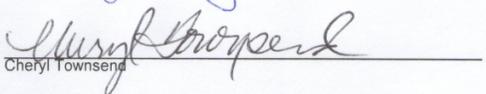
Synergy School will:

- meet all statewide standards and conduct student assessments in accordance with state guidelines
- be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employment Act
- be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations
- not charge tuition
- admit all students who wish to attend the school and will use a lottery system for new enrollments once the school reaches student capacity
- adhere to *Ed. Code § 47612.5(a)* regarding the minimum number of instructional days (175) and minutes provided for each year for grades 6 - 8 (54,000) and for grades 9-12 (64,800)
- not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnic background, national origin, race, gender, sexual orientation or disability
- adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities
- meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary
- ensure that teachers in the school hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate permit as relevant to NCLB and charter law
- will maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage
- will follow any and all other federal, state and local laws and regulations that pertain to the applicant or the operation of the charter school

Synergy's Co-Founders are committed to full implementation of the contents of this petition and complete legal compliance to the assurances listed above.

  
Margie Di Giorgio - Mc Kenzie

  
Date

  
Cheryl Townsend

  
Date

In conjunction with Synergy's partnership with Encore as discussed above, key members of Encore's existing executive leadership (the "Encore Executive Team") will play important roles in working collaboratively with Synergy to provide day-to-day operational and educational oversight. The Encore Executive Team is as follows:

**Mrs. Denise Griffin, Chief Executive Officer**

**Organization, operations, governance, finance, and administration**

Mrs. Griffin is a long time business owner and marketing director. Her history includes a 26-year career in business marketing and organization with major corporations nationwide. She also has an extensive background in creating, organizing, and operating businesses as she has spearheaded the opening of Star Quest Arts Academy and other entertainment based businesses over the last twenty-three years. Denise holds a Master's in Business Administration. She also holds a Private School Administration Certificate. Mrs. Denise Griffin is Encore Education Corporation's Chief Executive Officer. Denise is a cofounder of Encore Education Corporation and has been the CEO / Executive Director since 2007.

**Mr. John Griffin, Chief Operations Officer**

**Public Relations, Health & Safety, and Facilities**

Mr. Griffin is a veteran certificated teacher from the Hesperia Unified School District for nine years at Hesperia High School. He also has an extensive background in business management with over ten years' restaurant operations and management for several high traffic stores with budgets over \$3,500,000 annually. His duties as a General Manager placed him in several situations where he successfully handled all aspects of business operation and budgets. John holds his Bachelors in Business Administration and his Private School Administration Certificate. John Griffin is a cofounder of Encore Education Corporation and started as the Dean of Students of the Hesperia site, promoting to Chief Operations Officer in 2012.

**Mr. Phillip Wallace, Executive Officer of Student Affairs**

**Counseling, SPED, Student Services, Degree Completion**

Mr. Wallace holds a clear credential in pupil services and holds a Master's Degree in psychology. He has implemented master scheduling, course acceptance through the University of California and helped establish clearance for Encore to administer AP tests beginning in 2011. Phillip rolled out the training program for the implementation of the Aeries Computer Information System and also performs administrative duties on campus. Phillip has been with Encore Education Corporation since 2008, beginning as the head counselor and promoting to Executive Officer of Student Affairs.

**Mr. Stephen Dekany, Executive Officer of Enrollment / Recruitment**

**Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Marketing, and Retention**

Mr. Dekany holds a bachelor's degree in marketing and has worked extensively in all areas of marketing for worldwide corporations. He has created policies for recruitment, and enrollment within the Encore operation. Dekany creates and implements marketing strategies and helps with school tours, fast track enrollment, auditions, and orientations.

Stephen has been with Encore Education Corporation since 2010 as the Enrollment Director and promoting to Executive Officer of Enrollment.

**Mrs. Pamela Zabala, Executive Director of Academics  
Academics, Curriculum & Instruction**

Mrs. Zabala is a certificated teacher in science and has been a high school classroom teacher for over fifteen years. Pamela works with the academic staff to create and implement curriculum, pacing plans, benchmarks, and appropriate teacher development. Zabala works with Encore's common core team to continuously develop common core curriculum and strategies as the state moves forward with plans. Pamela has been with Encore Education Corporation since 2008, beginning as the Master Teacher in Science and promoting to the Executive Director of Academics.

**Ms. Nada Nasserdeen, Executive Director of Arts  
Arts, Curriculum & Instruction**

Ms. Nasserdeen holds a Master's Degree in Arts Education and has been a classroom choir teacher, professional singer, and professional director for worldwide production tours. Nada works with the arts instructors to create and implement curriculum, pacing plans, benchmarks, and appropriate teacher development. Nasserdeen also oversees all Encore productions and Encore's audition process. Nada has been with Encore Education Corporation since 2011 beginning as a choir teacher and promoting to Executive Director of Arts.

**Synergy's Founding Team  
In alphabetical order**

**Sahar Akbarzadeh Founding Team Member, Data and Reporting Specialist**

Sahar began her career in education as an office assistant for a large public charter school. Her talent was soon recognized and she was given the responsibility of coordinating the school's student information program and creating systems for data tracking and reporting. Sahar has attended numerous trainings and meetings sponsored by FCMAT, CSIS (California School Information Services) regarding reporting guidelines and requirements. She completed the Best Practices (BP) Cohort Project that helped implement local data management practices and prepared the school to submit data to the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data Systems (CALPADS). She submitted and certified student enrollment, demographic, and program participation data in CALPADS. She retrieved and maintained Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) numbers and conducted regular anomaly resolutions with school districts throughout the state. Sahar aspires to continue her career in the field of education and data management in dedication to serving her school community and students from all walks of life.

Sahar is the Human Resources Director of Omeid International, a non-profit public charity organization, where she works with a team of volunteers to develop protocols and manage the Amin Institute, an orphanage in Afghanistan. Her ambition is to help

children with the fundamental necessities for development, safe housing, nutrition, and education so that they are able to prosper in their perspective societies.

Sahar received her Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from California State University East Bay. As a student on the Dean's List, she completed the University Honors Program and graduated Cum Laude.

**Margie DiGiorgio-McKenzie, M. Ed. Co-Founder and Finance Director**

Margie DiGiorgio-McKenzie, a long time east bay area resident, began her teaching career helping to open an alternative educational program in an urban neighborhood in Trenton, New Jersey. Since then she has taught in a number of traditional and alternative education settings continuing her commitment to helping students succeed.

Ms DiGiorgio-McKenzie has worked in high schools in Mt. Diablo Unified School District and Antioch Unified School District for twelve years teaching math. Aside from classroom teaching she has volunteered to provide teacher sponsorship of several clubs and school programs focused on creating a variety of student activities assisting diverse groups of students with both educational goals and life endeavors. She began her role in school leadership as the coordinator of a learning center and lead teacher in the mathematics department of a large independent study charter school.

Ms. Digiorgio-McKenzie earned her bachelor's degree with honors in Liberal Studies from Cal State Hayward. She received her Single-Subject Math Credential from San Francisco State University. She earned a Master's Degree in Math Education and Curriculum from California State University East Bay. She attends regular trainings and conferences related to improving mathematics teaching and learning and is engaged in tireless research on school improvement efforts through effective school leadership.

**Vel Snider Founding Team Member, Director of Counseling and Student Services**

Vel Snider is currently a Team Leader for California State University East Bay Foundation, where she is responsible for a team of Counseling Associates and tutors who provide academic support to Oakland Unified School District's high school students. Part of these efforts included the development of Leadership and Mentorship Programs to broaden student support. She is presently a committee member chartered to design and implement a summer enrichment program for students, focusing on the college experience. Prior to this, Vel worked as the High School Academic Counselor at a large Bay Area Charter School and part-time as the High School Counselor at Vicente Continuation High School in Martinez. Vel received her Master's in School Counseling with Pupil Personnel Services credential from St. Mary's College of California in 2008. She is a member of the American School Counselors Association and the California Association of School Counselors.

Before entering the field of education, Vel had a successful twenty year career in the information and technology industries. She was the Director of Global Sales Support for Digital Island, an electronic commerce and data hosting company, where she built a high performing sales support team operating in an environment of exponential

business growth. Her start in the information arena began at AT&T, where she was the Director of Global Data Networking Sales responsible for over \$30 million in annual sales revenue. She received her MBA in Technology Management from Golden Gate University in San Francisco in 1988. Her Bachelor's of Business Administration was earned from the University of Iowa in 1980, with majors in Marketing and Administrative Management.

### **Cheryl Townsend, M. Ed. Co-Founder and Programs Director**

Ms Townsend began her career in education as a teacher in 1989. She has eight years experience as a school administrator developing and directing learning centers for two upstart charter schools. Her focus as a school administrator is on the implementation of school reform measures directly connected to instructional leadership and staff development. She has extensive training and experience in Special Education/Section 504 and has developed and implemented Response to Intervention and Professional Learning Communities Programs in her schools.

She has received considerable training on the development and implementation of charter schools for the past ten years through her employment at two charter schools in their first five years of operation. She has attended numerous trainings and conferences sponsored by the California Charter Schools Association, Charter Schools Development Center, Aplus+: Association for Personalized Learning and The California Consortium for Independent Study. These trainings and workshops have covered topics in school leadership, HR and personnel law, charter school compliance law, WASC accreditation, Special Education and 504 Plan law and The Brown Act.

Ms. Townsend received her BA in Liberal Studies from Mills College with a minor in American Studies. She received her Multiple Subject Teaching Credential from Chapman University and went on to receive her M.Ed. from Southern Oregon University. She holds Administrative Services Credentials in both Oregon and California.

## **Synergy's Founding Board**

### **Melissa Allison Founding Board Member**

Melissa Allison acquired her first seat on a Board of Directors at 17 years of age when she was voted on The Youth Council Board for the City of Antioch. She has since served as a Director on numerous nonprofit and for profit boards. She is currently serving a board position on the Contra Costa Builders Exchange Board of Directors and serves as the Chairperson for the Deer Creek Home Association Board of Directors. She demonstrates considerable experience in the areas of budget adoptions and other fiduciary responsibilities, creating by-laws and organizational policy, and insurance trust management.

Mrs. Allison has also volunteered countless hours in support of children. She served three years as President of the Board of Directors of the Parents Club at her children's elementary and middle schools engaging in a variety of activities focusing on

fundraising. She served four years as a member and chairperson of a number of School Site Councils in the Brentwood Union Elementary School District. She participated in the development of the Single Plan for Student Achievement each year and in the process received training on California State Content Standards and Frameworks. Melissa is also the home schooling mother of a special needs child and has considerable experience working on IEP teams. She possesses considerable knowledge in special education law and parents rights.

Melissa, in partnership with her husband, owns Antioch Paving Company Inc. Melissa is the Executive Director of the company where she is responsible for all financial and personnel management of the company. Melissa has extensive training and 15 years of experience running a successful corporation.

#### **Linda Ramsey, MFCC – Founding Board Member**

Linda Ramsey has over 30 years of experience working in education. She has accumulated a number of credentials and demonstrates experience in almost every aspect of the public education sector. These credentials and work experience include: k-8 Teaching Credential, Pupil Personnel Services Credential, special education Resource Specialist Credential and Administrative Services Credentials. She has worked tirelessly on behalf of children and families demonstrating experience and extensive knowledge in special education, curriculum and instruction, school finance and governance.

In her commitment and dedication to service Ms. Ramsey has also held Board of Director positions for a number of community organizations including a position on the board of a non-profit agency addressing domestic violence in her community as well as a board position for her local homeowners association.

She is currently self-employed as a Marriage and Family Therapist as she continues in her efforts to help children and families lead healthy and productive lives. Her work includes coaching families in all aspects of life including children's education. She has designed and implemented a hands-on family life coaching program in support of such goals.

#### **Richard Tomlinson, MS CPA – Founding Board Member**

Richard has spent over twenty years in public accounting; he has spent the last fifteen years advising business owners regarding tax and business strategies. He has supervised, managed and mentored scores of paraprofessional accounting staff. He is a principal owner in Willis & Tomlinson LLP, a certified public accounting firm specializing in providing accounting, tax, compliance, valuation and consulting services for tax-exempt organizations and charitable trusts.

Richard is a Certified Public Accountant licensed by the state of California. He holds a Bachelors Degree in Accounting from Regents College (now Excelsior College) in New York, and a Master's Degree in Taxation from the Washington Institute for Graduate Studies. He has taught undergraduate and graduate-level tax and accounting courses at Golden Gate University (the former Walnut Creek, California campus) and John F

Kennedy University. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants' Tax Section; the California Society of Certified Public Accountants; he is a professional affiliate member of the American Bar Association and the California Association of Nonprofits. Richard has served on the Foothill Elementary School site council and the Measure E Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee in the city of Pittsburg where he resides.

## **Founding Teacher Team**

Synergy's cofounders have recruited a team of seven teachers that participate regularly in the development of Synergy School's education program. All members of the founding teacher team hold valid California teaching credentials, multiple subject and single subject, and come to the Synergy table with over 100 years of combined teaching experience. These dedicated professionals have worked in a variety of education settings both tradition and alternative and in both traditional school districts and charter schools. Four of these seven teachers have worked in challenged school districts like Oakland USD and Vallejo USD with the most challenged students. All seven have demonstrated leadership capacities in their work and dedication to helping other teachers improve their skills in the classroom. This group worked extensively on the development of the school's mission, vision and core values. Their primary role is in the design of the education program specifically targeted to the development of Synergy's Project Based Learning delivery.

## **Founding Technology Team**

Synergy's co-founders have assembled a team of people to work on the development of all aspects of Synergy's technology program. The team's purpose is two-fold. One focus is on the development of technology systems that will ensure highly effective technology based work and education environment with minimal interruptions to the work of our staff and the education of our students. The second focus for this team is participation in the development of technology as it relates to the development of the technology based curriculum and assessment. Certain members of this team will go on to develop and provide the curriculum and tech support for the school's technology elective coursework.

The team is comprised of three experts whose current occupations include computer networking design, computer applications software and programs, education technology, data systems analysis and education reporting programs. In consultation with the cofounders this team has already laid the foundation for the schools technology platform and data-driven culture. They arranged for and trained Synergy's co-founders in the areas of network domain acquisition, website development and the Google Education Application that will provide the basis for Synergy's technology driven education delivery.

## **Organizations Assisting with the Development and Implementation of Synergy Schools**

Synergy is using top notch charter school development resources to ensure the success of the development, opening and implementation of Synergy's education programs. Here is a brief list of their preparation and training:

- California Charter School Association's Charter Launch Program – This program provides direct guidance in all aspects of charter school development and implementation. Membership in Charter Launch provides for one-on-one consultation with respect to petition development, budget development, legal compliance and many other aspects of charter school development. Upon approval Charter Launch will shift its support of Synergy to the implementation phase and assist Synergy in preparation for the opening the school.
- UCLA Extension: Charter School Implementation Program – Synergy's co-founders and various team members, in conjunction with Charter Launch have participated in 18 units of coursework focused on petition development through UCLA's charter school training program.
- California Charter School Association's Zoom! Data Source and Data Director Training – This training to be held near the opening of the school will teach Synergy staff how to manage all aspects of its data collection and analysis programs.
- Charter School Development Center Leadership Institute Program July 2011  
This intensive six day workshop is for approved charter schools in preparation for first year enrollment and program implementation. It covers intensive training on school leadership, governance, budget/finance, legal compliance and personnel.
- Charter School Development Center Business Officer Training Program March 2011- This intensive training program is focused solely on budgeting and finance and coincides with the timing of the receipt of the school's first funding allotment.
- Charter School Development Center Governance Academy and Leadership Update Workshops– Training for Synergy's board members and leadership staff in the area of governance is critical to successful operations. This training covers the basics of Brown Act, charter law, policy development and a variety of other topics related to governance.
- Synergy Education Project plans to contract with School Pathways to provide the school's Student Information System. Experienced in working with independent study and site based charter schools, School Pathways provides intensive trainings which will allow Synergy to design and manage a variety of data collection systems used for school wide and individual student data tracking.

## **Element A: A Description of Synergy's Education 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 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners." Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(A)*

## **Synergy's Philosophy, Mission and Vision**

### **Educational Philosophy**

Synergy shall offer a creative learning environment combining intensive studies of arts education with intensive pre college academic classes. Offering low student/teacher ratios, this high school is a great stepping stone to college.

- An educated person of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is well rounded and can use critical thinking to work through every day problems. With education beyond high school through university, trade, or life experience - an educated person can interact, socialize, and flourish in today's society.
- A student will be most successful in their high school career if they enjoy the educational atmosphere in their institution. It is important that the academic lessons are challenging, but clear. It is also important that electives appeal to the student directly. Combining both what they have to learn with what they want to learn will help each student tolerate what they hate to do and passionately explore what they love to do, ultimately helping them succeed at both.

**MISSION – The Mission of Synergy Education Project is to provide a creative, challenging, and nurturing environment that offers secondary students innovative preparation for a post-secondary education using project based learning and arts integration.**

### **Our Purpose**

Synergy exists because its founders believe there is an opportunity to improve the lives and futures of students and to prepare them for productive lives in a complex, culturally diverse, technology driven world by providing them with the highest quality education program, school staff and supportive learning environment.

### **Our Reason for Being**

Synergy's reason for being is to help all children succeed in reaching high levels of academic achievement and personal growth. Synergy will work to help students qualify to enter college after high school and offer specialized coaching for students that would be "first generation" college students within their families.

### **Our Core Values**

- We value and put forth a healthy respect for all children.
- We value and expect high academic and personal achievement.
- We value self-exploration and self-evaluation for all staff and students.

We value an active and dynamic learning environment.  
We value a safe, nurturing and supportive environment.

### **Our Vision**

Synergy's vision is to create a collaborative learning environment that meets the academic and social needs of our students while preparing them for college and 21st century careers. We will achieve our mission by:

- Offering intensive learning of the content knowledge through project based learning and arts integration
- Offering a curriculum focused on developing strong critical thinking skills and learning highly effective written and oral communication skills
- Creating a collaborative learning environment that motivates and teaches our students how to work effectively with others
- Creating competent learners that are able to solve all problems, personal and academic
- Using a variety of high tech tools that drive teaching and learning

Synergy's vision is to develop in students the knowledge and skill sets needed to be successful in college and careers in this technology and information age. Synergy students will be able to use extraordinary communication and relationship building skills along with high levels of critical thought as they fully engage in their communities and in their work. Synergy students will carry forth confident, mindful and compassionate as they meet the challenges and work towards the solutions to 21st century problems.

### **Goals for Academic and Personal Success and College and Career Readiness in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

- Synergy students will demonstrate high levels of academic achievement or improvement each year until they reach advanced levels of knowledge and skill in the areas of analytical/critical reading, math and oral and written communication skills.
- Synergy students will demonstrate high levels of content knowledge in grade level science as well as advanced levels of knowledge and application of the scientific method.
- Synergy students will be extraordinary project developers and presenters.
- Synergy students will demonstrate advanced skill levels in their use of technology.
- Synergy students will set and reach physical fitness goals.

### **Means to Achieve Synergy's Mission and Vision**

In order to achieve its mission, all Synergy staff will teach and model a dynamic, project based, technology driven curriculum using a variety of contemporary, research proven methodologies that will truly prepare our students for college and careers in the 21st century. Synergy staff will provide a variety of support systems as well as teach students to think creatively and resourcefully in the removal of any personal and academic barriers to learning so that they may achieve high levels of academic success and personal growth.

**We will deliver the following services to our students:**

- A dedicated team of educators and support staff well trained for all aspects of school operations
- A small school structure that allows for personalized learning
- Teachers, Counselors and staff that teach and model sensible character development
- Teachers, Counselors and staff that teach and model effective learning strategies and problem solving
- A physical education and integrated health and wellness program that supports mental and physical well being
- A dynamic, technology driven, standards driven, project based curriculum and instructional delivery
- A strong summative and formative assessment program designed to support teaching and learning and assist teachers and students in knowing their academic and personal strengths and weaknesses
- A positive school culture where staff and students are held accountable to quality work and celebrated for success in their learning and work
- Well-developed counseling and student services departments that will offer a variety of support services, academic and personal, focused on helping students remove barriers to learning and life goals and to assist them in the planning of their futures.

**HOW WILL SYNERGY STUDENTS BE EDUCATED?**

To help the students of Synergy excel in their education: small class sizes, block schedules, arts correlations, and project based study skills courses will help each student succeed. The goal of Synergy is to have students achieving at or above grade level in benchmark testing and in their everyday school career.

**TRADITIONAL CLASSES**

It is the philosophy of the founders of Encore that there are certain things in traditional education that work. Encore believes that students learn best from an engaged teacher in a classroom setting where students can interact with a person. Use of technology within a classroom is a great correlation tool, but having the human interaction and time in the social setting of a traditional classroom is key to the social and academic success of a high school student. Synergy plans to apply Encore's proven success in this area to their existing program.

**BLOCK SCHEDULE**

A block schedule gives teachers a 85-minute class period to teach material. Classes meet every other day so students have two days to complete homework assignments. The longer class period offers a teacher more lecture and project time. The transition and "settle down" time for a class period will not cut into the learning process because of the reduced number of transitions.

## **ARTS CORRELATIONS**

Research has shown that the integration of arts with academics results in higher understanding in math, comprehension, and retention of academic teachings. California has been a host to many performing arts elementary schools of choice. These schools have been the first schools in the community to reach or exceed API and AYP goals through the integration of fine arts and academics. Students of these schools have been able to accelerate their learning process and test above grade level. It is the correlation of the fine arts programs including music, drama, technical arts, and dance that have helped these students succeed in history, reading, and math.

Not all students learn in the same way. Some students excel when they read. Some students excel when they hear. Some students excel when they see. Some students excel when they feel. Using drama, music, and dance as a way for students to further learn about History, English, Math, and Science helps bring core curriculum to life. English students have taken part in rich literature dramas such as Shakespeare's "Tempest". Mark Twain's stories were told onstage in the Broadway musical "Big River." Science students have studied the dynamics of science in dance. Math students designed geometric dance floors. Musicians learn how to technically factor through learning and practicing how to read music. Dancers learn the science of physics as they strengthen their balance and symmetry.

Similar programs have proven very successful not only at Encore's own campuses but at Discovery School of the Arts in Victorville. Not only do the students of Discovery School work hard so they can participate in the arts programs, they have also learned about Van Gogh, Greek Mythology, California History, and the science of Archeology through performing. Memorization has been proven to last longer if you put it to song.

***PROJECT BASED LEARNING/STUDY SKILLS*** – At Synergy, students will be able to gain specific communication skills through mandatory courses in project based learning. Within the project based learning / study skills classes, students will work with small groups to complete quarterly projects that combine a variety of academic skills. The project based learning study skills courses will help students work together to gain mastery of how to develop critical thinking and how to study / work as a team.

## **Synergy Students**

The school will serve students living in the city of Pittsburg and surrounding areas with the expectation that the student population will mirror the District's demographic data. The school will also target student recruitment efforts in the surrounding communities of Antioch and Bay Point. Demographic data from Riverview Middle School in Bay Point and Antioch Middle and High Schools demonstrates similar student demographics data as well as percentages in student achievement data school wide and in all subgroup categories. All surrounding middle and high schools have API scores in the 600 to low 700s range. Riverview Middle School, Rancho Medanos Middle School, Hillview Middle School and Antioch Middle School are all in year 5 Program Improvement status.

Pittsburg Senior High and Antioch High School are also in Program Improvement status. Synergy's anticipated student population will consist of:

- 75% will reside in the city of Pittsburg
- 25% will reside in the surrounding areas of Bay Point and Antioch
- 70% Free and Reduced Price Lunch Eligible
- 22% will be English Learners
- 52% will be Hispanic, Latina/Latino
- 20% will be African American
- 20% will be white
- 55%-70% of the PUSD and surrounding schools middle school students will have yet to reach scores of proficient on ELA and/or math portions of standardized testing.

### **Synergy's Middle School Students**

The middle school years are a crucial transitional period in which most students develop the skills and behaviors necessary to succeed in high school, college and beyond. District data for middle school students begin to show significant academic underachievement that can lead to continued school failure. According to data from the California Department of Education, Pittsburg's middle school students are making improvement in their academic performance from prior year's performance, however, large numbers of the students continue to be minimally successful in their academic achievement. STAR test data from 2009 indicated:

- Approximately 60% of Hillview Jr. High students are scoring below proficient in the ELA portion and approximately 63% in mathematics.
- Of the 309 eighth grade Hillview students taking the end-of-course algebra 1 test, 40% scored below basic or far below basic on the test.
- Approximately 60% of Rancho Medanos Jr. High students are scoring below proficient in the ELA portion and approximately 70% in mathematics.
- Of the 78 eighth grade students at Rancho Medanos taking the general math end-of-course test 77% scored below basic or far below basic and 37% below basic or far below basic in the end-of-course algebra 1 test.

Many of Pittsburg's middle school students face a number of challenges making them students at-risk for not being able to handle the demands of high school before they even step foot on campus. Averaged data of local area middle school students from Pittsburg indicates:

- 80% qualify for Free or Reduced Price Lunch
- 25% are English Learners
- 54% are of Hispanic or Latino/Latina Ethnicity
- 21% are of African American Ethnicity

Synergy's academic and social programs specifically target serving students that fall in these particular subgroups.

### Synergy’s High School Students

Year two of operation begins enrollment of Synergy’s high school program. We will start with a 9<sup>th</sup> grade class of 75 students (our incoming 8<sup>th</sup> grade class from year one), adding grade levels and class size each. In similar fashion as the middle school program, Synergy will enroll no more than 100 students in each grade level. High school is where schools typically begin to experience significant drop-out rates especially for those students identified in the at-risk subgroups. Here is what the data tells us about the academic performance of Pittsburg Senior High School (PHS) students.

- Approximately 35% of PHS students are functioning below basic or far below basic on the English language arts portions of the STAR test.
- 50% - 60% of the students taking end-of-course tests in algebra 1, geometry or algebra 2 are scoring below basic or far below basic.
- 19% of the school 10<sup>th</sup> graders did not pass the English portion of the CAHSEE
- 21% of the school’s 10<sup>th</sup> graders did not pass the math portion of the CAHSEE
- Only 12.2% of the graduating class of 2008 completed the a-g requirements for admission into California’s university system.

The following data taken from the California Department of Education indicates that high numbers of Pittsburg High School’s student population fits into one or more of the at-risk categories:

- 60% qualify for Free or Reduced Price Lunch
- 19% are English Learners
- 49% are of Hispanic or Latino/Latina Ethnicity
- 22% are of African American Ethnicity
- 17% dropout rate

### Projected Enrollment and Grade Levels to Be Served

Research indicates that small schools are leading the race in improving student learning.

Under Synergy’s revised approach, projected enrollment for the upcoming three years is as follows:

Grade Level	2015 / 2016	2016 / 2017	2017 / 2018
6 <sup>th</sup>	50	50	50
7 <sup>th</sup>	50	45	45
8 <sup>th</sup>	50	45	45
9 <sup>th</sup>	50	45	45
10 <sup>th</sup>	30	45	45
11 <sup>th</sup>	25	25	45
12 <sup>th</sup>	0	20	20
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>295</b>

## The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner

An educated person in the 21st century is a person prepared to set and accomplish goals in a very complex and complicated world. Education and economist authors writing about education in the 21st century point out that for many our nation's students, the jobs they will have twenty years from now probably do not yet exist.<sup>1</sup> This makes our roles and responsibilities as educators tricky because even though the world has changed dramatically the foundation by which we educate has not. This leaves most educators in isolated attempts to develop a new understanding of the kinds of knowledge and skills sets needed to thrive in the 21st century. Since specific skill sets related to specific career tasks are likely to be unknown we must now focus our attention as educators on developing skill sets in students teaching them to think critically, communicate effectively, create resourcefully and manage sensibly. What Synergy aims to do is implement a state standards based content education integrated and in alignment with the teaching and learning of these 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

### **An educated person in the 21st century is**

Prepared for college and high level career technical schools through a solid base of core subject area content knowledge

- Has strong analytical reading skills
- Is able to communicate clearly and effectively through highly organized writing
- Possess a solid understanding of mathematical concepts with strong problems solving and application skills
- Has acquired a foundation of knowledge of the basic principles of science with strong skills in inquiry, observation and experimentation using the scientific method

Prepared to use technology and a number of other electronic tools to analyze and solve problems

- Effectively uses technology in ways that support their studies not just as a research tools but as problem solving tools
- Highly skilled at using technology as a communications tool
- Equipped with a set of personal awareness and social skills that are the foundation for building positive relationships with self and others
- Possesses a strong sense of self and the self confidence to perform intellectually, academically and personally in challenging conditions

<sup>11</sup> Wagner, T., (2008). *The Global Achievement Gap: Why Even Our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills Our Children Need and What We Can Do About It*. Basic Books, New York. Florida, Richard. (2007). *The Flight of the Creative Class: The New Global Competition for Talent*. New York: HarperCollins. Goldin, Claudia, & Katz, Lawrence F. (2008). *The Race Between Education and Technology*. Boston: Harvard University Press. National Center on Education and the Economy. (2007). *Tough Choices or Tough Times: The Report of the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce*. Washington, DC: Author. *21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, Education and Competitiveness: A Resource and Policy Guide* produced in 2008 by the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills outlines the skills deficits needed in a 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce and economy and details what educators must provide in order for our students to compete.

- Has reached high levels of self discipline with a "no excuses" attitude
- Works collaboratively with all members of their community
- Is a positive thinker and communicator
- Is a critical thinker and communicator
- Possesses a high level of ethnics and cultural sensitivity
- Knows what it takes to build highly effective relationships and act accordingly

An extraordinary problem solver

- Equipped with strong critical thinking skills
- Has learned to work together in teams using the power of the collective in learning of content knowledge and demonstrating that knowledge through presentations
- Has acquired skills sets for approaching complex, multilayered problems. Has learned to see that "Lots of little things make big things happen." (Coach John Wooden)

### **A school educating students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is**

Standards driven

- Provides Project Based Learning experiences using the California State Content Standards as the foundation for all projects

Data driven

- Uses big picture data to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the organization
- Uses big picture data to drive program improvement efforts
- Uses a number of student assessment tools, formative and summative, to continuously measure student performance
- Uses student performance data to improve teaching and learning

Delivers instruction and learning with a clear plan consistent with teaching the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills needed for careers, college and real life.

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Collaboration Across Networks
- Adaptability
- Initiative and Self-Motivation
- Communication Skills, Written and Oral
- Analytical and Process Oriented Thinking
- Inquiry
- The Ability to Dream Big
- Highly Developed Skills for Using Technology

Provides continuous opportunities for professional development

- An organizational design that provides teachers weekly time for collaboration with their colleagues in cooperative efforts focused on improving student learning through the improvement of their teaching skills

- A minimum of 10 full day staff development days for skills training and PBL development
- A continuous evaluation process whereby all staff regularly engage in administrative, peer and self evaluation processes focused on skills development and improvement.

Structured to model a successful 21<sup>st</sup> century organization

- Teachers and administrators work in teams modeling collaboration in their efforts to support students through programs like Response to Intervention, Professional Learning Communities and PBL Development Teams.
- Demonstrates positive systems of evaluation whereby all staff will receive feedback regarding their performance in a climate that requires accountability, professional growth and development.

## **How Learning Best Occurs**

Learning best occurs when a student's academic skills are fully assessed and a personalized learning plan is developed and set in motion. Students, in collaboration with their Mentor Teacher and school counselor, will set learning and personal goals that correspond to their individual needs. Synergy understands that all students possess different strengths and weaknesses and will work in conjunction with the student to strengthen areas of weakness and to expand on areas of strength.

Learning best occurs when

- students can experience the subject matter using as many of their senses and learning modalities as possible
- students are engaged in active rather than passive learning with daily opportunities for hands-on learning
- students are highly motivated because they are taking the lead in their learning
- students feel connected to the learning environment through strong relationships with students and staff
- students feel connected to the learning environment because of high levels of relevance to the curriculum and project assignments
- students are enrolled in schools with small class sizes
- there are substantial resources available for academic and personal support

## **Learning best occurs using the following teaching and learning strategies**

- Project Based Learning
- Integrated Curriculum and Learning Experiences
- Awareness of Student's Intelligences
- Differentiated Learning Experiences
- Collaborative Learning Environment
- Small Class Sizes
- Access to Strong Support Systems

Each of these educational strategies is explained below with detailed information about how they fit within Synergy's overall teaching and learning structure.

**Learning best occurs in a Project Based Learning (PBL) environment.** Project Based Learning focuses less on teaching and more on a learning process that stems from inquiry.<sup>2</sup> A number of California charter schools are using this teaching and learning strategy with impressive success. Some of the most notable are High Tech Middle and High Schools as well as The Big Picture Inc. schools located across the state and the nation. PBL involves having the students focus on a content driven learning project, a multifaceted problem or a complex task and collectively seek the resolution of the problem or task. Through investigation, research, and collaboration, students work together over an extended period of time, generally two to six weeks, to find an understanding of the content. Those tasks or problems will be reflective of real world situations in which students gain contextual knowledge pertinent to life outside their classroom walls. Text books, lectures, conventional assessments, experimentation and technology all serve as resources while students engage in cooperative learning to complete and present the project. Abilities such as teamwork, time and task management, research, presentation, and communication are among those skills that students learn and develop through collaboration based learning which is a byproduct of the project based learning model. Students collect, evaluate and interpret data to report what has been discovered. During the course of inquiry, students learn content, process and problem solving, all of which are necessary in developing critical thinking skills. A detailed description of PBL and the three phases of project development are covered in the Instructional Design section of the petition. See Appendix 2 for the PBL design template and sample PBL projects.

**Learning best occurs when students are engaged in integrated learning.** Integrated curriculum and learning opportunities are natural consequences of PBL. Projects are designed to draw upon the gathering of information and acquisition of knowledge across a multitude of subject matter. There will be a focus topic of study with each project but as the students conduct their independent research they begin to discover the relationships between topics and the connectedness of subject matter. Much research has been conducted on the benefits of integrating curriculum.<sup>3</sup> One of the greatest benefits identified is the increase in the level of critical and higher order levels of thinking. For example, using mathematical applications in learning science not only increases breadth and depth of knowledge but has a significant impact on the level

<sup>2</sup> Boaler, J. 1999. Mathematics for the Moment, or the Millennium? *Education Week* 17(29): 30-34. Dewey, J. 1938 *Experience and Education*. New York: Simon and Shuster. Doppelt, Y. 2003. Implementing and Assessment of PBL in a Flexible Environment. *International Journal of Technology and Design Education*, 13:255-72. Gardner, H. 2006. *Multiple Intelligences*. New York: Basic Books. Greier, R., P.C. Blumenfeld, R.W. Marx, J.S. Krajcik, E. Soloway, and J. Clay-Chambers. 2008. Standardized Test Outcomes for Students Engaged in Inquiry-Based Curricula in the Context of Urban Reform. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* 45(8):922-39. The Buck Institute for Education, [www.bie.org](http://www.bie.org). The George Lucas Foundation, [www.edutopia.org](http://www.edutopia.org).

<sup>3</sup>Rote Versus Meaningful Learning. *Theory into Practice*, 41(4), 226-232. Walker, C., Greene, B., (2009). The Relations Between Students, Motivational Beliefs and Cognitive Engagement in High School. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 102(6), 463-471.

of critical thinking skills development in the process of observing how these two subjects are connected. Research also indicates that integrated curriculum and learning augments student level of interest, motivation and their ability to apply what has been learned to real world applications.<sup>4</sup> Students put forth more effort when they feel the subject matter is relevant to their lives. They are more willing to seek additional assistance, ask questions, and discipline themselves to focus during class as well as to work harder to retain content. Synergy will incorporate integrated curriculum and learning experiences through core-subject classes and in elective "majors" coursework through its PBL education design. The application of integrated curriculum and learning is demonstrated in the Instructional Design section. Integrated curriculum and learning is also observed in Appendix 2 through examples of student projects.

**Learning best occurs when students and teachers are aware of students' intelligences.** Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences is one of the foundational elements in the development of the school's education program.<sup>5</sup> Through multiple intelligence assessments students will become knowledgeable about how they best learn. This high level of metacognition woven throughout the learning environment will allow for students to draw upon their natural born aptitudes and interests. All Synergy teachers will be trained extensively on assessing the learning intelligences of their students. It is crucial that they know how individual student's best learn. This will enable them to teach and guide students in ways that make sense to the student. The goal here is to increase learning and enhance intrinsic motivation.

**Learning best occurs through differentiated learning opportunities.** Differentiated instruction and learning opportunities will come as a natural result of the PBL model.<sup>6</sup> As students work, they must call upon various skills sets and will naturally gravitate towards favored learning modalities. Allowing for variations in both the process of learning and the demonstration of learning, teachers provide opportunities for all learners to succeed, not just visual learners who are typically the highest performers in the traditional classroom.

**Learning best occurs in a collaborative learning environment.** Peer learning and collaboration have long been acknowledged as highly motivating learning strategies

<sup>4</sup> Benware, C., Deci, E. (1984). Quality of Learning With an Active Versus Passive Motivational Set. *American Educational Research Journal*, 21(4), 755-765. Dewey, J. (1913). *Interest and Effort in Education*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin. Mansilla, V., Duraising, E., (2007). Targeted Assessment of Students' Interdisciplinary Work: An Empirically Grounded Framework Proposed. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 78(2), 215-232. Mayer, R. (2002). Rote Versus Meaningful Learning. *Theory into Practice*, 41(4), 226-232. Walker, C., Greene, B., (2009). The Relations Between Students, Motivational Beliefs and Cognitive Engagement in High School. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 102(6), 463-471.

<sup>5</sup> Gardner, H., (1993). *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York: Basic Books. Veenema, S., Gardner, H. (1996) *Multimedia and Multiple Intelligences*. *The American Prospect*. 29(326): 69-75. Gardner, H., (2009). *Five Minds for the Future*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

<sup>6</sup> Tomlinson, C.A., McTighe, J. (2006). *Integrating Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design*. ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development). George, P. (2005). *A Rationale for Differentiating Instruction in the Regular Classroom*. *Theory Into Practice*, 44(3). Retrieved August 5, 2009, from Education Full Text Database. [www.differentiatedinstruction.net](http://www.differentiatedinstruction.net).

successful in improving student learning when done correctly.<sup>7</sup> Navigating a team project teaches a variety of essential communication and relationship skills. The continuous discussion, requiring speaking and listening, fosters critical and analytical thought. Reading by itself is one-dimensional learning. Students must be able learn the content information but also to process it through the ideas of others adding another dimension of processing information. PBL projects will be designed with peer and collaborative learning strategies in mind. Teachers will not abandon direct instruction but rather use it as a tool to guide groups of students towards learning a particular content standard. Teachers will be active facilitators assisting students in the learning of state standards through strategically designed interdisciplinary lessons that are embedded in well developed assignments and projects.

**Learning best occurs in schools with small class sizes.** Researchers have come to understand that small schools and small class sizes are ideal in optimizing student learning and achievement.<sup>8</sup> Synergy plans for no more than 25 students in each class. Classes need to be small enough for all students to receive the attention and focus of the teacher but big enough to promote group interaction and stimulating educational communication. The delivery of Synergy's dynamic learning environment is possible through its small class size structure.

**Learning best occurs when students have access to strong support systems.** These programs assist with the development of high levels of personal awareness and through the removal of personal barriers that might be inhibiting learning. It's not difficult to understand that students with academic, personal and social issues of grave concern find it hard to concentrate on their studies and are quite likely to not perform at their best. Based on the state and district data, high numbers of students at Synergy Schools will come to school each day facing one challenge or another. The school will provide many systems and services for supporting students in ways that help them acquire self knowledge, personal problem solving skills and personal management skills that will assist them in removing any barriers they might have to learning. These programs and support systems include but are not limited to:

<sup>7</sup> Bellanca, J. & Fogarty, R. (1993). Blueprints for Thinking in the Cooperative Classroom, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Melbourne, Hawker Brownlow Education. Puchner, Laurel (2003). Children Teaching for Learning: What Happens When Children Teach Others in the Classroom? Teaching and Teacher Education. Fantuzzo, J., King, J. and Jeller, L. (1992). Effects of Reciprocalpeer Tutoring on Mathematics and School Adjustment: A Component Analysis. Journal of Educational Psychology, V84 P331-339. Queenie, L. & Richards, R. (2000, Winter) Teaching Leraners-Learners Teaching:Using Reciprocal Teaching to Improve Comprehension Strategies in Challenged Readers. Reading Improvement, v37 no4 p190-194. Boud, D., Cohen, R., and Sampson, J. (2001). Peer Learning in Higher Education: Learning From and With Each Other. London, Kogan Press.

<sup>8</sup> Barker, Bruce O. (2003) The Advantages of Small Schools. Eric Digests. Beckner, Weldon. THE CASE FOR THE SMALLER SCHOOL. Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1983. ED 228 002. Transforming the High School Experience: How New York City's New Small Schools Are Boosting Student Achievement and Graduation Rates. <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/560/full.pdf> Bloom, Howard; Thompson, Saskia; Unterman, Rebecca; Herlihy, Corinne; Payne, Collin.(MDRC, New York, NY , Jun 2010). School Overcrowding: Limiting Hispanic Potential. <http://uno-online.org/SRO-Study-4-21.pdf> (United Neighborhood Organization, Chicago, IL , Apr 2009)

- Crisis management counseling
- Small group counseling
- Project based Health and Wellness Program
- Project based Life Skills Course
- Safe Schools Programming

Student participation in some of the programs listed above will be daily and weekly. Other programs are accessible to students on an as needed basis like crisis counseling and periodic student activities related to the Safe Schools Program. It should also be noted that the school's counselors will be active participants in the development of curriculum and projects where appropriate. The school's counselors will also take an active role in staff trainings regarding the delivery of student supports systems and other non-core subject curriculum. See Appendix 2 for a sample of a student project to be done as part of the Health and Wellness Program.

Synergy plans for no more than 35 students maximum in each class, with the class size average at 28 to 1. Classes need to be small enough for all students to receive the attention and focus of the teacher but big enough to promote group interaction and stimulating educational communication.

## Description of the Learning Environment

<p><b>13</b> First Day of School, Minimum Day <b>14</b> Minimum Day</p>	<p><b>AUGUST 2015</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	<p><b>FEBRUARY 2016</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29						<p><b>12</b> Lincoln's Birthday, No School <b>14</b> <b>15</b> School <b>26</b> Minimum Day, Staff Development</p>
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<p><b>9</b> Minimum Day, Staff Development <b>12</b> Columbus Day, No School <b>31</b> Halloween</p>	<p><b>OCTOBER 2015</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	<p><b>APRIL 2016</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	<p><b>1</b> Spring Break, No School <b>22</b> Minimum Day, Staff Development</p>
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<p><b>11</b> Veterans Day, No School <b>20</b> Minimum Day, Staff Development <b>23-27</b> Thanksgiving Break, No School <b>26</b> Thanksgiving Day</p>	<p><b>NOVEMBER 2015</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30						<p><b>MAY 2016</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					<p><b>8</b> <b>27</b> Minimum Day, Staff Development <b>30</b> Memorial Day, No School</p>
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<p><b>1</b> New Year's <b>1-8</b> Christmas break, No School <b>14-15</b> Fall Finals Prep <b>18</b> M.L. King Day, No School <b>19-22</b> Finals Week- Minimum Days <b>25</b> First Day of Spring Semester <b>29</b> Minimum Day, Staff Development</p>	<p><b>JANUARY 2016</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	<p><b>JULY 2016</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	<p><b>4</b> Independence Day</p>
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### SYNERGY CAMPUS 2015-2016 CALENDAR

## The Daily and Weekly Schedules

Synergy has planned for daily and weekly schedules that make for a comprehensive program in meeting the education and social needs of its students. The daily schedule

below demonstrates Synergy's extended day delivery with more time on task and more opportunities to have specific learning needs met for those students struggling with academic or social issues.

Synergy uses traditional and non-traditional means of instructing students for both academic and non-core enrichment arts programs. Synergy shall have an eight class program each semester (four periods per day). The instructional day will run from 7:25 – 3:00 p.m. and includes an 85-minute block program where classes meet every other day. Block scheduling has been used at the Encore – High Desert campus since its opening in 2008 and has contributed to the overall academic success of the students from Encore. Due to the academic program created for the students of Encore, alumni of the Encore campus have been able to go to universities on full scholarship and have successfully graduated from universities. We intend to replicate this success at Synergy.

Proposed Daily Schedule Under Revised Program:

Passing Period 7:20 a.m. - 7:25 a.m.

Period 1 / 6 - 7:25 - 8:50 a.m.

BREAKFAST - 8:50 - 9:00

Period 2 / 7 - 9:05 - 10:30 a.m.

Period 3 / 8 - 10:35 - 12:00 p.m.

Study Hall A - 12:05 - 12:55 p.m.

LUNCH A - 12: 00 - 12:35 p.m.

Study Hall B - 12:40 - 1:30 p.m.

LUNCH B - 12:55 - 1:30 p.m.

Period 4 / 9 - 1:35 - 3:00 p.m.

Conservatory Intensives - 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

### **DAILY STUDY HALL**

In each daily block schedule, students are given a study hall period in which they are to work on their homework. If they use this time to study, students are able to complete assignments on campus so they have limited off campus homework. The exception to this rule is personal reading assignments and/or special projects. If a student chooses not to use the time given to them to work on homework, they are expected to complete homework at home.



## HOW DO WE DO IT? SEP'S REGULAR SCHOOL DAY

### DAILY OPERATION - PITTSBURG

Passing Period 7:20 a.m. - 7:25 a.m.

Period 1 / 6 - 7:25 - 8:50 a.m.

BREAKFAST - 8:50 - 9:00

Period 2 / 7 - 9:05 - 10:30 a.m.

Period 3 / 8 - 10:35 - 12:00 p.m.

Study Hall A - 12:05 - 12:55 p.m.

LUNCH A - 12:00 - 12:35 p.m.

Study Hall B - 12:40 - 1:30 p.m.

LUNCH B - 12:55 - 1:30 p.m.

Period 4 / 9 - 1:35 - 3:00 p.m.

Conservatory Intensives - 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

SEP's first day of school is on August 13<sup>th</sup>.

SEP's last day of school is on June 10<sup>th</sup>.

SEP takes a week break in the fall that coincides with Thanksgiving.

SEP takes a three week break for winter break that coincides with Christmas and New Year celebrations.

SEP takes a two week spring break in March.

**THE SIX YEAR PLAN  
– 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

**In seventh grade,  
what classes  
do I take?**

- **SOCIAL SCIENCE** - World History & Geography: Medieval & Early Modern Times
- **ENGLISH** - Reading Language Arts Grade 7
- **MATHEMATICS** - Mathematics 7
- **SCIENCE** - Life Science 7

- **STUDY SKILLS** – Time management, test taking strategies, math organization, note taking, character and anti bullying, good habits, memorization, goal setting, and college goals.
- **PROJECT BASED LEARNING** – This course works directly on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) related monthly and quarterly projects

**ELECTIVE CLASSES:**  
Students can choose up to two

- Foreign Language (2 yrs. required for graduation)
- Arts Course (Vocal Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts)

**STUDY HALL:**  
All students are enrolled in a 55 minute daily study hall that coincides with lunch.

**THE SIX YEAR PLAN  
– 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

**In eighth grade,  
what classes  
do I take?**

- **SOCIAL SCIENCE** - US History & Geography (Regular or Honors track)
- **ENGLISH** - Reading Language Arts Grade 8 (Regular or Honors track)
- **MATHEMATICS** - Mathematics 8 (Regular or Honors track)
- **SCIENCE** - Physical Science 8 (Regular or Honors track)
- **LIFE SKILLS** – Math and Grammar, Testing Skills, Khan Academy Mathematics, Typing, Health and Wellness
- **PROJECT BASED LEARNING** – This course works directly on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) related monthly and quarterly projects

**ELECTIVE CLASSES:**  
Students can choose up to two

- Foreign Language (2 yrs. required for graduation)
- Arts Course (Vocal Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts)

**STUDY HALL:**  
All students are enrolled in a 55 minute daily study hall that coincides with lunch.



**THE SIX YEAR PLAN  
– 9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

**As a Freshman,  
what classes  
do I take?**

- **ENGLISH** - High School English I (regular or honors track)
- **MATHEMATICS** - High School Integrated Mathematics I (regular or honors track)
- **SCIENCE** - Integrated Science, Biology, or Biology Honors
- **GEOGRAPHY / HEALTH** – In depth teaching of world geography and physical health including PE
- **COLLEGE SKILLS** – This course specializes in test preparation, scholarships, interviews, and all tools to help students get into college. Freshman emphasis is on use of technology.
- **PROJECT BASED LEARNING** – This course works directly on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) related monthly and quarterly projects

**ELECTIVE CLASSES:**  
Students can choose up to two

- Foreign Language (2 yrs. required for graduation)
- Arts Course (Vocal Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts)

**STUDY HALL:**  
All students are enrolled in a 55 minute daily study hall that coincides with lunch.



**THE SIX YEAR PLAN  
– 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

**As a Sophomore,  
what classes  
do I take?**

- **SOCIAL SCIENCE** - High School World History (regular or honors track)
- **ENGLISH** - High School English 2 (regular or honors track)
- **MATHEMATICS** - High School Integrated Mathematics 2 (regular or honors track)
- **SCIENCE** - Biology (regular or honors track), Chemistry (regular or honors track)
- **COLLEGE SKILLS** – This course specializes in test preparation, scholarships, interviews, and all tools to help students get into college. Sophomore emphasis is SAT and PSAT prep
- **PROJECT BASED LEARNING** – This course works directly on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) related monthly and quarterly projects

**ELECTIVE CLASSES:**  
Students can choose up to two

- Foreign Language (2 yrs. required for graduation)
- Arts Course (Vocal Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts)

**STUDY HALL:**  
All students are enrolled in a 55 minute daily study hall that coincides with lunch.



**THE SIX YEAR PLAN  
– 11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

As a Junior,  
what classes  
do I take?

- **SOCIAL SCIENCE** - High School US History (regular or honors track)
- **ENGLISH** - High School English 3 (regular or honors track)
- **MATHEMATICS** - High School Integrated Mathematics 3 (regular or honors track)
- **SCIENCE** - Chemistry(regular or honors track), Environmental Science
- **COLLEGE SKILLS** – This course specializes in test preparation, scholarships, interviews, and all tools to help students get into college. Junior emphasis is communication through writing and public speaking
- **PROJECT BASED LEARNING** – This course works directly on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) related monthly and quarterly projects

**ELECTIVE CLASSES:**  
Students can choose up to two

- Foreign Language (2 yrs. required for graduation)
- Arts Course (Vocal Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts)
- Early Out

**STUDY HALL:**  
All students are enrolled in a 55 minute daily study hall that coincides with lunch.



**THE SIX YEAR PLAN  
– 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

As a Senior,  
what classes  
do I take?

- **SOCIAL SCIENCE** - US Government and US Economics (regular or honors track)
- **ENGLISH** - High School English 4 (regular or honors track)
- **COLLEGE SKILLS** – This course specializes in test preparation, scholarships, interviews, and all tools to help students get into college. Senior emphasis is financial aid and college applications as well as entrance exams
- **PROJECT BASED LEARNING** – This course works directly on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) related monthly and quarterly projects

**ELECTIVE CLASSES:**  
Students can choose up to four

- Foreign Language (2 yrs. required for graduation)
- Arts Course (Vocal Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts)
- Early Out
- **ELECTIVE ACADEMIC CLASSES** – Some students will have specific needs to complete admissions requirements for some colleges.

**STUDY HALL:**  
All students are enrolled in a 55 minute daily study hall that coincides with lunch.



**ACADEMICS**

- ▶ What are our SEP expectations?



**HUMANITIES**

- The Humanities Department at SEP aligns to the Common Core standards for ELA and the CA state standards for history. We are committed to helping students become creative and independent thinkers by guiding them in the understanding and analysis of important political, geographic, economic, legal and social issues of our contemporary and historical world. We bring academics to life through activities like: Music and dance, costume – role play, propaganda posters/film/radio broadcast, creating songs for specific time periods, and other project based learning activities.



**SEP High School**  
**ARTS & PRE COLLEGE EDUCATION**

## LANGUAGE ARTS

- The Language Arts department at SEP encompasses all levels of English Language Arts and Spanish. The curriculum aligns with CCSS for ELA and covers the essential standards of Reading and Writing through the 4 Cs: Creativity, Communication, Collaboration, and Critical Thinking. Students express their creativity through: Drawing chapter summaries, filming commercials, collages, conducting Socratic seminars, writing original poetry, dramatic interpretations of stories, and rewriting scenes or ending of novels/plays.



**SEP High School**  
**ARTS & PRE COLLEGE EDUCATION**

## MATHEMATICS

- The Mathematics Department at Encore aligns with the Common Core State Standards and seeks to engage students in a full college preparatory curriculum from Mathematics 1 through Mathematics 3 that include concepts of Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2. The fourth year of mathematics includes Statistics and/or Pre Calculus. The goal of Encore's Mathematics Department is to provide an educational experience in mathematics that helps students prepare for successful roles in an ever changing society.



## SCIENCE

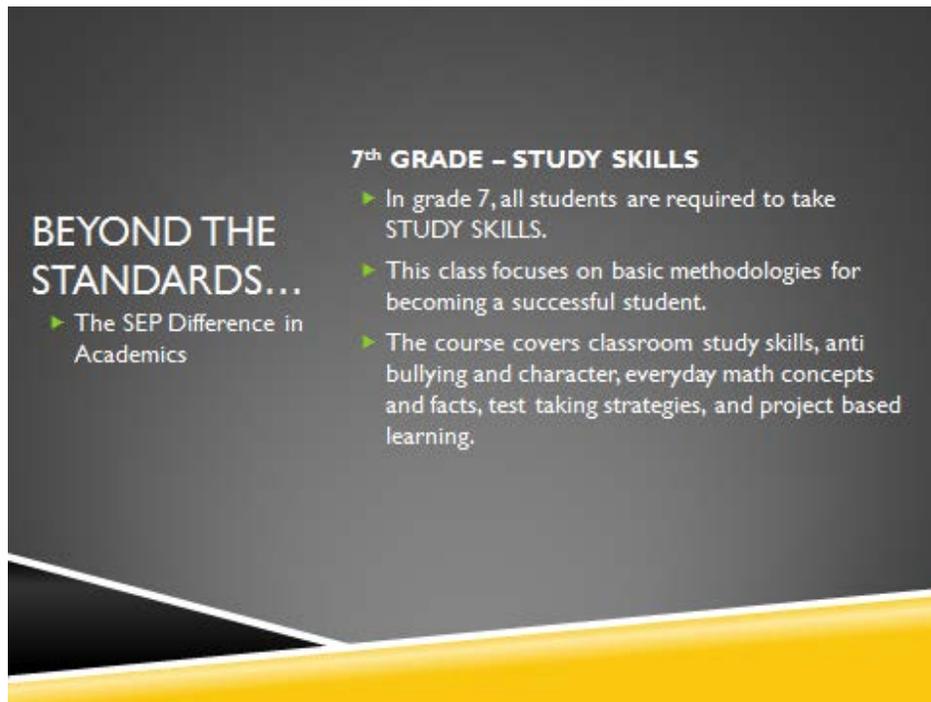
- The Science Department at SEP aligns to the Common Core ELA standards for Science and are introducing the Next Generation Science Standards. The Science Department works to motivate and teach students to scientifically approach the world by incorporating critical thinking, problem solving, and real-world application of science concepts into every classroom. This is accomplished through labs, hands on activities and computer simulations.

## BEYOND THE STANDARDS...

- ▶ The SEP Difference in Academics

SEP has an intensive group of courses that fall into the Academic Skills Department.

SEP's Academic Skills Department takes class blocks to reinforce basic standards and work to close the achievement gap in education.



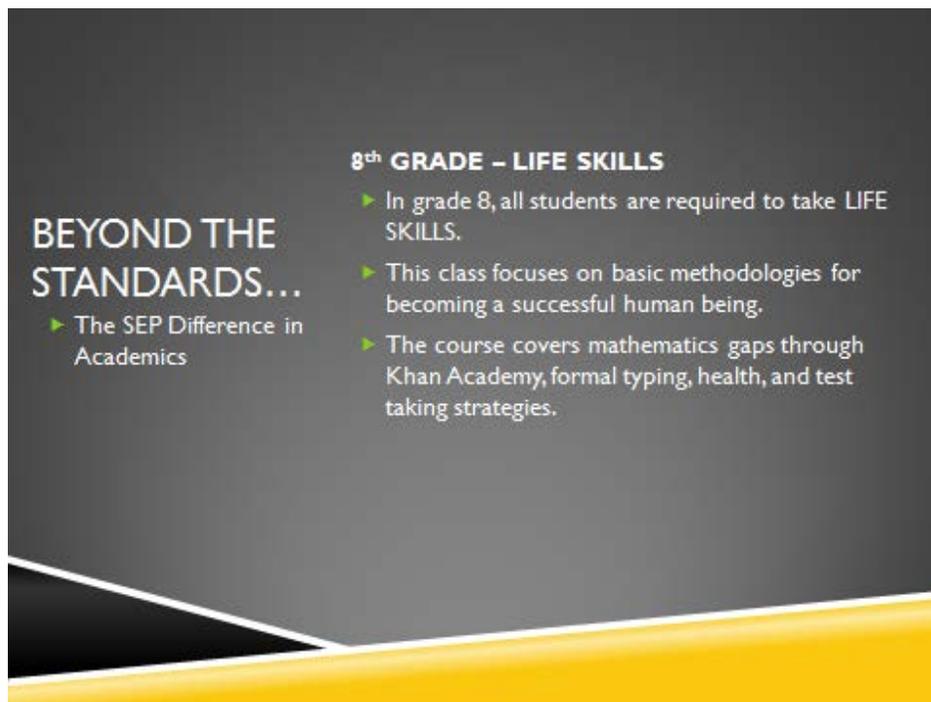
**BEYOND THE STANDARDS...**

- ▶ The SEP Difference in Academics

**7<sup>th</sup> GRADE - STUDY SKILLS**

- ▶ In grade 7, all students are required to take STUDY SKILLS.
- ▶ This class focuses on basic methodologies for becoming a successful student.
- ▶ The course covers classroom study skills, anti bullying and character, everyday math concepts and facts, test taking strategies, and project based learning.

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**BEYOND THE STANDARDS...**

- ▶ The SEP Difference in Academics

**8<sup>th</sup> GRADE - LIFE SKILLS**

- ▶ In grade 8, all students are required to take LIFE SKILLS.
- ▶ This class focuses on basic methodologies for becoming a successful human being.
- ▶ The course covers mathematics gaps through Khan Academy, formal typing, health, and test taking strategies.

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## BEYOND THE STANDARDS...

- ▶ The SEP Difference in Academics

### GRADES 9 – 12 – COLLEGE SKILLS

- ▶ Beginning in grade 9, all students are enrolled in a college skills class. The mission of this class is to introduce students to all of the tools necessary to be accepted to the college or university of choice, make plans for after high school, and learn how to get into college.
- ▶ 9<sup>th</sup> grade covers extensive use of technology including formal typing and keyboard use
- ▶ 10<sup>th</sup> grade covers extensive preparation for the SAT and the PSAT as well as other test taking strategies
- ▶ 11<sup>th</sup> grade covers extensive preparation in written and verbal communication
- ▶ 12<sup>th</sup> grade covers completion of applications for scholarships, admissions, and other requirements to get into college
- ▶ For students on the Honors Track, College Skills is also used for AP test prep if wanted

## BEYOND THE STANDARDS...

- ▶ The SEP Difference in Academics

### GRADES 9 – 12 – MATH SKILLS

- ▶ Beginning in grade 9, students that struggle in math will be enrolled in a math skills class. This class will include CAHSEE preparation and reinforcement of basic concepts to help mastery of more difficult concepts in math.



**ACADEMICS – HIGH ACHIEVERS**

- At SEP, students can be enrolled in HONORS courses beginning in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- In order to qualify for HONORS, a student must have As in the course for the entire prior year AND be recommended by the teacher of the core course.
- Students enrolled in HONORS core courses can receive an extra point toward academic GPA.
- HONORS courses are widely recognized by universities and colleges.
- Should a student wish to take an AP exam at the end of the course, participation in the Honors strand of college skills is recommended to prepare for the AP test.



**ACADEMICS – CHALLENGES**

- At SEP, students that struggle have many opportunities to fill in academic gaps include participation in specific coursework that will help students excel.
- Some students may be assigned a coach that will help them get on track, based on recommendation by teachers.
- Students that have current IEPs and 504s should contact the school directly for a separate meeting to go over details.
- SEP is a full inclusion, full acceptance school. This means that our students get to learn from each other by working through everyone's personal needs and learning how to help each other. All students have the opportunity to work together.



## GRADUATION –

SEP has adopted the UC/CSU admission requirements as the graduation requirements for SEP. This means that all students will be enrolled in academic courses that prepare them for college applications. They must have at least a "C" in all of these courses to gain university consideration for the courses.



## ARTS COURSES



### **ARTS COURSES –**

Every student is required to take at least one arts course each year to enrich their well rounded education.



### **DANCE –**

Dance courses will includes all facets of dance in a variety of genre both classical and commercial.





## **VISUAL ARTS –**

Visual arts includes all facets of made with your hands artwork. This includes drawing, painting, photography, 3d mediums, and new media



## **THEATER ARTS –**

Theater includes all facets of drama and theater. This includes acting, productions, stage tech, and musical theater.





## **ACADEMIC CURRICULUM**

Teachers create lesson plans that run in conjunction with the text book chapters and align with State Standards. The text books that have been chosen have continuous types of assessment and practice test questions for standardized testing. They also correlate the use of new technology. As implementation of Common Core continues, Synergy will continue to align with the requirements set forth within the state of California for standardization of academics. Teachers will use a variety of teaching methods including lectures, in class and out of class assignments, special projects, classroom discussions, tests and quizzes, targeted arts correlations, and benchmark testing. Teachers are required to use a variety of teaching styles including but not limited to cooperative learning, inquiry- based learning, technology based lessons, and direct instruction.

Course catalogs, curriculum, and syllabi are reviewed and revised annually by the executive team and teaching staff at Synergy. The Executive Director makes sure that pacing plans are followed and that benchmarks are given regularly.

## **Humanities**

The Humanities Department aligns to the Common Core ELA Standards for History, and the CA History Standards. The Humanities Department is committed to helping students become creative and independent thinkers by guiding them in the understanding and analysis of important political, geographic, economic, legal and social issues of our contemporary and historical world. The Humanities Department brings History to life through various activities like: Music and dance, costume – role play, propaganda posters/film/radio broadcast, creating songs for specific time periods, soldier journals,

Historical figure press conferences, French Revolution Twitter feed and cross- curricular activities.

### **Language Arts**

The Language Arts department encompasses all levels of English Language Arts and Spanish. The curriculum aligns to CCSS for ELA and covers the essential standards of Reading and Writing through the 4 Cs: Creativity, Communication, Collaboration, and Critical thinking. Student express their creativity through: drawing chapter summaries, filming commercials, collages, conducting Socratic seminars, writing original poetry, dramatic interpretations of stories, and rewriting scenes or ending of novels/plays. Real world applications include: College Admission Essays, Career Research Essays and Job Portfolios.

### **Mathematics**

The Mathematics Department aligns to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and seeks to engage students in a full college preparatory curriculum from Pre-Algebra to College-Prep courses. The goal of the Mathematics Department is to provide an educational experience in mathematics that helps students prepare for successful roles in an ever changing society. This is accomplished through our commitment to excellent teaching, a well-designed curriculum, hands-on learning, cross- curricular projects and a supportive environment for all our students. Encore's mathematics students express their creativity through: creating conic shapes, drawing and coloring tessellations, creating geometric shaped dance floors, and acting out math equations on a large grid. The real world applications include: Money, Budgets, Architecture, Engineering and Technology.

### **Science**

The Science Department aligns to the Common Core ELA Standards for Science, the CA Science Standards and we are introducing the Next Generation Science Standards. The Science Department works to motivate and teach students to scientifically approach the world by incorporating critical thinking, problem solving, and real-world application of science concepts into every classroom. This is accomplished through various labs (dissections, rockets, candle- making, and mouse-trap cars), hands-on activities, and computer simulations (Zombie Apocalypse). Encore's science students express their creativity through cross-curricular projects: Creating a gland song / dance, drawing genetic crosses of dinosaurs, creating infomercials on health topics, creating informational pamphlets on diseases, and photographing nature. The real world applications include: Healthy Lifestyles, Problem Solving, Architecture, Engineering and Technology.

## **ARTS ENRICHMENT CURRICULUM**

In order to properly align students with their passion and talent, each arts conservatory is broken into levels of learning based on either assessment audition or on progress throughout the school year. Art courses are student driven and may be added or removed based upon student interest.

**Fine Art Credit Courses**

All courses that are within the realm of core drama, visual arts, and core music that are eligible for fine arts credit as defined by the California Department of Education are taught by credentialed teachers.

**Non-core Arts Enrichment Programs:**

Courses that are designated as non-core arts enrichment programs are intensive arts training given by non-core arts enrichment instructors. These instructors are industry professionals and are not required to possess a teaching credential pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(I).

**Dance Conservatory:** The dance conservatory includes instruction in ballet, jazz, tap, lyrical, musical theatre, and choreography. Students interested in entering the dance conservatory need to take part in a dance workshop, where they are taught a dance piece and are leveled according to retention and skill. Students can take classes at their level or at level lower than where they have been placed, based on availability. Instructors within this conservatory work together to help dancers prepare themselves for college scholarships and industry auditions. They level each dancer according to each genre as genres each mandate different skills and mastery. Each instructor follows state standards and gives quarterly tests to measure student progress. Special projects within this conservatory may include assignment such as geometry and physics representation within choreography or research papers on various dance topics.

**Music Conservatory:** The music conservatory will include both instrumental and vocal orchestration. Within the instrumental music strand courses in guitar, orchestra, jazz ensemble, and rock band will be offered. Within the vocal music strand courses will be offered in choir, ensemble, and in solo entertainer. Students interested in entering the music conservatory will be required to perform a one to two minute solo piece for audition or opt to enter in a beginning level class. Teachers and Instructors within this conservatory will work together to help students interested in moving into a college or industry music career be well equipped to meet the needs of their goals.

**Technical Arts Conservatory:** The technical arts conservatory will cover a variety of art media. Students interested in entering the technical arts conservatory will need to supply an art portfolio with ten pieces or photographs of original pieces created by them. CD-Rom, PowerPoint, DVD and other preapproved electronic submissions will also be accepted. Technical Arts Conservatory will align with the California State Standards and create lesson plans accordingly. This conservatory will be a fluid teaching department with a variety of industry specific jobs. The purpose of the technical arts conservatory is to teach students about “behind the scenes” jobs within the arts industry. Students interested in these courses will have to submit a resume that will be

forwarded to the instructors of each course. Instructor approval will be required to be enrolled in these courses. This is the smallest Arts conservatory, offering classes in – set building, studio recording, video production, costume design, and stage sound/lighting. Future courses may include cosmetology, stage makeup, commercial arts production, and culinary arts.

**Theater Conservatory:** The dramatic and musical theatre conservatory will cover all aspects involved in performing in either dramatic or musical theatre. Teachers and Instructors within this conservatory will create lesson plans based on the chosen textbook and aligning their curriculums with California State Standards (or equivalent). In the dramatic theatre department a minimum of one quarter per year will be designed for Shakespeare Dramas. Other stage works will be chosen based on interest as well as historical content to help reinforce teachings within the history department. Within this department, courses will be available in Drama, Musical Theatre, Improvisation & Monologue, Musical Theatre Dance, and Musical Theatre Vocals. Students will be expected to create a one to two minute performance including a monologue. Musical Theatre students should also sing a Broadway style song.

**TRANSITIONAL SIXTH GRADE -**

Synergy Education Project will have a class of sixth grade students enrolled into a transitional sixth grade class program. This program includes CCSS in all areas of academics including mathematics, reading language arts, science, history, art, and health. The purpose of this transitional sixth grade course is to help students close the achievement gap before entering the precollege academic six year plan administered by SEP.

**COURSE COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS GRADES 7 & 8**

Subject	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Social Science	World History & Geography: Medieval & Early Modern Times	US History & Geography: Growth & Conflict
English	Reading Language Arts –	Reading Language Arts -
Math	Math 7	Math 8
Science	Life Science 7	Physical Science 8
Fine Art	Full Year Required	Full Year Required
Phys. Ed.	Full Year Required	Full Year Required
Electives	2 Full Years Required (2 Electives per year)	2 Full Years Required (2 Electives per year)
<b>Total</b>	<b>8 Full Year Courses Required</b>	<b>8 Full Year Courses Required</b>

Courses must be passed with a “D” or better.

**HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Synergy Requires</b>	<b>UC &amp; CSU Requires</b>
<b>Social Science</b>	3 years – - World History - US History & Geography - American Government & Economics	2 years – - World History - US History Or - World History - US History & Government
<b>English</b>	4 years	4 years: Needs to be college prep with Composition & Literature
<b>Math</b>	3 years – - Algebra I - Geometry - Algebra II or Other	3 years – - Algebra I - Geometry - Algebra II or higher <i>4 years recommended</i>
<b>Science</b>	3 years – - Biology - Chemistry - Anatomy or Other	2 years – Lab Science in 2 of 3 areas: - Biology - Chemistry - Physics <i>3 years recommended</i>
<b>Foreign Language</b>	2 years – - Spanish I or Other - Spanish II or Other	2 years – - Needs to be the same foreign language <i>3 years recommended</i>
<b>Fine Art</b>	2 years - - One year must be A-G approved Fine Art	1 year
<b>Electives</b>	8 year-long courses, 2 year-long courses must include physical fitness	None
<b>TESTS</b>	PLAN recommended for 10th grade PSAT recommended for 11th grade SAT and ACT recommended for end of 11th grade and start of 12th grade.	CSU: SAT Reasoning or ACT (writing optional) UC: SAT Reasoning or ACT and two (2) SAT Subject tests in two (2) different subject areas: History/Soc. Studies, English Lit, math, Lab Science or Foreign Language
<b>Total</b>	25 year-long courses (Taken between 9 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> grade)	15 year-long courses meets minimum criteria, 18 year-long recommended

Courses must be passed with a “C” or better to receive credit toward college acceptance.

**UC/CSU COURSE ACCEPTANCE AND WASC ACCREDITATION**

This ensures that students are able to transition into college and obtain course acceptance by other high schools. Encore Education Corporation has many courses already accepted by the University of California as this is a universal tool used by schools in the United States. Encore Education Corporation also has schools approved for acceptance by all branches of the US military. Synergy currently holds candidacy for

accreditation and will continue on the accreditation path through internationally accepted Western Association for School and Colleges. Encore – High Desert is accredited through WASC with the recent midterm visit completed in February of 2015. Synergy will follow the current A-G approved curriculums from Encore – High Desert to ensure transferability of courses in the interim of course approval for Synergy. Parents will be notified about WASC accreditation, UC/CSU course acceptance and course transfer to other high schools through office postings, meetings, newsletters, and the Synergy website.

### Curriculum and Instruction Design

Synergy’s curriculum, instruction and learning program is based on a Project Based Learning (PBL) model. This section provides a full description of how standards based projects are developed and implemented. The assessment of the outcomes of student learning using a PBL model is covered in detail in Element C of the petition.

The basic structure of each project has three distinct phases that carry three ongoing components.

Project Phase	Project Work Focus	Learning Methods	Assessments and Check Points
<b>The Foundation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative Project Planning</li> <li>• Student Directed Research</li> <li>• Direct and Indirect Instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Led Project Group Discussions and Problem Solving</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Teacher Instruction, Guidance and Feedback</li> <li>• Group and Independent Research</li> <li>• Community Connections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Journal Feedback</li> <li>• Group and Individual Student Interviews</li> <li>• Teacher Project Progress Rubrics</li> <li>• Student Project Progress Rubrics</li> </ul>
<b>The Learning Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative Project Components Development</li> <li>• Project Resources Development</li> <li>• Analysis and Synthesis of Information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Led Project Group Discussions and Problem Solving</li> <li>• Teacher Led Group Discussions, Guidance and Feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards based quizzes</li> <li>• Journal Feedback</li> <li>• Group and Individual Student Interviews</li> <li>• Teacher</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct and Indirect Instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Research</li> <li>• Teaching and Learning Focus on Critical Thinking Across Content Areas,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Progress Rubrics</li> <li>• Student Project Progress Rubrics</li> </ul>
<b>The Product</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of all Project Components</li> <li>• Student Evaluation</li> <li>• Teacher Evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written Communication</li> <li>• Oral Communication</li> <li>• Use of Technology to Present Ideas</li> <li>• Use of Other Visuals to Present Ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards based test</li> <li>• Journal Feedback</li> <li>• Project Group and Individual Student Interviews</li> <li>• Teacher Project Progress Rubrics</li> <li>• Student Project Progress Rubrics</li> </ul>

**Curriculum and Resources for Project Based Learning**

In order to achieve the maximum learning potential using Project Based Learning, the students will need well structured projects, instructional/learning opportunities and ample material resources. Synergy’s students will have access to a range of print materials, computer based resources and materials supplies that will enable them to fully participate in all phases of each project whether it’s researching a topic, creating charts/graphs or building a model for presentation. As for coverage of the content standards, Synergy will use traditional textbooks and other technology based resources as the foundation for student learning with the exception of mathematics coursework. Standards based, well developed projects will take the place of a traditional text delivery making the text materials in our library reference resources rather than the primary force driving instruction. Curriculum will include but is not limited to:

- Each student will be issued technology based resources
- Search engines, data bases, online texts, amongst many other computer-driven research functions will be the primary tools used to gather the knowledge required for the completion of projects.
- A number of software tools and education applications software will be used for project based learning, presenting projects and for managing and organizing individual learning tasks. Students will use a variety of software and hardware resources that will teach confidence in using technology based academia.

- Education Application for building their web pages and communicating with other Synergy students and staff.
- A variety of online coursework suppliers will be used for supplementary instruction, skills practice and reinforcement. These may include but are not limited to Study Island, Alex, Revolution Prep and Rosetta Stone.
- A resource usery (library) will provide text based reference resources for research purposes.
- A variety of literature will provide the basis for Project Based Learning in all English courses. Required reading materials will consist of a number of fiction and non-fictional reading which will include but is not limited to full novels, biographies/autobiographies, editorials, plays/screen plays, poetry, short stories, etc.
- Community connection opportunities will be built into projects where appropriate. Synergy students will be required to seek people resources outside Synergy walls that will assist them in their learning. For example, students may be required to locate and make contact with a research scientist for information on a topic of study. Another example might be initiating and engaging in a group project with students from another school.

### **Project Based Learning Teacher Training**

How our teachers are trained and supported is critical in successfully implementing a PBL education program and a top priority of Synergy's administrative staff. In order for teachers to be successful in their classrooms they need to be part of a community of teachers and resources all aimed at supporting their work as facilitators of student learning. For Synergy teachers, this means initial and ongoing training and support that will teach them how to shift the focus of their work from a teaching model to a student learning model. Project Based Learning instructional delivery is not taught in depth in most teacher preparation programs so there must be ample opportunities for teachers to learn new techniques and to engage in collaborative efforts with their colleagues assessing the content, delivery and evaluation of the school's PBL program. Synergy's administrative staff plans to use a number of resources for PBL training including but not limited to consultants who specialize in PBL staff development and training, private companies like the Buck Institute who provide numerous resources, as well as administrators and lead teachers who have successfully implemented PBL in prior classrooms.

### **Standards Based Projects Development**

Teachers and instructors will work directly with the administration of Synergy to develop an appropriate professional development calendar including the development of standards based projects that will take place each quarter for each student.

Synergy teachers and administrators will participate in a highly organized projects preparation process. Teachers and administrators will work together for two weeks each August using a well defined process, project templates and state standards check lists to ensure that coverage of all state standards for each grade level or course are addressed each year. Appendix 2 contains a sample PBL development template, samples of actual projects and California state content standards checklists.

All projects will be required to demonstrate the following:

- Project assignment outline
- Goals and objectives
- Specific California State Content Standards addressed
- Use of Standards checklists that identify all Standards addressed
- Assessment rubrics to be used during the project process and at presentation of the project
- Student project development tools
- Student resources development
- Student presentation expectations and guidelines

Synergy School teachers will use a backward design model, using the CA state standards as the basis for determining the nature of the projects that will serve as the focus of inquiry. A clearly defined end product serves as the driving force behind lesson and project design. Teachers will work in their grade level curriculum development team each August to plan the year's projects. Teachers will also be given ample staff development time on a weekly and monthly basis as needed for continuous project refinement and development. All projects will be reviewed and approved by the Programs Director and/or designee before they are assigned to students. It will be the responsibility of the school's leadership to ensure the quality of all projects as well as full coverage of the state standards.

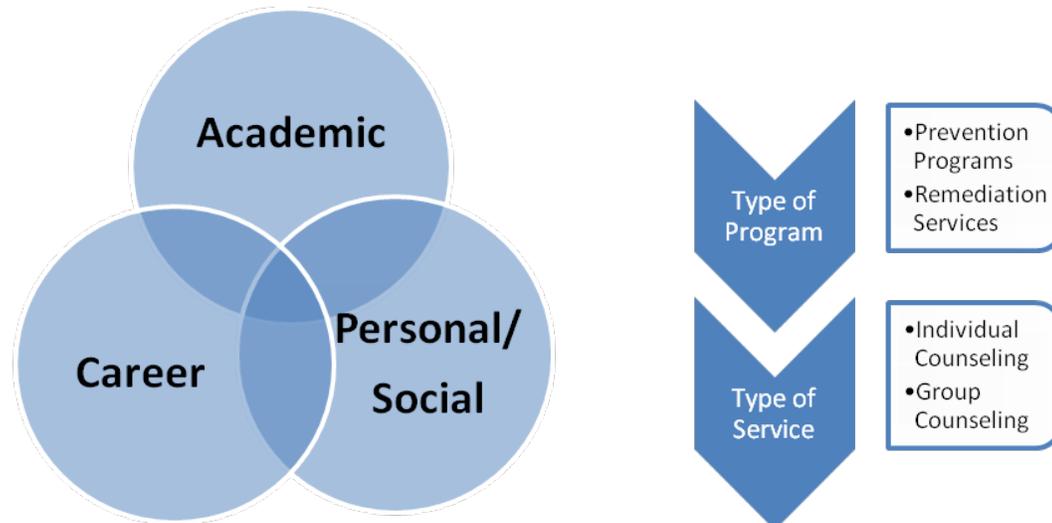
Through teacher developed project rubrics, each student will be evaluated as well as evaluate their learning process via self-review, peer-reviews and educator-reviews. It is critical that students develop strong metacognitive abilities to expand their ability to analyze and improve their own work. Self-analysis leads to a connection with the learning process.

In addition to PBL development in August, each month Synergy's teachers, counselors and administrators will come together for partial day or full day staff development opportunity focused on PBL. There will be opportunities for grade level teachers to work collaboratively on the continuous development, refinement and evaluation of upcoming and recently completed projects. These monthly opportunities will also offer trainings and workshops focused on teaching skills development.

### **Synergy's Counseling and Student Services Department**

Part of Synergy's mission is to facilitate each student's academic, career, and personal/social development through the counseling department's delivery of guidance and counseling activities as well as through a collaborative effort between Synergy staff, the home, and community. The ultimate objectives are to enhance academic productivity and results, assist students in identifying their interests and abilities, and facilitate development of personal/social skills that will remediate student deficits, capitalize on student strengths, cultivate their unique capabilities, and enable youth to become socially responsible individuals. Synergy's counseling programs are based on

the American School Counselors Association Framework for School Counseling Programs model.



Fundamental beliefs of the counseling program for Synergy School:

- All students can learn and should be given the opportunity to do so with academic support.
- All students have dignity and worth and have a right to a safe, mutually respectful, and healthy learning environment.
- Learning involves the education of the whole person and is a continuous lifelong process.
- Learning requires the active participation, mutual respect, and individual accountability of students, parents, teachers, and staff.
- Diversity is to be respected and appreciated.
- The school counseling program should be student centered. The program will be based on specific goals and developmental student competencies.
- We recognize the need for some students to have other growth opportunities. Some students may struggle with change, family issues, self-identity, social/emotional issues, or academic difficulties. The program provides support to students in need as well as in crisis, and offers small group counseling, individual counseling, or referral to outside agencies as appropriate.

#### Specific Programs

- Academic Counseling – one-on-one and group counseling opportunities for both students and parents on an as needed basis and as part of a group of planned events targeting 8<sup>th</sup> grade transition to high school and preparations for engaging in the college admissions process
- Crisis Management – one-on-one and group counseling led by the school's counselor to assist students in managing crisis on an as needed basis
- Safe Schools Program – periodic staff training and classroom based instruction and projects covering subjects like gang prevention and bullying as part of the Tuesday and Thursday afternoon program

- Health and Wellness – project based learning coursework focused developing and maintaining healthy minds and bodies grades 6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup>
- College, Career and Life Planning – individual and group, project based learning activities for high school students starting in grade 9
- Life Skills – One of the Majors Program offerings for students experiencing behavior issues with coursework and small group counseling focused on developing a variety essential skills in the areas of communication, social skills and decision making

### **Synergy's High School Program**

Synergy's curriculum and instruction delivery is consistent in its application at all grade levels. The intent is provide a fluid yet stable set of education experiences as students move through their growth and development at various stages in a tight knit community of learners. As students transition into high school, however, there is a need for additional school structures and support systems that must be in place in order to successfully prepare students for life in and beyond high school.

### **WASC Accreditation**

Synergy has been awarded WASC candidacy status. This is to ensure that all a-g courses can be submitted to UC for approval as soon as the process allows. Synergy's goal is to ensure that 100% of our graduating students will be able to submit applications to California's public university system having completed all of CSU/UC's requirements. This will enable Synergy staff to immediately submit our courses to the UC Regents for approval. Parents will be informed at all phases of the process regarding the transferability of student credits to California's public universities.

### **Academic Guidance Counseling – College and Career Planning**

Synergy's goal is to eliminate dropouts and ensure that large majority of our graduating seniors have been enrolled in and completed coursework necessary to be accepted into a college or trade school. A comprehensive guidance program and curricular component are key in achieving these goals. With emphasis on preparing students for post-secondary options and becoming contributing members of society, Synergy will also provide students and parents with other opportunities to explore and plan for their futures. The school will host a number of events each year that address planning for life after high school. These informational opportunities will cover topics such as college planning, college admissions and financial aid.

Components of the school's Academic Guidance Program are research-based, developmentally appropriate, and based on the American School Counselors Association standards. Key goals of the high school counseling program and college and career planning:

- Academics: Students will develop skills and attitudes necessary to achieve success in college and trade schools, learn study skills, and understand the relationship of learning to the world of work. They will explore both public and private university opportunities and prepare for the admissions process.

- Career: Students will be given opportunities to discover their own interests, talents and abilities, seek information relative to a career path, gain knowledge about employment opportunities, and plan for their future.
- Personal/Social: Students will develop respect for self and others. Students will develop effective interpersonal skills to become responsible, contributing members of society and be fully prepared to meet the demands of life after high school. Activities and learning opportunities in this area permeate all aspects of Synergy's education program and school culture.

### Synergy's Graduation Requirements

Synergy's graduation requirements cover all state and CSU/UC application requirements. Because Synergy is an extended day program our students that successfully complete all four years of high school at Synergy will by far exceed the credit accumulation and specific course requirements. The graduation requirements table demonstrates the minimum requirements needed for graduation. These requirements will also meet the minimum course requirements for acceptance into a UC or CSU school.

#### SEP HIGH SCHOOL COURSE COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS GRADE 6

<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>
<b>Social Science</b>
<b>Reading</b>
<b>Language Arts</b>
<b>Math</b>
<b>Science</b>
<b>Music &amp; Arts</b>
<b>Health</b>
<b>Physical Education</b>
<b>Library Science</b>

Courses will be graded as A, B, C, D, F.

#### SEP HIGH SCHOOL COURSE COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS GRADES 7 & 8

<b>Subject</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>
<b>Social Science</b>	<b>World History &amp; Geography: Medieval &amp; Early Modern Times</b>	<b>US History &amp; Geography: Growth &amp; Conflict</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>Reading Language Arts –</b>	<b>Reading Language Arts -</b>
<b>Math</b>	<b>Math 7</b>	<b>Math 8</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>Life Science 7</b>	<b>Physical Science 8</b>
<b>Fine Art</b>	<b>Full Year Required</b>	<b>Full Year Required</b>
<b>Phys. Ed.</b>	<b>Full Year Required</b>	<b>Full Year Required</b>
<b>Electives</b>	<b>2 Full Years Required (2 Electives per year)</b>	<b>2 Full Years Required (2 Electives per year)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>8 Full Year Courses Required</b>	<b>8 Full Year Courses Required</b>

**SEP HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>SEP Requires</b>	<b>UC &amp; CSU Requires</b>
<b>Social Science</b>	3 years – - World History - US History & Geography - American Government & Economics	2 years – - World History - US History Or - World History - US History & Government
<b>English</b>	4 years	4 years: Needs to be college prep with Composition & Literature
<b>Math</b>	3 years – - Integrated Math I - Integrated Math II - Integrated Math III	3 years – <i>4 years recommended</i>
<b>Science</b>	3 years – - Biology - Chemistry - Anatomy or Other	2 years – Lab Science in 2 of 3 areas: - Biology - Chemistry - Physics <i>3 years recommended</i>
<b>Foreign Language</b>	2 years – - Spanish I or Other - Spanish II or Other	2 years – - Needs to be the same foreign language <i>3 years recommended</i>
<b>Fine Art</b>	2 years - - One year must be A-G approved Fine Art	1 year
		None
<b>Electives</b>	8 year-long courses, 2 year-long courses must include physical fitness	
<b>TESTS</b>	PLAN recommended for 10th grade  PSAT recommended for 11th grade  SAT and ACT recommended for end of 11th grade and start of 12th grade.	CSU: SAT Reasoning or ACT (writing optional) UC: SAT Reasoning or ACT and two (2) SAT Subject tests in two (2) different subject areas: History/Soc. Studies, English Lit, math, Lab Science or Foreign Language
<b>Total</b>	25 year-long courses (Taken between 9 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> grade)	15 year-long courses meets minimum criteria, 18 year-long recommended

**Courses must be passed with a “C” or better to receive credit toward college acceptance.**

**ACADEMIC CURRICULUM**

Teachers create lesson plans that run in conjunction with pacing plans that align with State Standards. The resources that have been chosen for Synergy have continuous types of assessment and practice test questions for standardized testing. They also correlate the use of new technology. As implementation of Common Core continues, Synergy will continue to align with the requirements set forth within the state of California

for standardization of academics. Teachers will use a variety of teaching methods including lectures, in class and out of class assignments, special projects, classroom discussions, tests and quizzes, targeted arts correlations, and benchmark testing. Teachers are required to use a variety of teaching styles including but not limited to project based learning, cooperative learning, inquiry-based learning, technology based lessons, and direct instruction. Course catalogs, curriculum, and syllabi are reviewed and revised annually by the executive team and teaching staff at Synergy. The Executive team makes sure that pacing plans are followed and that benchmarks are given regularly.

## Synergy student annual education plan

**8 classes and a study hall in the block includes:**

- English**
- Science**
- Math**
- Social Science**
- Project Based Learning**
- Study Skills**
- 2 non core enrichment classes**
- Study Hall**

### GOALS AND ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE STATE PRIORITIES

SYNERGY EDUCATION PROJECT GOALS AND ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE STATE PRIORITIES
<p>Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), following is a table describing Synergy’s annual goals to be achieved in the state priorities schoolwide and for all pupil subgroups, as described in Education Code Section 52060(d), and specific annual actions to achieve those goals.</p> <p><b><u>Local Control Accountability Plan (“LCAP”)</u></b></p> <p>Pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5, Synergy will produce a Local Control Accountability Plan (“LCAP”), which shall update the goals and annual actions identified below, using the LCAP template adopted by the State Board of Education. Synergy shall submit the LCAP to the District and the County Superintendent of Schools annually on or before July 1, as required by Education Code Section 47604.33.</p> <p>The LCAP and any revisions necessary to implement the LCAP shall not be considered a material revision to the charter, and shall be maintained by Synergy at the school site.</p> <p>Because each state priority has multiple parts, in order to align with the goals and annual actions to these multiple parts of each state priority, Synergy has separated out the state priorities into “subpriorities.”</p>
<p><b><u>STATE PRIORITY #1— BASIC SERVICES</u></b></p> <p><i>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 (E.C. §17002(d))</i></p>
<p><b>SUBPRIORITY A – TEACHERS</b></p>

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<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Encore Education Corporation will hire and retain highly qualified, credentialed teachers within the subject area of instruction for all core instruction.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Encore Education Corporation will utilize edjoin.org and job fairs to recruit appropriate candidates. Teachers hired for core curriculum must possess a minimum of an intern eligible credential in the appropriate course of study. Teachers will have to follow state guidelines to clear credential. 100% of core teachers will possess the appropriate credential.
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy will engage a variety of methods to deliver adopted academic content and performance standards as adopted by the state board for all pupils including English Learners. Instructional materials will include CCSS adopted textbooks and other resources including but not limited to technology resources, ancillary reading materials, and resources available on the internet.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Teacher lesson/pacing plans will reflect CCSS. Encore's executive team will work with Synergy staff and faculty to customize lesson plans and materials to be purchased with designated funding to align with CCSS.
<b>SUBPRIORITY C – FACILITIES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Encore Education Corporation will lease appropriate facilities to house the entire operation of Synergy Education Project within the jurisdiction of PUSD.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Encore Education Corporation will work with the city of Pittsburg to find appropriate location(s) that can house a minimum of 10 classrooms that are approved by the city planning department for a long term campus location. Synergy will work to secure certificate of occupancy for building(s) for classes to commence on scheduled start date.
<b>STATE PRIORITY #2— IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS</b>	
<i>Implementation of Common Core State Standards, including how EL students will be enabled to gain academic content knowledge and English language proficiency</i>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – CCSS IMPLEMENTATION</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy will successfully implement CCSS throughout all course studies.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Encore Education Corporation has an Executive Director that works directly with a CCSS implementation team that continues professional development and meets with Synergy teachers regularly to train, direct, and share expectations with fellow faculty.
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – EL STUDENTS &amp; ACADEMIC CONTENT KNOWLEDGE</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy will engage a variety of methods to deliver adopted academic content and performance standards as adopted by the state board for all pupils, including English Learners.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Teachers lesson/pacing plans will reflect CCSS. Any modifications made for special populations within a class are noted on the electronic gradebook, including English Learners. Special populations will be offered different services including after school tutoring, EL Coordinator, in school tutoring, study skills coaching, and response to intervention coaching.
<b>SUBPRIORITY C – EL STUDENTS &amp; ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy will work to help EL Students move through the reclassification process toward English proficient.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE</b>	Synergy's faculty will document the implementation of CCSS for all students, including EL. Progress will be measured by the percentage rate of EL's that

<b>GOAL</b>	become English Proficient and how many are reclassified. Also used as a method of measure are CST data (or equivalent), Benchmarks, and using other indicators of student and state performance measures when available.
<b>STATE PRIORITY #3— PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT</b>	
<i>Parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for schools, and how the school will promote parent participation</i>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – ACHIEVING/MAINTAINING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Parents will actively engage in input in decision making and participate in programs.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will use a variety of resources to acquire the help from parents on campus. At home surveys, a staff member designated for parent coordination, a parent liaison placed on the oversight school boards, and a parent involvement request each year will help keep parents engaged.
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – PROMOTING PARENT PARTICIPATION</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy will use a variety of methods to communicate with parents to promote and ask for parent participation.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will use a variety of methods to communicate with parents regularly including but not limited to email blasts, all call systems, direct contact, request for input, call surveys, letters mailed home, surveys sent home, and requests to participate in parent meetings. Parents undergo an orientation session prior to enrollment.
<b>STATE PRIORITY #4— STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT</b>	
<i>Pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) statewide assessment</li> <li>B. The Academic Performance Index (API)</li> <li>C. Percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy UC/CSU entrance requirements, or career technical education</li> <li>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)</li> <li>E. EL reclassification rate</li> <li>F. Percentage of pupils who have passed an AP exam with a score of 3 or higher</li> <li>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</li> </ul>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – CAASPP: ELA/LITERACY AND MATHEMATICS</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Students will perform at or above grade level in the areas of ELA and Mathematics
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will implement uniform benchmark tests created through TestWiz (NWEA) or similar program to be able to gauge progress as a result of the classroom seat time.
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – API</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy will surpass the state average for high school API (or equivalent) within five years of change of management.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will use a variety of methods to teach CCSS and to check progress through the use of uniform benchmark tests.

<b>SUBPRIORITY C – UC/CSU COURSE REQUIREMENTS (OR CTE)</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	The majority of graduating seniors of Synergy will complete coursework that is equivalent to at least the admissions standards for UC and CSU consideration
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will adopt UC and CSU admissions requirements as the graduation requirements for Synergy seniors.
<b>SUBPRIORITY D – EL PROFICIENCY RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	English Learners will advance one level each year toward English proficiency as measured annually by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) or a sanctioned replacement assessment.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Upon enrollment, the original Home Language Survey in the students' cumulative folder from previous enrollment in a California school will be reviewed, as well as any prior CELDT scores, in order to best determine the current level of the student. If no prior Home Language Survey exists, one will be completed upon enrollment at Encore.
<b>SUBPRIORITY E – EL RECLASSIFICATION RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	English Learners will be reclassified within three years.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Upon enrollment, the original Home Language Survey in the students' cumulative folder from previous enrollment in a California school will be reviewed, as well as any prior CELDT scores, in order to best determine the current level of the student. If no prior Home Language Survey exists, one will be completed upon enrollment at Encore.
<b>SUBPRIORITY F – AP EXAM PASSAGE RATE: ENCORE WILL NOT OFFER AP COURSES</b>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY G – COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS/EAP</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	For each year of the charter, students will demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the EAP.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Students will be exposed to rigorous college – ready curriculum while attending Synergy.
<b><u>STATE PRIORITY #5— STUDENT ENGAGEMENT</u></b>	
<i>Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. School attendance rates</li> <li>B. Chronic absenteeism rates</li> <li>C. Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3))</li> <li>D. High school dropout rates</li> <li>E. High school graduation rates</li> </ul>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	An average of 94% of enrolled students will attend Synergy daily.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	The following actions will be put into place to help Synergy achieve the student attendance rate goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Perfect attendance incentives</li> <li>2. Parent education in handbooks and letters home describing the importance of daily attendance</li> </ul>

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Full Time attendance clerk dedicating to clearing and recording absences</li> <li>4. Implementing SARB policies and processes</li> <li>5. Requiring attendance to class as part of the overall grade within a course</li> </ol>
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – STUDENT ABSENTEEISM RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	A maximum of 6% of enrolled students will be absent from school in regards to average daily attendance.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Health and Wellness policies will promote helping to keep students from getting sick.</li> <li>2. Perfect attendance incentives</li> <li>3. Parent education in handbooks and letters home describing the importance of daily attendance</li> <li>4. Full Time attendance clerk dedicating to clearing and recording absences</li> <li>5. Implementing SARB policies and processes</li> <li>6. Requiring attendance to class as part of the overall grade within a course</li> </ol>
<b>SUBPRIORITY C – MIDDLE SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Middle School student dropout rates will not exceed 2% average dropout rate.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Synergy will refer all middle school students exiting Synergy to their home district.</li> <li>2. Attendance clerk will keep CALPADS up to date to be able to document student enrollment and exits</li> <li>3. Parent communication about the importance of following Synergy's six year graduation plan will take place annually within the parent handbook.</li> <li>4. Exit surveys administered to all students that decide to leave Synergy will help administration and staff improve programs.</li> <li>5. Synergy will offer a variety of programs that will keep students involved in school.</li> </ol>
<b>SUBPRIORITY D – HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	High School student dropout rates will not exceed 20% average dropout rate.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Synergy will refer all high school students exiting Synergy to their home district.</li> <li>2. Attendance clerk will keep CALPADS up to date to be able to document student enrollment and exits</li> <li>3. Parent communication about the importance of following Synergy's six year graduation plan will take place annually within the parent handbook.</li> <li>4. Exit surveys administered to all students that decide to leave Synergy will help administration and staff improve programs.</li> <li>5. Encore will offer a variety of programs that will keep students involved in school.</li> </ol>

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<b>SUBPRIORITY E – HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	At least 90% of all Synergy high school students will graduate.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<p>Synergy will employ a variety of methods to help high school students understand the importance of graduating from high school.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Full time counselors will help guide students through the six year plan.</li> <li>2. Synergy will publish the six year plan in the annual parent/student handbook.</li> <li>3. Synergy will use a variety of intervention programs to guide struggling students including SSTs and Rtl coaches.</li> </ol>
<p><b>STATE PRIORITY #6— SCHOOL CLIMATE</b>  <i>School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Pupil suspension rates</li> <li>B. Pupil expulsion rates</li> <li>C. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness</li> </ol>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – PUPIL SUSPENSION RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy's goal is to be at less than a 5% average annual suspension rate of students enrolled at Synergy Education Project.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will publish and send home with all students and interested students copies of the latest parent/student handbook.
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – PUPIL EXPULSION RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy's goal is be at less than a 5% average annual expulsion rate of students enrolled at Synergy Education Project.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will publish and send home with all students and interested students copies of the latest parent / student handbook.
<b>SUBPRIORITY C – OTHER SCHOOL SAFETY AND SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS MEASURES (SURVEYS)</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	The majority of students and staff at Synergy feel that they are in a supportive environment.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will employ the use of an annual survey (NSLP model or equivalent) that asks questions regarding the health, safety, and well being of the school climate.
<p><b>STATE PRIORITY #7— COURSE ACCESS</b>  <i>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.</i>  <i>“Broad course of study” includes the following, as applicable:</i>  <i>Grades 1-6: English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and other as prescribed by the governing board. (E.C. §51210)</i>  <i>Grades 7-12: English, social sciences, foreign language(s), physical education, science, mathematics, visual and performing arts, applied arts, and career technical education. (E.C. §51220(a)-(i))</i></p>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	All students have the opportunity to participate in the full scope of programs offered at SYnergy
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will use the full inclusion method for all students including, but not limited to, EL, 504, and SPED.

<b>STATE PRIORITY #8—OTHER STUDENT OUTCOMES</b>	
<i>Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.</i>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – ENGLISH</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Majority of students will be at or above grade level within the area of English.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Synergy will hire and retain highly qualified, credentialed teachers within the subject area of English.</li> <li>2. Synergy will engage a variety of methods to deliver adopted academic content and performance standards as adopted by the state board for all pupils, including English learners.</li> <li>3. Synergy will work to increase student achievement by filling in gaps in fundamental knowledge.</li> </ol>
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – MATHEMATICS</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Majority of students will be at or above grade level within the area of Mathematics.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Synergy will hire and retain highly qualified, credentialed teachers within the subject area of Mathematics.</li> <li>2. Synergy will engage a variety of methods to deliver adopted academic content and performance standards as adopted by the state board for all pupils, including English learners.</li> <li>3. Synergy will work to increase student achievement by filling in gaps in fundamental knowledge.</li> </ol>
<b>SUBPRIORITY C – SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Majority of students will be at or above grade level within the area of Social Sciences (Humanities).
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Synergy will hire and retain highly qualified, credentialed teachers within the subject area of Social Sciences (Humanities).</li> <li>2. Synergy will engage a variety of methods to deliver adopted academic content and performance standards as adopted by the state board for all pupils, including English learners.</li> <li>3. Synergy will work to increase student achievement by filling in gaps in fundamental knowledge.</li> </ol>
<b>SUBPRIORITY D – SCIENCE</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Majority of students will be at or above grade level within the area of Science.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Synergy will hire and retain highly qualified, credentialed teachers within the subject area of Science.</li> <li>2. Synergy will engage a variety of methods to deliver adopted academic content and performance standards as adopted by the state board for all pupils, including English learners.</li> <li>3. Synergy will work to increase student achievement by filling in gaps in fundamental knowledge.</li> </ol>
<b>SUBPRIORITY E – VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Students of Synergy will complete a minimum of one year (10 credits) of fine arts core courses as part of the six year graduation plan.

<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will invoke the one year of a completed course in a fine arts class (defined as music, drama, or dance) by enrolling all students in at least one course prior to graduation.
<b>SUBPRIORITY F – PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Students of Synergy will complete a minimum of two years (20 credits) designated within a non-core physical education course to complete the Synergy six year plan.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Counselors of Synergy will enroll students within a physical education class for a total of four semesters within the six year plan.
<b>SUBPRIORITY H – FOREIGN LANGUAGES (GRADES 7-12 ONLY)</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Students of Synergy will complete a minimum of one year (20 credits) designated within a foreign language course in order to complete the Synergy six year plan.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Counselors of Synergy will enroll students within a foreign language class for total of two semesters within the six year plan.

## Synergy’s Plan for English Learners

Synergy School will comply with all federal, state and judicial mandates for English Learners. All teachers employed by Synergy School will be CLAD certified and demonstrate competency in creating Project Based Learning opportunities and SDAIE lesson plans that include learning strategies for EL students. Synergy administrators will make every effort to employ a number of bilingual staff so that we may better serve EL students and their families.

Students enrolling in Synergy designated as English Learners will have a qualified staff member administer the CELDT. They will also participate in the schools initial assessment program for additional information on the EL students’ academic performance level.

Given the demographics of Pittsburg Unified School District, Synergy expects that approximately 30% of its students will be designated English Learners. The school is dedicated to providing EL students with an exceptional education while transitioning them to English Language Proficiency as soon as possible. In addition to a rigorous English language development program, Synergy acknowledges the importance of valuing students’ native languages and reinforces an appreciation for the cultures, customs and traditions of all its students through the school’s commitment to integrating multicultural studies and sensitivity throughout all learning programs.

Synergy students identified with limited English proficiency will achieve proficiency in English as quickly as possible through the school’s instructional program and support services. EL students will not be excluded from education program or any extracurricular activities bases on an inability to speak or understand the English language. Parents of Synergy students with limited English proficiency will be provided with notices and information from the school in their native language to encourage their participation in the school.

### **Identifying Synergy's English Learners**

The Home Language Survey, CELDT testing and Synergy's Baseline Assessment Program will help identify the EL student as well as provide critical information regarding their skill levels in the areas of reading comprehension, writing and mathematics.

- The Home Language Survey - will be completed for every Synergy student. A Beginning EL classification determination will be made upon enrollment for students who speak little to no English who are unable to take the CELDT assessment.
- CELDT – Within 30 days of enrollment or at the beginning of each school year, EL students will be administered the California English Language Development Test. The test will be done by a trained evaluator in the determination of where the student fits on the English acquisition scale. EL students who score above the established cut-off will be reclassified from EL status and be considered English proficient. Re-designated students will be monitored regularly through Synergy's extensive assessment program to ensure they are continuing develop their skills and are successful in their learning.
- Baseline Assessment Program – All students will be required to complete baseline assessments. For EL students, teachers will be using these assessments as indicators of the level of English language acquisition and using that information to help target instructional support. Portions of the baseline assessment program may be given in the student's first language.

### **Participation in the Core Learning Program**

All Synergy students will participate in The Core Learning Program. PBL projects development will include instructional strategies for English Learners that support their needs in the regular classroom setting. A natural consequence of PBL is the contextual learning opportunities for EL students. The PBL learning environment gives concrete meaning because of constant exposure to real time concepts in English and in their native language. The use of the computer as opposed to text based learning gives the student more control over how to access the standards based information they must learn. For example, Odyssey Ware, an online coursework program, provides content support in Spanish and other languages making the content information highly accessible to the EL student. Teaching and learning strategies will also include:

- Skills level grouping for participation for some projects for students with CELDT designations of beginning language learners through early intermediate language learners. This allows for teachers to make accommodations in project assignments and materials resources to ensure access to the content.
- The use of realia in demonstrations and activities.
- Peer teaching and buddy learning strategies will be used for continuous practice in hearing and speaking English.

Curriculum accessible for EL students will include the following:

- Computer based technology that allows for EL students to research content information in their native language as well as English.
- Online supplemental materials that have an audio component that allows for information to be delivered in Spanish and English like Odyssey Ware, Study Island and Revolution Prep (CAHSEE).
- Text and ancillary materials offered in home languages as necessary

### **The Majors Program for English Learners – PBLEL**

Students will be recommended for this program by their teachers based on a number of factors including CELDT designations of beginning and intermediate level learners. PBLEL will provide focused instruction and project based learning specifically geared towards English language acquisition. It will be specifically designed and mandatory for beginning and early intermediate level EL students. The class sizes will be small and provide for intensive instruction and learning. The PBLEL Teacher will design PBLEL's projects and will be responsible for choosing text and audio based curriculum materials specifically geared towards instructing the EL student in the acquisition of skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing in English at grade level. Synergy's Programs Director or designee will receive information on the curriculum, a detailed plan for projects implementation and the proposed plan for student assessments and evaluation methods. The Programs Director will approve such plans prior to the adoption of any EL curricular program.

The requirement that EL students be placed in the PBLEL class may be waived by parental consent. At the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians are informed of the placement of their child into PBLEL class and are notified of an opportunity to apply for a parental exception waiver. Parents will be directed to meet with the school director or designee to complete the waiver process.

### **Re-Designation of Synergy's EL Students**

Proficiency in the English language of EL students is monitored by teachers and qualified evaluators annually using the CELDT and other assessment measures. The EL Teacher will be responsible for tracking these assessments and the student's progress towards proficiency. The EL Teacher in collaboration determines whether continued participation in PBLEL and other special support services is needed. Once the student has reached the appropriate proficiency it is the EL Teacher who makes the recommendation for re-designation as language proficient.

Once a student has reached English language proficiency specialized English –learning classes and services are no longer needed. An EL student may be considered as having acquired a "reasonable level of English proficiency" and may be reclassified as fluent English proficient using the following four criteria:

- An assessment of English Language Proficient on CELDT test
- Reasonable performance on base-line and quarterly benchmark assessments
- Mentor Teacher evaluation and recommendation
- Parent opinion and consultation

Prior to re-designation, the EL Teacher will coordinate a meeting with parents, teachers and a school counselor to discuss the student's English language proficiency, academic achievement and possible re-designation to Fluent English Proficient. This EL "team" will work together in deciding the designation or re-designation and with a special focus on any areas of academic weakness as they relate to the student's English skills along with plans to provide extra support should the student fall below satisfactory levels of performance. Re-designated students may also be recommended for level 1 of the school's Response to Intervention Program (Rtl) for special monitoring and more frequent skills assessments. Rtl is explained in detail in the Plan for Struggling Students section.

## **Synergy's Plan for High Achieving Students**

Students enrolling in Synergy may be identified as academically gifted by a number of channels. Synergy will have a referral mechanism in place whereby a student may be designated as academically gifted. Referrals can come from a number of sources including parents, teachers or others directly involved with the education. An Intervention Support Program meeting will be held. The student's core subject area teachers and the principal will conduct a full review of the student's academic history and current levels of performance. This team will make a recommendation on how to proceed depending on the particulars of individual cases.

Gifted students will work within Synergy's regular education program at their intellectual and academic level as a result of the school's Project Based Learning curricular and instructional delivery. Project Based Learning supports gifted and talented students because it challenges high achieving students to work towards their potential at their intellectual ability which is a natural consequence of its design. Mentor Teachers with gifted students will act as the advocate for students identified as gifted in collaboration with other teachers to ensure that all staff working with gifted students is supporting those students in providing any additional or supplemental opportunities to go above and beyond what is expected for the general population of students. They will be recommended for the Rtl process whereby a meeting will be held for the purpose of evaluating the student's progress and making a determination as to what accommodations might be best to further extend learning opportunities. It will be the responsibility of the student's teachers to document such accommodations and follow-up with students and parents. Class teachers and the student, where appropriate, will work together to create extended learning opportunities within projects. Other examples of accommodations for gifted students might be enrollment in online university courses, AP courses or local community college courses. Whatever extended learning opportunities are chosen, they will be the result of a collaborative effort between the parent, student and teacher. If Synergy experiences a significant population of gifted and talented students relative to its small school size, there may be a Professional Learning Community task force established to address the special needs of these students.

**PLAN FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ACADEMICALLY LOW ACHIEVING –**

Low achieving students may be identified by their CAASP assessment scores, their course performance (D or F), performance on basic skills tests, and teacher observation.

Synergy follows a progressive multi-tier Response to Intervention (Rtl) model in meeting the needs of low achieving students. Students that are identified as struggling by teachers and instructors will be given a variety of methods to help them progress dependent on how much help is designated as a need for each student. Supports may include:

- 1) Small class sizes
- 2) Innovative scheduling to allow for additional individualized tutoring and mentoring;
- 3) Individual and small group attention that focuses on mastering the current learning;
- 4) Mastery learning process that builds in review and reassessment;
- 5) Extended day to provide extra learning time;
- 6) Optional extended courses; or after school tutoring
- 7) Technology assisted learning through web-based programs
- 8) Focus on key students during staff meetings
- 9) Additional focused in class interventions, modifications and accommodations
- 11) Mentoring by an Rtl coach
- 12) Student Success Team (SST) meetings

**STUDY SKILLS, GRADE 7** – Synergy has a mandatory class that all seventh grade students can enroll in that focuses on learning how to study and succeed in school. This class targets all students along with low achieving students to help them learn how to learn.

**HEALTH & STUDY SKILLS, GRADE 8** – Synergy has a mandatory class that all eighth grade students can enroll in that focuses on basic math skills during the first quarter, typing for one quarter, test taking for one quarter, then health for the rest of the year with a focus in helping low achieving math students fill in math gaps during the first quarter.

**STUDY SKILLS, HIGH SCHOOL** – This is a mandatory class that is open to all students and may be required for students that struggle. This course provides block tutoring, access to additional resources such as the Khan Academy, and scheduled study skills curriculum to reinforce study habits with low performing students. This course also provides extra study hall time to help students complete tasks.

**RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION** – Synergy will have an Rtl coach that specifically targets students that are failing their academic courses. This coach meets with

students regularly to reinforce study habits, check in on student progress, and provide motivation and support to the struggling student. The Rtl coach also coordinates in class interventions, modifications, accommodations, SST meetings, and if required referrals to Special Education.

### **PLAN FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ACADEMICALLY HIGH ACHIEVING –**

High achieving students are identified by their CAASPP assessment scores, their course performance (A), and teacher observation.

Students will be placed in honors classes with other students that are at the same academic level based on placement exams during the beginning of each school year and by ongoing review of the teachers. Students that display accelerated standards will have the opportunity to work in honors classes that teach the same general curriculum, but with more critical and creative thinking involved. “Academically high” should not translate into more work, but more thinking. Students may be encouraged to consider concurrent enrollment in college classes. Completed college classes may be awarded credit towards high school graduation requirements.

Response to the needs of high achieving students may include:

- Advanced Projects
- Innovative scheduling to allow for mentoring that leads to learning extensions;
- Individual and small group attention that focuses on extending the current learning;
- Provide extensive college counseling to ensure that all students are fully informed of costs, aid, and support services provided by the college;
- Provide study skills and learning strategies for college courses;
- Provide personal coaching in choosing a major;
- Encourage career internships.

### **Tier I - Intervention Support Program (ISP)**

Students functioning below grade level as determined by baseline and/or other assessments will be recommended for the Intervention Support Program. Anytime a student falls below the targeted score goal on regular school wide assessments like CST or quarterly benchmark assessments, the student may become a participant in the ISP program. Students may also be recommended by any of their teachers, administrators, counselors, parents/guardians at anytime during the school year.

Parents will be notified by mail once their student has been recommended for the ISP program. ISP program teams consisting of the teachers and counselors that work directly with the student will have a regular meeting schedule whereby they meet to, formally and informally, discuss and create an intervention program suited for the individual needs of each student. Each individual program will be documented by the student’s Mentor Teacher and implemented by all teaching staff working directly with the student. Interventions will typically take place in the general classroom setting. In some situations where student behavior is determined to be hindering progress, the

school counselors may also be responsible for implementation of the ISP student's individual intervention program. ISP students will be closely monitored and assessed every 6-9 weeks in accordance with RtI model. If the student makes the desired improvement, the student may remain in the ISP program with continued interventions and periodic assessments or the student may be exited from the program based on the ISP team's decision. The exited student may reenter the ISP program at any time should the need arise.

### **Tier II - The Student Success Team Program (SST)**

If a student in the ISP program fails to make the desired progress, the team may decide to recommend the student for the SST program. New students demonstrating behavioral challenges and/or academic abilities far below grade level may also be waived from the ISP level and recommended directly for the SST level of the program. Similar to the ISP program, a team of teachers, students, administrators and counselors is established. Also added to the Student Success Team is the student's parent/guardian as well as the Special Education Coordinator. Regular meetings are held whereby a more intensive intervention program is created dependent upon the specific areas of need. The Special Education Coordinator will be responsible for documenting the individual student's intervention program as well as provide regular follow-up to ensure implementation is taking place. This program will typically be built upon the ISP program should one be in place. The student teachers, parents, counselor and special education staff are responsible for the daily implementation of the intervention program and regular assessments as called for in the SST and follow up reports. Most interventions will take place in the general education classroom. Monitoring and assessments will take place every 4-6 weeks for all SST students. If the student makes the desired progress, they may be exited from the SST program or recommended for the ISP program for continued interventions, monitoring and assessments.

### **Tier III - The Recommendation for Evaluations and Special Education**

If a student fails to make the desired progress through the ISP and/or SST programs they may be recommended for evaluations through our special education program to rule out the possibility of learning or other types of disabilities restricting them from accessing the general education program. Once the SST Team recommends further evaluations, the Special Education Coordinator will be responsible for initiating the assessment referral and ensuring that an assessment plan is provided the parent within 15 days of the referral. The appropriate formal evaluations will be conducted and an IEP meeting will be held in accordance with all laws governing special education. The student's SST program will remain in place with the suggested interventions and regular assessments throughout the duration of the initial evaluations and IEP meeting. If the IEP team decides that special education services are necessary to support the student, an IEP will be established whereby the student's SST interventions may be considered as part of their IEP accommodations. If the student does not qualify for an IEP, they may be recommended for a 504 Plan or the SST will remain in place until the student reaches satisfactory levels of performance and the team agrees to exit or move the student to the ISP program.

## **Synergy's Programs for Serving Students with Special Needs**

In its effort to ensure that all of its students have access to a free and appropriate public education, Synergy School shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title II of the American with Disabilities Act related to civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Civil Rights (OCR) and Education Code Part 30. The school will also adhere to the policies, procedures and requirements of its SELPA's plan for Special Education.

All students will be enrolled regardless of a disability or special education need. Synergy School intends to provide special education instruction and related services in accordance with the IDEA, Education Code requirements, and applicable policies and practice of a Special Education Local Plan Area ("SELPA"). Synergy will apply to become an independent LEA and join a SELPA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(c) either on its own or with a grouping of charter school LEAs as a consortium. Synergy School shall comply with all state and federal laws related to the provision of special education instruction and related services and all SELPA policies and procedures. The school shall utilize appropriate SELPA forms and commit to all reporting required by the SELPA.

The school shall be categorized as an LEA within the SELPA in conformity with Education Code Section 47641(c). Synergy School shall comply with a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") between SELPA and the school related to the delineation of duties between SELPA and the school. An annual meeting between Synergy School and their adopted SELPA shall take place to review special education policies, procedures, protocols, and forms in order to ensure that the school and their SELPA have an ongoing mutual understanding of protocol that will facilitate ongoing compliance.

All students will be given equal access to the school regardless of disabilities. Synergy School will not discriminate against any student based on his/her disabilities. All students with disabilities will be accorded a Free, Appropriate Public Education. The school will provide appropriate services for exceptional needs students according to their IEPs developed pursuant to Education Code Section 56710 and in compliance with the California Master plan for Special Education (Education Code Section 56000 et.seq.).

Synergy School will contract with Special Education service provider/s and will monitor said providers to ensure the quality of the services provided as well as compliance with all applicable federal and state laws. In addition to providing direct services to students, Special Education providers and other experts will provide regular staff development and training during each school year to ensure that all Synergy staff, school administrators, and other mandated IEP team members are providing a high quality education program in accordance with all local, state and federal laws.

### **Special Education and Services**

Synergy will not discriminate when it comes to the enrollment of special education students and will ensure that all students with IEPs receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in compliance with all regulatory special education requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and any other civil rights enforced by the US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights. Synergy School will also comply with any guidelines required by our adopted SELPA as well as any California laws pertaining to special education students.

Synergy offers a full inclusion program for all its students. Special education students may be served outside the general education classroom for periodic services as called for in their IEP but shall otherwise be fully included in the general education classroom.

Where appropriate, special education services may be offered in the general education setting as to avoid interruption to and in order to maximize full inclusion and access to the core education program.

Along with strict adherence to all federal, state and local special education laws and guidelines, Synergy will have in place a number of support systems and staffing structures to ensure strong support for special education students.

- Special Education Coordinator - The Special Education Coordinator will be qualified in the minimum as a Special Education Resource Specialist. This person will be responsible for coordinating all aspects of a student's IEP including participation on the Student Success Team if applicable; coordination of initial, annual and triennial IEP evaluations; coordinating services in accordance with the student's IEP; follow-ups communications with the student's Mentor Teacher and various other IEP team members; acting as the IEP liaison in referrals to other school support systems as needed.
- Project Based, Differentiated Learning - Synergy's Project Based Learning (PBL) model naturally and organically supports many students with learning disabilities as it offers differentiated instruction and learning as well as the delivery of a variety of simultaneous learning modalities. Many of the interventions, accommodations and modifications called for in Rtl and special education IEPs come as a natural consequence of the implementation of a PBL model.
- Counseling Support - Students with learning and other disabilities often struggle with a layer of social, emotional and motivation issues that prevents them from fully accessing the general education curriculum. Counseling staff will be regular participants in the Rtl and Special Education Programs to ensure these issues are addressed as they relate to student learning. Students may receive periodic counseling services as called for as part of their ISP, SST or IEP program.

### **Special Education Students**

Students enrolling at Synergy with an active IEP will receive placement and services as called for in their IEP. A 30 day placement IEP meeting will be held for a full review of

the student's placement to determine the need for evaluations, appropriate placement and/or changes to the student's IEP relative to Synergy's alternative education delivery.

### **Referral for Evaluations**

Synergy's referral for evaluation process is a formal, ongoing review of information related to students who are suspected of having disabilities and show potential signs of needing special education and related services. Synergy's Rtl program will be the primary channel by which students are referred for evaluations. This typically happens through the SST process as described in the Response to Intervention section of this petition. Synergy's staff will make every effort to ensure that continuously struggling students are identified, assessed regularly and referred to special education evaluation should they continue to struggle despite intervention efforts. Students may also be referred by a parent or any other person with an investment in the student's education. If it is determined there is a need for evaluations the Special Education Coordinator will send an Assessment Plan to the parent or guardian and informed that special education evaluation and related services are at no cost to the student's family. All referrals and requests for evaluations will be responded to in writing by the Special Education Coordinator within 15 days. The evaluation process will begin once parent consent has been established by the return of the Assessment Plan. No student will be assessed without the proper parental or guardian consent.

### **Evaluations**

The Special Education Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating all aspects of the student's evaluation process. Once the request for evaluations has been returned by the parents, an IEP meeting will be held within 60 days. The Coordinator will be responsible for gathering information to help the student's IEP team determine the presence of a disability, eligibility for services, and determining the nature and extent of required services. Evaluation procedures will be conducted in the student's primary language. An interpreter will be provided if needed. The types of evaluations and assessments that may be used for determining eligibility for specialized instruction and services will include:

- Individual evaluations administered by trained professionals
- ISP, SST and other Rtl reports
- Intervention or benchmark assessments if available
- Other school records and samples of student work
- Student, parent and teacher observations

Evaluation guidelines:

- They must occur within 60 days once the Referral for Evaluations is returned by the parent
- Can only be administered with parent or guardian consent
- Student will be evaluated in all areas related to the suspected disability
- Will be administered by qualified professionals
- Will be administered without cultural, racial or gender bias

- Will be administered in the student's primary language
- Will be specially adapted for students with special impairments
- Students must be re-evaluated every three years, in accordance with the guidelines listed above and the results of those re-evaluations presented at the student's triennial IEP meeting.

### **The IEP Development and Implementation**

Every child who is assessed by the school will have an IEP that documents the results of the evaluation and determines eligibility for special education services. If it is determined that a student does not qualify for an IEP, the student will be referred to Synergy's Rtl program or referred for a Section 504 Plan if they qualify so that the student's needs can be addressed and regularly monitored. If the student is eligible for an IEP and subsequent services, Synergy School will ensure that services are coordinated and allow for any accommodations or modifications determined necessary by the IEP. An IEP meeting must be held each year prior to the date of the initial or last IEP meeting. Parents or Synergy staff may call for an IEP meeting at any time. Students with IEPs shall be served in the Least Restrictive Environment.

Each student with an IEP will have an IEP Team that oversees the implementation and progress of the IEP. Synergy's IEP teams will consist of the following individuals:

- The student's parent or guardian
- The Special Education Coordinator
- The Principal or other administrator designee
- The Mentor Teacher
- Professionals qualified to interpret the results of the evaluations
- Qualified service providers
- The student when appropriate

Others familiar with the student may be invited as needed. Synergy School understands the parent as a key stakeholder in the IEP meetings and will make every effort to accommodate parents' schedules and needs so that they will be able to participate effectively on the IEP team. The school will provide an interpreter if necessary to ensure that all parents or guardians understand and can participate in the IEP process. If a parent can't attend the IEP meeting, the school will ensure their participation using other methods, such as conferencing by the web or telephone. The parent shall receive a copy of the IEP.

Once written consent is established by the parent, Synergy will implement the IEP inclusive of all services, assistive technology, accommodations and modifications as they are written in the IEP. An individual student's IEP will vary from student to student but Synergy IEPs will contain a minimum of the following:

- Evaluation scores
- Rationale for placement

- The details regarding the delivery of services and assistive technology/devices
- Annual goals and short-term objectives inclusive of the student's current level of performance
- A description of how the student's progress is to be measured and monitored
- Transition plans and goals (high school students)

Once an established IEP is in place, regular IEP meetings will be held according to the following schedule:

- Annually to review progress and make changes in placement if needed
- Every three years to review the results of a complete reevaluation of the student's placement and progress
- After the student has received a formal evaluation of any kind
- At the request of the parent
- At the request of Synergy's Special Education staff
- When a new Transition Plan is required
- When a special education student has been suspended to address any changes that might need to be made
- Prior to an expulsion for a Manifestation Determination and change of placement

Synergy will contract with a special education provider or number of providers to ensure that all special education students are receiving the services called for in their IEPs by qualified professionals.

### **Special Education Strategies for Instruction**

Synergy School will comply with the federal mandate of providing the "least restrictive environment," with a continuum of options available, meaning that the school will make every attempt to educate special education students along with their non-disabled peers as well as provide additional support systems. Synergy will provide a comprehensive full inclusion program that may include specialized individual and small group tutoring through Synergy's extended day program. Each student's IEP requires different kinds of accommodations and modifications for instruction; therefore the educational strategies will be built around the student's needs as called for in the IEP. IEP students needing academic remediation may be recommended for the Learning Skills Lab and students with social, emotional, behavioral disabilities may be recommended for the Life Skills Lab both of which are part of Synergy's afternoon "Majors" program. Synergy's Special Education Coordinator will oversee all students with IEPs and communicate regularly with the student's Mentor Teacher, other classroom teachers and service providers to ensure the education program as called for in the IEP is being administered appropriately.

### **Serving Students with Section 504 Plans**

Synergy will comply with the regulatory requirements of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and any other civil rights given to disabled students enforced by the U. S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Students who enroll at Synergy with a current 504 Plan will be served in accordance with the provisions of that plan. Students will be placed on a 504 Plan as the need arises in the case of a temporary

physical disability or through the course of evaluations that determine a need for accommodations and possible services. Students shall periodically be re-evaluated for the purpose of monitoring the disability and its impact upon learning.

### **Special Education Reporting**

Synergy School will work hand in hand with their adopted SELPA to track and make available the following information on students with disabilities as required by IDEA:

- A calculation of all 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 number of students exempted from assessments
- The settings in which students with disabilities receive their services, specifically including the portion of the school day when 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
- The basis of exit from Synergy School of students with Disabilities

All necessary procedures and practices to ensure confidentiality and accurate record keeping will be the responsibility of Synergy's Special Education Coordinator as supervised by the Programs Director or designee. The Programs Director will ensure that a central file with all special education evaluation material and IEP's is maintained and that this file is locked and confidential, in accordance with IDEA guidelines. The Programs Director or designee will oversee access to these records and will be responsible for ensuring that all providers responsible for the implementation of a student's IEP will have access to a copy of the IEP and will be informed of their specific responsibilities in implementing the IEP.

### **Due Process and Procedural Safeguards**

Parents or guardians of students with IEP at Synergy School must give written consent for the evaluation and placement of their child will be included in the decision making process and will be invited along with teachers to meetings to develop their child's IEP.

Any concerns or disagreements raised by parents will be acknowledged by the school and handled in accordance with SELPA policies. A meeting between the parent and the school will be scheduled to seek resolution of the disagreement. If a disagreement or concern persists, parents or guardians have the right to initiate a due process hearing to challenge a decision regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of their child.

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

Parents or guardians also have the right to file a complaint with the California Department of Education if they believe that the school has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing special education. If a parent or guardian requests a due-process hearing Synergy School represent itself in all aspects of the claim. If the claim results in a finding of systemic noncompliance at the Synergy School, the school shall promptly implement the corrective actions necessary to address the noncompliance.

## **Element B: Measurable Outcomes for Synergy School and Its Students**

*‘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.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(B)*

Synergy School has set high standards and goals for its students and staff. This section details each of these goals along with the benchmarks that indicate success.

As Synergy School grows, benchmark performance goals and exit outcomes will be adjusted over time as necessary. Synergy will pursue Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO) in accordance with No Child Left Behind and will pursue its Academic Performance Index (API) growth targets as set by the California Department of Education, both school-wide and within reportable subgroups.

The following assessment tools will be used to measure individual student progress towards mastery of the content standards.

- Classroom based tests and quizzes
- Baseline Assessments
- Project rubric scores
- Essays and other formal writing rubric scores
- Presentation rubric scores
- Student journals
- Student web-page development and content
- Portfolio assessments
- CAHSEE
- CST Scores
- Quarterly benchmark assessments – AIMSweb
- PSAT/SAT

### **MEASURING STUDENT PROGRESS –**

Students are graded on assignments, quizzes, mid-terms, and finals and are given a quarterly report posting their results of each class. Students have to pass a class with at least a 60% or higher in order receive credit for completing that class. Students receiving a 90% or higher will receive the grade letter “A” on their report cards. Students receiving an 80 – 89% will receive the grade letter “B” on their report cards. Students receiving a 70 – 79% will receive the grade letter “C” on their report cards. Students receiving a 60 – 69% will receive the grade letter “D” on their report cards. Students receiving less than a 50% will receive a failing grade and will be required to retake the course to earn credit. At the end of each semester, grades will start new.

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDEX –**

The primary school-wide accountability measures at Synergy will be the state mandated assessments included in the CAASPP testing program (e.g., the Smarter Balanced Assessments, The California Standards Test (CST), the California Modified Assessment (CMA), and the California Alternative Performance Assessment (CAPA)), Benchmarks in the core Academics, and the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Therefore, Synergy Education Project will use the methods of API and AYP (or its replacement) as a primary measure of School success. This process will be reviewed and adjusted to State Standards as needed.

All students of Synergy will take periodic practice tests to help them prepare for the State Standardized testing and help faculty assess areas that need extra attention. It is the goal of Synergy to have an API score of at least 800 or equivalent by the year 2020.

**Synergy will attain its schoolwide and numerically significant student subgroups’ growth targets each year by doing the following:**

- Perform an analysis of the previous year’s scores.
- Establish target areas among sub-groups, including low-achieving students and English learners, and among curricular areas.
- Analyze standards cluster results in each subject and set targets to raise an area that falls behind.
- Align financial and staff development resources with established target areas.
- Monitor results on benchmark tests, especially those within the target areas.
- Reaffirm standards-based instruction ensuring that assessments and instruction are aligned with the standards.
- Monitor pacing to ensure that all priority standards are taught prior to CAASP testing.

SYNERGY’S OUTCOMES THAT ALIGN WITH THE STATE PRIORITIES	
<p>Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(B), following is a table describing Synergy’s outcomes that align with the state priorities and Synergy’s goals and actions to achieve the state priorities, as identified in Section 3 of this charter.</p> <p>The LCAP and any revisions necessary to implement the LCAP, including outcomes and methods of measurement listed below, shall not be considered a material revision to the charter, and shall be maintained by Synergy at the school site.</p>	
<p><b><u>STATE PRIORITY #1— BASIC SERVICES</u></b></p> <p><i>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 (E.C. §17002(d))</i></p>	
SUBPRIORITY A – TEACHERS	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE</b>	Synergy will hire and retain highly qualified, credentials teachers within the

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<b>SUBPRIORITY</b>	subject area of instruction for all core instruction.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Teachers hired for core curriculum must possess an intern eligible credential minimum in the appropriate course of study. Teachers will have to follow state guidelines to clear credential.
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	100% of core teachers will possess appropriate credential.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	100% of core teachers will possess appropriate credential.
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Percentage rate that teachers are assigned and credentialed appropriately for students they teach. Percentage rate that students have access and are enrolled in all core areas of study.
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	All students have full accessibility to relevant, state approved instructional materials.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will fund as necessary implementation of new resource and instructional materials to align with CCSS or equivalent (based on state adoption).
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Teachers and students have full accessibility to relevant, state approved instructional materials.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	Availability of instructional materials will, at minimum follow the outline of Williams Act.
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Synergy will measure availability based on teacher checkout systems and teacher requests for materials. Barcoding and textbook library will keep track of number of available resources versus number of students enrolled in a course.
<b>SUBPRIORITY C – FACILITIES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy will create a safe, functional, and secure operational facilities.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will enter into a lease with a landlord and complete tenant improvements as necessary.
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Synergy's measurable outcome is an executed lease for adequate facilities.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	Synergy will obtain certificate of occupancies reflecting the proper use of the building(s) and/or facilities.
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Possession of proper licensing and permits will designate operational facilities.
<b>STATE PRIORITY #2— IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS</b>	
<i>Implementation of Common Core State Standards, including how EL students will be enabled to gain academic content knowledge and English language proficiency</i>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – CCSS IMPLEMENTATION</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	All courses will adhere to Common Core State Standards.

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<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<p>Synergy will use a variety of methods to achieve proper CCSS implementation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encore Ed. Corp. will name an Academic Director that will facilitate the implementation of CCSS.</li> <li>2. Synergy will schedule specific trainings and send staff members to off site trainings in regards to the implementation of CCSS.</li> <li>3. Synergy will purchase/fund appropriate materials to implement CCSS, including but not limited to technology.</li> </ol>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Teachers will submit pacing plans and benchmarks reflecting CCSS.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	All teachers will turn in pacing plans reflecting the implementation of CCSS.
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Synergy will utilize standardized CCSS benchmarks and state testing to measure the implementation of CCSS
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – EL STUDENTS &amp; ACADEMIC CONTENT KNOWLEDGE</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	EL students have full accessibility to the entire academic program.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	All students will participate in full immersion with modification and accommodations as designated by EL Coordinator and SPED Inclusion Specialists.
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Verification of accessibility will be defined by enrollment at the appropriate level of Synergy's six year plan.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	Students are enrolled in all required academic courses coinciding with grade level.
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	EL student accessibility will be verified through a review of the EL student class schedules and transcripts.
<b>SUBPRIORITY C – EL STUDENTS &amp; ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	All EL students progress toward English language proficiency.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<p>Synergy will employ several programs to help EL students achieve English language proficiency.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All Synergy teachers will be NCLB compliant</li> <li>2. EL Coordinator will help advocate for EL students and work with regular education teachers to outline specific plans for EL learners.</li> <li>3. Additional support will be offered to all students through tutoring during lunch and after school.</li> <li>4. Additional instructional materials in the designation of EL will be provided at the EL Coordinator's request.</li> </ol>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	All teachers will be NCLB certified. All students will progress toward recertification based on CELDT (or equivalent) test results.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	Students will be placed according to CELDT (or equivalent) test.

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<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Synergy's EL student progression will be measured by the annual the CELDT (or equivalent) test results
<b>STATE PRIORITY #3— PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT</b>	
<i>Parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for schools, and how the school will promote parent participation</i>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – ACHIEVING/MAINTAINING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Parents will actively engage in and give input in decision making and participate in programs
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<p>Synergy will use a variety of actions to help achieve and maintain parent involvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent / Teacher conferences available monthly</li> <li>• New student / parent interest meetings and orientations</li> <li>• Parent representatives sit on the site council</li> <li>• Parents are encouraged to incur 8 parent involvement hours per semester</li> <li>• Communication with parents is sent regularly using methods such as direct mail, email, web site, all call system, and notes home</li> <li>• Parents are given direct access to student achievement using Aeries parent portal or equivalent</li> <li>• Parents are asked to complete annual surveys</li> <li>• Active communication takes place between teacher and parents via email</li> <li>• Synergy will offer college readiness seminars for parents to help them equip their students to enter college after high school</li> </ul> <p>Exit interviews are given by the counseling department for students that are withdrawn from Synergy</p>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Parent involvement will be measured by the responses to surveys, amount of parents that contribute involvement hours, and other communication assessment data offered through the variety of media outlets used
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	All parents / guardians will be signed up for all call system.
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Synergy will measure the amount of parent involvement by keeping data regarding parent involvement hours accrual and analytics reports offered from the methods of communication (ie: Call-Em-All, Constant Contact, Aeries)
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – PROMOTING PARENT PARTICIPATION</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Parents will feel they are informed about Synergy expectations and are aware of opportunities for parent involvement.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Parent representation on the Synergy Site Council and constant communication in a variety of ways
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Parent involvement hours remain steady and / or increase annually.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The majority of the parents are communicated with regularly with strong efforts to make sure that all parents are reached in a variety of ways.
<b>METHODS OF</b>	Synergy will measure the amount of communication with parents and guardians

<b>MEASUREMENT</b>	based on the analytics reports offers from the methods of communication (ie: Call-Em-All, Constant Contact, Aeries)
<b>STATE PRIORITY #4— STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT</b>	
<i>Pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</i>	
<p>A. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) statewide assessment</p> <p>B. The Academic Performance Index (API)</p> <p>C. Percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy UC/CSU entrance requirements, or career technical education</p> <p>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)</p> <p>E. EL reclassification rate</p> <p>F. Percentage of pupils who have passed an AP exam with a score of 3 or higher</p> <p>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</p>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – CAASPP: ELA/LITERACY AND MATHEMATICS</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	The majority of students are performing at or above grade level in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<p>Synergy will have a variety of measures in place to make sure that students can work to be at or above grade level in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of CCSS</li> <li>• Implementation of NWEA standardized benchmarks or equivalent</li> <li>• Hiring and training of highly qualified teachers</li> <li>• After school and during lunch tutoring</li> <li>• Schoolwide fundamental reviews (Math Madness BINGO, Summer Reading Programs as examples)</li> </ul>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Synergy students will increase standardized test scores.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	Synergy will use test results from state testing (if available) and / or the results from NWEA or equivalent standardized benchmark testing implemented by Synergy in the interim of development of state testing rubrics.
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Synergy will measure results using a variety of analytics associated with a variety of tests given to the students throughout the year.
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – API</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy will work to reach the state goal of 800 API or appropriate state replacement.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<p>Synergy will use a variety of methods to prepare students for date driven results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will be required to create and implement Pacing Plans</li> <li>• Students will take school standardized benchmark tests</li> <li>• Synergy will work on inservice and trainings for CCSS implementation</li> <li>• Teachers will work with students on specific test preparation</li> </ul>
<b>MEASURABLE</b>	Measurable outcomes will reflect the new implementation of state testing

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<b>OUTCOME</b>	measurable outcomes as designated by the state of California
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	Synergy will publish test results in the annual SARC as released by the California Department of Education.
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Test results given by the CAHSEE, Socio Economics, EL Enrollment, SPED Enrollment, graduation rates, subgroup data provided by the California Department of Education.
<b>SUBPRIORITY C – UC/CSU COURSE REQUIREMENTS (OR CTE)</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	All graduating seniors will be enrolled in courses that meet the minimums for UC/CSU admission requirements.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Approval of courses by UC/CSU with annual updates
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Percentage of students enrolled in UC/CSU approved courses
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	Majority of students enrolled in UC/CSU approved courses
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Percentage of students meeting requirements according to CALPADS and Aeries
<b>SUBPRIORITY D – EL PROFICIENCY RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	English Learners will advance one level each year toward English proficiency as measured annually by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) or a sanctioned replacement assessment.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Upon enrollment, the original Home Language Survey in the students' cumulative folder from previous enrollment in a California school will be reviewed, as well as any prior CELDT scores, in order to best determine the current level of the student. If no prior Home Language Survey exists, one will be completed upon enrollment at Synergy.
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	English Learners advance one or more levels toward English proficiency using prior and current CELDT scores.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	Matrix of where Synergy English Learners originally place toward English proficiency based on CELDT test and prior school information from student files
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Percentage of English Learners that advance one level or more annually toward English proficiency using CELDT or equivalent.
<b>SUBPRIORITY E – EL RECLASSIFICATION RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	English Learners will be reclassified within three years.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Upon enrollment, the original Home Language Survey in the students' cumulative folder from previous enrollment in a California school will be reviewed, as well as any prior CELDT scores, in order to best determine the current level of the student. If no prior Home Language Survey exists, one will be completed upon enrollment at Synergy
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Results from annual CELDT scores or equivalent
<b>BASELINE</b>	Placement of English Learners based on prior school files and annual CELDT

<b>PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	testing.
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Classification based on CELDT test results or qualified replacement
<b>SUBPRIORITY F – AP EXAM PASSAGE RATE; SYNERGY DOES NOT OFFER AP COURSES</b>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY G – COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS/EAP</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	For each year of the charter, students will demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the EAP.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Students will be exposed to rigorous college – ready curriculum while attending Synergy
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Synergy will have a higher percentage of students considered college ready based on EAP results compared to the state average
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	None
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	EAP test results
<b>STATE PRIORITY #5— STUDENT ENGAGEMENT</b>	
<i>Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. School attendance rates</li> <li>B. Chronic absenteeism rates</li> <li>C. Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3))</li> <li>D. High school dropout rates</li> <li>E. High school graduation rates</li> </ul>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	An average of 94% of students will attend school every day
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<p>Student attendance rate goal will be reinforced by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perfect attendance incentives</li> <li>• Parent education about school attendance in handbooks and letters home describing the importance of daily attendance</li> <li>• Full time attendance clerk dedicated to clearing and recording absences</li> <li>• Implementing SARB policies and processes</li> <li>• Requiring attendance to class as part of the overall grade that grants course credit</li> </ul>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	The outcome of average daily attendance will be based on monthly reports generated by the school’s information system, currently Aeries.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The baseline performance level will be determined by the P1 report created after opening of Synergy Education Project.
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Within Aeries or equivalent, data analytics reports related to daily attendance will measure overall average daily attendance

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<b>SUBPRIORITY B – STUDENT ABSENTEEISM RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	An average of 6% or less students will be absent from school each day.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<p>Synergy will employ a variety of actions to encourage daily attendance to class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Wellness policies will promote keeping students healthy</li> <li>• Perfect attendance incentives</li> <li>• Parent education in handbooks and letters home describing the importance of daily attendance</li> <li>• Full Time attendance clerk dedicated to clearing and recording absences</li> <li>• Implementing SARB policies and processes</li> <li>• Attendance to class to obtain course credit for classes</li> </ul>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Percentage of average daily attendance will be the base measurable outcome
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The baseline performance level will be set at the conclusion of P1 for Synergy Education Project
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Data Analytics from Aeries or equivalent will be used to determine results
<b>SUBPRIORITY C – MIDDLE SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Middle School student dropout rates will not exceed 2% average dropout rate.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<p>Synergy will use a variety of actions to achieve the goal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referral for all middle school students that are exiting Synergy to their home district</li> <li>• Attendance clerks will keep CALPADS up to date to be able to document student enrollment and exits</li> <li>• Parent communication about the importance of following Synergy's six year graduation plan will take place annually within the parent handbook</li> <li>• Exit surveys administered to all students and parents that decide to leave Synergy will help administration and staff improve programs.</li> <li>• Synergy will offer a variety of programs that will keep students involved in school.</li> </ul>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Annual percentage of students exiting Synergy as middle school students (grades 7 or 8) that do not enter another school based on CALPADS
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	Baseline Performance Level will be based on the amount of middle school dropouts based on CALPADS at the conclusion of the first year of operation at Synergy
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Synergy will use the information regarding school of enrollment after exiting Synergy using CALPADS
<b>SUBPRIORITY D – HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	High school student dropout rates will not exceed 20% average dropout rate
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy will refer all high school students exiting Synergy to their home</li> </ul>

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<b>GOAL</b>	<p>district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance clerk will keep CALPADS up to date to be able to document student enrollment and exits.</li> <li>• Parent communication about the importance of following Synergy's six year graduation plan will take place annually within the parent handbook.</li> <li>• Exit surveys administered to all students that decide to leave Synergy will help administration and staff improve programs.</li> <li>• Synergy will offer a variety of programs that will keep students involved in school.</li> </ul>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	The annual of percentage of high school that exit Synergy without enrollment to a different school as designated by CALPADS
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The baseline performance level will be determined by the percentage of high school students at Synergy that dropout of school once Synergy has enrollment of students in all high school grades
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Percentage of students exiting and not entering another school as described by CALPADS
<b>SUBPRIORITY E – HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	At least 90% of all Synergy high school seniors will graduate
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<p>Synergy will use a variety of methods to help high school students understand the importance of graduating from high school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselor(s) will help guide students through the six year plan</li> <li>• Synergy will publish the six year plan in the annual parent / student handbook.</li> </ul> <p>Synergy will use a variety of intervention programs to guide struggling students including SSTs and RtI coaches.</p>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	90% or more of enrolled seniors at Synergy will graduate from high school.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	When Synergy enrolls seniors, at least 90% of Synergy enrolled seniors will graduate
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	The percentage of seniors that graduate
<p><b>STATE PRIORITY #6— SCHOOL CLIMATE</b>  <i>School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Pupil suspension rates</li> <li>B. Pupil expulsion rates</li> <li>C. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness</li> </ul>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – PUPIL SUSPENSION RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy's goal is to be at less than a 5% average annual suspension rate of students enrolled at Synergy Education Project.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will publish and send home with all students and interested students copies of the latest parent/student handbook.
<b>MEASURABLE</b>	Based on Aeries information rate, Synergy Education Project will report a less

<b>OUTCOME</b>	than 5% average annual suspension rate.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The amount of students suspended
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Data will be compiled using the reporting methods for discipline within Aeries information system or equivalent.
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – PUPIL EXPULSION RATES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Synergy's goal is to be at less than a 5% average annual suspension rate of students enrolled at Synergy Education Project.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will publish and send home with all students and interested students copies of the latest parent/student handbook.
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Based on Aeries information rate, Synergy will report a less than 5% average annual expulsion rate.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The amount of students expelled
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Data will be compiled using the reporting methods for discipline within Aeries information system or equivalent.
<b>SUBPRIORITY C – OTHER SCHOOL SAFETY AND SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS MEASURES (SURVEYS)</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	The majority of students and staff at Synergy feel that they are in a supportive environment.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will use an annual survey (NSLP model or equivalent) that asks questions regarding the health, safety, and well being of the school climate.
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Based on answers from the annual survey, the majority of stakeholders will answer questions that determine that they feel supported at Synergy.
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	Majority of stakeholders will answer the survey with the majority of questions positively
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Straight percentages from the annual surveys will determine the overall feeling regarding the health, safety and well being of school climate.
<b>STATE PRIORITY #7— COURSE ACCESS</b>	
<p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>“Broad course of study” includes the following, as applicable:</i></p> <p><i>Grades 1-6: English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and other as prescribed by the governing board. (E.C. §51210)</i></p> <p><i>Grades 7-12: English, social sciences, foreign language(s), physical education, science, mathematics, visual and performing arts, applied arts, and career technical education. (E.C. §51220(a)-(i))</i></p>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	All students have the opportunity to participate in the full scope of programs offered at Synergy.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy will use the full inclusion model for all students including, but not limited to EL, 504, and SPED</li> <li>• The counseling department will create a master schedule base on course requests from students</li> </ul>

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<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	Students will receive the majority of requested course enrollment based on course requests
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	Based on student course requests, students will be enrolled in the majority of classes requested
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Synergy uses analytics created by Aeries or equivalent to help create a master schedule that accommodates as many student requests as possible.
<b>STATE PRIORITY #8—OTHER STUDENT OUTCOMES</b>	
<i>Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.</i>	
<b>SUBPRIORITY A – ENGLISH</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Majority of students will be at or above grade level within the area of English
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy will hire and retain highly qualified, credentialed teachers within the subject area of English.</li> <li>• Synergy will engage a variety of methods to deliver adopted academic content and performance standards as adopted by the state board of education for all pupils, including English learners</li> <li>• Synergy will work to increase student achievement by filling in gaps of fundamental knowledge through school wide extracurricular activities.</li> </ul>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Progress reports generated from Aeries information system or equivalent. Overall teacher class GPA will be reported according to Aeries information system or equivalent.
<b>SUBPRIORITY B – MATHEMATICS</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Majority of students will be at or above grade level within the area of mathematics
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy will hire and retain highly qualified, credentialed teachers within the subject area of mathematics.</li> <li>• Synergy will engage a variety of methods to deliver adopted academic content and performance standards as adopted by the state board of education for all pupils, including English learners</li> <li>• Synergy will work to increase student achievement by filling in gaps of fundamental knowledge through school wide extracurricular activities.</li> </ul>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Progress reports generated from Aeries information system or equivalent. Overall teacher class GPA will be reported according to Aeries information system or equivalent.

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<b>SUBPRIORITY C – SOCIAL SCIENCES</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Majority of students will be at or above grade level within the area of social sciences
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy will hire and retain highly qualified, credentialed teachers within the subject area of social sciences.</li> <li>• Synergy will engage a variety of methods to deliver adopted academic content and performance standards as adopted by the state board of education for all pupils, including English learners</li> <li>• Synergy will work to increase student achievement by filling in gaps of fundamental knowledge through school wide extracurricular activities.</li> </ul>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Progress reports generated from Aeries information system or equivalent. Overall teacher class GPA will be reported according to Aeries information system or equivalent.
<b>SUBPRIORITY D – SCIENCE</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Majority of students will be at or above grade level within the area of science
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy will hire and retain highly qualified, credentialed teachers within the subject area of science.</li> <li>• Synergy will engage a variety of methods to deliver adopted academic content and performance standards as adopted by the state board of education for all pupils, including English learners</li> <li>• Synergy will work to increase student achievement by filling in gaps of fundamental knowledge through school wide extracurricular activities.</li> </ul>
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Progress reports generated from Aeries information system or equivalent. Overall teacher class GPA will be reported according to Aeries information system or equivalent.
<b>SUBPRIORITY E – VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Students of Synergy will complete a minimum of one year (10 credits) of fine arts core courses as part of the six year graduation plan.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Synergy will invoke the one year of completed course in a fine arts class (defined as music, drama, or art) by enrolling all students in at least one course prior to graduation.
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>BASELINE</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course

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<b>PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	within subject matter
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Progress reports generated from Aeries information system or equivalent. Overall teacher class GPA will be reported according to Aeries information system or equivalent.
<b>SUBPRIORITY F – PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Students of Synergy will complete a minimum of two year (20 credits) designated within a non-core physical education course to complete the Synergy six year plan.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Counselors of Synergy will enroll students within a physical education class for a total of four semester within the six year plan.
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Progress reports generated from Aeries information system or equivalent. Overall teacher class GPA will be reported according to Aeries information system or equivalent.
<b>SUBPRIORITY G – FOREIGN LANGUAGES (GRADES 7-12 ONLY)</b>	
<b>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</b>	Students of Synergy will complete a minimum of two years (20 credits) designated within a foreign language course in order to complete the Synergy six year plan.
<b>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</b>	Counselors of Synergy will enroll students within a foreign language class for total of two semesters within the six year plan.
<b>MEASURABLE OUTCOME</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>BASELINE PERFORMANCE LEVEL</b>	The majority of Synergy students will pass their enrolled mandatory course within subject matter
<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	Progress reports generated from Aeries information system or equivalent. Overall teacher class GPA will be reported according to Aeries information system or equivalent.

### **Element C: Synergy's Performance Assessment Program**

*"The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured." Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(C)*

The State Standards and multiple sources of data form the basis of Synergy's teachings. Performance assessments are evaluated with the use of in-common benchmarks and rubrics and are analyzed on a regular basis to help drive Synergy's educational program. The rubrics are used to inform students and parents about the standards for student work. Synergy shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the required student assessments pursuant to Education Code Sections 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards or assessments authorized in statute.

**Synergy shall use the following assessment and reporting tools or the equivalent replacement:**

- The CAASPP testing program;
- The California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).
- Benchmark Testing
- Student transcripts demonstrating successful completion of required academic courses.
- An annual School-wide writing assessment.
- School maintained records of graduates for the first five years after graduation.
- NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) to be used to show needs and progress in reading and math foundation skills.
- CELDT to show progress for ELL students.
- PSAT and SAT results for college bound students.
- Completion of all transferable requirements for college-bound students.
- Annual portfolios of student-selected work, reflections, resumes, and goals.
- School-created student questionnaires regarding attitudes, goals, and interests.
- Presentation and project rubrics created by teachers to measure success on student presentations and group and individual projects.
- School-maintained records of attendance, suspension, and dropout rates.
- API and AYP reports
- Physical Fitness Test (PFT)

Students will be assessed academically by using the annual results of benchmark testing, the CAASPP assessment program, the California High School Exit Examination, and the California English Language Development (or equivalent replacement). They will also be given semester finals to monitor Academic progress.

Synergy affirms that its methods for measuring pupil outcomes for the Eight State Priorities, as described in Section 4 of this charter, shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a School Accountability Report Card as required by Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(C).

## **USE AND REPORTING OF DATA –**

Synergy Education Project will collect and analyze data on student achievement on a regular basis and provide student achievement data to staff, parents and guardians, and the District in the following manner:

- School leadership, in collaboration with the teaching staff, will annually review the primary measures of School performance—the CAASPP and CAHSEE results—in order to identify strengths and weaknesses at the school and departmental levels and set new performance targets at both the school and departmental levels.
- Staff receives data on student achievement during staff meetings and use this data to help monitor and improve Synergy’s education program. A data plan will be developed with an annual timeline for gathering and analyzing various student achievement data including CAASPP and CAHSEE results, classroom grades, quarterly School-wide benchmark testing, the annual writing assessment, and student questionnaires. The timeline will identify staff meetings in which teachers reflect on and discuss student achievement data, determine what modifications to instruction are necessary, and what new goals to set for student achievement. Additionally, the review of the performance of at-risk and low achieving students will be ongoing throughout the year. Using this data, a Student Success Team (SST) may be convened to provide support to these students by creating an assistance plan.
- Parents and guardians receive data on student achievement by mail annually and in person once per year with either an advisory or mentor teacher. Parents will receive reports on CAASPP assessments and CAHSEE by mail. They will also receive six week progress reports on classroom grades and the results of quarterly benchmark testing by mail. Current classroom grades including results for all assignments will be available to parents and students on Synergy’s website. The School Accountability Report Card (SARC) will be published annually prior to the published deadline.
- The District receives data on student achievement through School reports and/or presentations to the District’s Board of Education. These reports and/or presentations occur annually during Synergy’s charter period and include formative and summative data to demonstrate that Synergy is meeting state performance standards.

Synergy will use the CAASPP assessment program to assist in identifying strengths and weaknesses at a student, classroom, grade level, school and organization.

If any student is not making sufficient progress to meet the benchmarks, teachers, parents or administrators begin a Student Success Team. From this meeting an action plan is created to support the student.

**SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARD (SARC)**

Synergy Education Project will also submit an Annual School Accountability Report Card (SARC). The SARC will be created using the models supplied by the California Department of Education as the state standards for reporting.

**LOCAL CONTROL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP) -**

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5, Synergy will produce a Local Control Accountability Plan (“LCAP”), which shall update the goals and annual actions to achieve the goals identified in Section 3 of this charter regarding the State Priorities, using the LCAP template adopted by the State Board of Education. Synergy shall submit the LCAP to the District and the County Superintendent of Schools annually on or before July 1, as required by Education Code Section 47604.33.

**Student Performance Assessments**

Academic Outcome Goals	Assessment Tools Used to Measure Achievement
Students demonstrate advanced levels of understanding of mathematical concepts and computation skills in grade level math standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CST Test</li> <li>• CAHSEE</li> <li>• AIMSweb Benchmark Assessment or equivalent</li> <li>• PSAT Test</li> <li>• Project Rubrics</li> <li>• Standards-based Tests and Quizzes (Data Director)</li> </ul>
Students demonstrate advanced levels of critical and analytical reading skills as they relate to grade level literature, social studies and science coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CST Test</li> <li>• CAHSEE</li> <li>• AIMSweb Benchmark Assessments or equivalent</li> <li>• PSAT Test</li> <li>• Project Rubrics</li> <li>• Standards-based Tests and Quizzes (Data Director)</li> </ul>
Students demonstrate advanced levels of grade level written communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CST, 7<sup>th</sup> grade writing test</li> <li>• CAHSEE</li> <li>• PSAT Test</li> <li>• AIMSweb Benchmark Assessments or equivalent</li> <li>• Project Rubrics</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genre Specific Writing Rubrics</li> </ul>
Students demonstrate advanced levels of knowledge in grade level science content standards as well as advanced levels of knowledge and application of the scientific method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CST Test Science 8<sup>th</sup> grade</li> <li>• CST End of Course Tests, science subject specific</li> <li>• Project Rubrics</li> <li>• Lab Reports</li> <li>• Standards-based Tests and Quizzes (Data Director)</li> </ul>
Students demonstrate advanced levels of oral communication and presentation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation Rubrics</li> <li>• Group Skills Assessments</li> </ul>
Students demonstrate College, Technical School or Career Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PSAT test</li> <li>• Kuder® Career Skills Assessment Test or equivalent</li> </ul>
Students demonstrate preparedness to fully participate in a technologically advanced world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Rubrics</li> <li>• Presentation Rubrics</li> <li>• Technology Skills Assessment</li> </ul>

### Personal Skills and Character Goals

Synergy students will become model citizens in and outside their school community. Successful learning in a Project Based Learning environment requires high levels of student cooperation, motivation, good character and respect for all. Synergy students will have these behaviors modeled continuously by all staff and in return will be held to the highest expectation in developing and exhibiting good character and good decision making skills.

Personal Skills Goals	Markers of Success
Students become well informed citizens and active participants in their communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% participation in community service work</li> <li>• 90% participation in community based internships with local school partners</li> </ul>
Students demonstrate high skill levels in the areas of self discipline, organization, time/task management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students demonstrate a high level commitment to personal work ethic with 97% attendance rates</li> <li>• Less than 2% students referred for disciplinary issues</li> <li>• Less than 1% student suspensions and expulsions</li> </ul>
Students demonstrate high levels of problem solving, creative thinking, adaptability and resourcefulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project rubric scores in the 6-7 range as indicators that students researched, located and integrated the necessary content into their projects</li> <li>• Presentation rubric scores in the 6-7 range as</li> </ul>

	indicators that students identified and used the available resources to create the visual models required
Students demonstrate the ability to work successfully in collaboration with others, networking and building successful relationships with peers and adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will interact with their peers and staff with kindness, respect and compassion with less than 1% student referrals for behavior issues</li> <li>• Students will demonstrate the ability to work successfully in teams throughout project development, execution and presentation with less than 1% student referrals for behavior issues</li> </ul>

## Synergy’s Baseline Assessment Program

*How can you get to where you are going if you don’t know where you are?*

Synergy’s Baseline Assessment Program (BAP) will measure the basic academic skills, technology use skills and Project Based Learning skills readiness of each student at the beginning of each year or upon enrollment. The outcomes for each student will in part, provided the baseline by which the continuous periodic assessments will be measured. For example, the initial AIMSweb CBM Reading assessment will provide the baseline for comparing the three additional CBM Reading assessments given quarterly. The program will consist of a number of assessment tools measuring academic capabilities and a number of communication and social skills needed to be able to participate and effectively learn in a technology driven, Project Based Learning environment. What follows is a breakdown of each area targeted in the Baseline Assessment Program, the assessment tools used and what each is intended to measure.

Baseline Assessment Area	Assessment Tool	What This Assessment Measures
Reading – comprehension and critical reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIMSweb – CBM Reading grades 6-8 or equivalent</li> <li>• Data Director created critical reading assessments grades 9-12 or equivalent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIMSweb’s reading assessment will measure fluency and basic comprehension</li> <li>• Data Director created assessments will measure mastery of grade level comprehension skills</li> </ul>
Writing – organization, idea development and spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIMSweb - CBM writing and spelling grades 6-8 or equivalent</li> <li>• Writing Prompt writing process assessment grades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIMSweb writing expression will assess sentence structure and language usage.</li> <li>• Writing Prompt writing process assessment will measure idea</li> </ul>

	6-12	development and various structural aspects of essay writing
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIMSweb M-Comp grades 6-8 or equivalent</li> <li>• AIMSweb M-Cap grades 6-8 or equivalent</li> <li>• Publisher provided assessments 6-12</li> <li>• Data Director created math assessments 9-12 or equivalent</li> <li>• CSU/UC Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project (MDTP) grades 7-12 or equivalent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIMSweb M-Comp and M-Cap will assess mathematics computation skills as well as concepts and applications skills</li> <li>• Publisher provided assessments will assess readiness for a particular grade level or content area of math</li> <li>• Data Director created assessments will check for understanding of state standards address in projects</li> <li>• MDTP will assess readiness for the following math coursework: pre-algebra, algebra I, algebra II, integrated math, pre-calculus, calculus</li> </ul>
Project Based Learning and Group Skills Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaps Behavior Assessment® grades 6-12 or equivalent</li> <li>• AIMSweb Behavior Assessment grades 6-12 or equivalent</li> <li>• Synergy created assessment rubric grades 6-12</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication skills</li> <li>• Listening skills</li> <li>• Motivation/Initiation</li> <li>• Inquiry levels</li> <li>• Leadership skills</li> <li>• Cooperation and collaboration skills</li> </ul>
Technology Skills Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy created assessment rubric grades 6-12</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keyboarding speed</li> <li>• Research skills</li> <li>• Word®</li> <li>• Excel®</li> <li>• Power Point®</li> <li>• Problem solving skills</li> </ul>
Multiple Intelligences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy will choose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies strengths and</li> </ul>

and Learning Styles Assessments	from a reputable provider of Multiple Intelligences and Learning Styles diagnostic materials for grades 6-12	weaknesses in each of the eight intelligences categories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies strengths and weaknesses in various learning modalities</li> </ul>
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### **Continuous Assessment and Monitoring of Student Progress**

Synergy students will undergo continuous assessments to ensure they are making progress towards Synergy’s mission and vision. These assessments will be reported to parents in understandable formats in order to help them better understand their children’s academic and social progress. These assessments will help students to better understand where they are doing well and where they might reach out for support. The information provided by the assessments will help guide subject area teachers in direct instruction and overall student guidance throughout the course of each project. Through continuous assessment struggling students will be identified quickly and provided with remediation in identified target areas. Finally, Synergy’s administrative team will be able to regularly assess school wide results enabling them to continue building upon areas of strength and addressing areas of weakness.

What is most important about Synergy’s continuous assessments is that they provide numerous opportunities throughout each semester for teachers and administrators to observe student progress and address poor performance issues as soon as they are evident. Poor performance will not go unnoticed and will be addressed through clear systems of identification and remediation as is explained in Struggling Students section of Element A. The column on the right in the table below sets forth the minimum achievement standard for each type of assessment. Once the student falls below the goal boundary the Mentor Teacher steps in to advocate for the student using the intervention programs and resources provided. Interventions will be based on the specifics and the severity of the low performance. The interventions may be as simple as additional assignments for skills practice or recommendation for the Skills Lab class or Rtl as mentioned in Struggling Students section of Element A.

The following chart has been replaced in this material revision by the LCAP and LCFF required tables.

### **Systems for Data Collection**

#### **Student Information System**

Synergy will contract with Aeries or other suitable web-based student information system (SIS) that will provide the following features so that the school may track various aspects of Synergy’s student population as well as provide sets of information required

for various reporting at the county and state levels. Synergy's student information will provide the following:

- attendance collection and reporting
- allows staff to create simple and complex reports to be used at all levels of reporting whether it be in-house, county or state
- compatibility with CALPads, CSIS and SSID information collection and reporting

Synergy's student information system must be flexible in terms of the features available for customizing our data collection efforts directly related to the School's mission and vision. The school's data collection and analysis team will work directly with the company that provides the SIS to customize its features to maximize Synergy's data collection and analysis efforts.

#### **Zoom! Data Source and Data Director or equivalent**

Zoom! Data Source along with its Data Director tool will be purchased through the California Charter Schools Association. This program is also being used by the California Charter Schools Association in the gathering of much needed data specific to charter schools statewide.

Synergy's projects (PBL) are developed using the state standards as their starting points. Data Director contains a feature whereby standards based benchmark assessments can be created by the teacher to measure mastery of standards based content. Synergy teachers will use this feature throughout and at the end of each project to monitor and assess mastery of subject area standards. The data collected will help drive where and how the teacher guides the students in their project development and execution.

Custom sub grouping is a feature available through Data Director. Synergy will create custom subgroups of students participating in any of Synergy's special programs. The purpose is to track the effectiveness of each Synergy program measured against student progress. CST, CAHSEE, standards benchmark assessments, CELDT and other data will be collected for the specific subgroup and analyzed for program effectiveness. For example, a custom subgroup will be created for all Rtl students participating in the Intervention Support Program. Data will be collected and viewed by the appropriate staff quarterly. If the students in the custom subgroup fail to make the desired progress the Synergy administrative team will take immediate steps to remediate the lack of progress as well as add that program to the school's Annual School Improvement Plan. The following other custom groups will be created for monitoring student progress:

- Designated specific level CELDT students
- Re-designated English Language Proficient students
- CAHSEE remediation students
- Students participating in SST
- Students participating in Skills Lab coursework

- Special Education students

The data collected from Data Director will be used specifically for reporting efforts but more importantly it will drive the school's Student Accountability Report Card, our WASC Self Study and the Annual School Improvement Plan.

### **AIMSweb Assessment and Data Management or equivalent**

AIMSweb is a benchmark and progress monitoring system that will be used in a number of ways to provide an additional layer of assessments needed to monitor students' baseline starting point, quarterly progress and Rtl progress. Since Synergy will not use textbooks as its primary instructional delivery it will lack some testing and assessment tools that usually accompany traditional text materials. AIMSweb was chosen for its flexibility and data collection system which allows for continuous monitoring as well as data collection and reporting features that will help Synergy communicate student progress with teachers, parents and other stakeholders. AIMSweb will be used as one of the primary tools in the Baseline Assessment Program to be done at the beginning of each school year or upon enrollment. Reading, writing and mathematics assessments will then be conducted quarterly for all 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students. AIMSweb will also be the primary tool by which students participating in Synergy's Rtl program are regularly monitored. Intervention Support Program and Student Success Teams will determine progress monitoring intervals for all Rtl students. AIMSweb is also launching a behavioral assessment program in fall 2010 that Synergy may use for students in Rtl experiencing behavior issues.

**Google Education Application** – Synergy Education Project currently uses Google Education Application as the primary provider for their email network and documents management. It carries with it a host of tools to be used by staff, students and parents. Once Synergy is in full operation this application has a number of tools that allow for various pieces of data collection. For example, Google Education Application has a survey creation feature which will act as the template for Synergy's online annual Parent Survey. Once the survey is complete this feature sorts and compiles the completed survey information and conveniently loads it into an Excel® spreadsheet whereby the data can be easily reported.

## **Accountability Reporting**

### **School Accountability Report Card - SARC**

Synergy School will compile the necessary data and create a SARC at the end of each school year. State law requires that the SARC contain all of the following:

- Demographic data
- School safety and climate for learning information
- Academic data
- School completion rates
- Class sizes
- Teacher and staff information

- Curriculum and instruction descriptions
- Postsecondary preparation information
- Fiscal and expenditure data
- Explanation of Synergy's AYP
- Graduation rates
- Percentages of HQTs teaching core academic subjects
- Program Improvement status if applicable

Synergy's SARC will be made available on its website. Parents will be informed of its location. Paper copies will be provided upon request. The SARC will also be made available in Spanish.

### **Annual School Improvement Efforts**

The Data Collection and Analysis Team along with a representative of the Parent Advisory Committee and/or other stakeholders will meet towards the end of each school year and then again after the state releases the prior year's CST results for the purpose of creating the Annual School Improvement Plan to be used as a guide for the coming school year. The plan will target specified areas for improving student learning and other aspects of the school that the Synergy community agrees need attention. The following aspects of the school will be addressed each year in the Annual School Improvement Plan as well as other areas decided upon by the team and other Synergy stakeholders.

- Student Achievement
  - Assessments
  - Curriculum and instruction
- Community Relations
- Parent Involvement and Communication
- Facilities
- Staffing and Personnel
- Governance

**Reporting to Parents** – Communication with and from Synergy's parents is of top priority. Students receive a better education when their parents are informed and involved. Synergy staff will create a number of communications channels that allow parents to be informed of various aspects the school. Parents will have access to information through the school's website or be given the information directly as appropriate:

- Student progress reports and report cards
- CST and CAHSEE results
- AIMSweb assessment results
- Periodic newsletters
- SARC
- Annual School Improvement Plan
- Results of the Parent Survey

- Timely information about upcoming events

Student report cards will be generated at the end of each semester reporting semester achievement consistent with Synergy's Uniform Grading Policy. Report cards will be California state-standards based in the content areas of English, math, science and social studies.

Report cards will be mailed directly to the home address listed in the Student Information System.

**Reporting From Parents** – Parent participation in the Annual Parent Survey is crucial in helping Synergy's leadership understand from a parent's point of view where we are successful and where we might improve. Each year a parent survey will be developed and executed in efforts to gather this much needed information. The following categories will be addressed in each survey. There will also be room on the survey for hand written or typed comments or suggestions.

- General experience of the school
- Quality of education program
- Quality of the facilities
- Quality of communication and receipt of information
- Quality of service and levels of access to various staff and departments
  - Administrative staff
  - Teachers
  - Counselors
  - Special Education

**WASC Accreditation** - Synergy School has attained "candidate for accreditation" status from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The Programs Director shall submit the application by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in preparation for an initial spring visit. Having already been in operation with its middle school program for two years prior to that time, Synergy's leadership team will be fully prepared to participate in all aspects of the process in anticipation of our first WASC team visit. Our initial report submitted to WASC will contain detailed information covering the five criteria required.

### **Additional Items**

Pupils will be required to fulfill the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) requirement as a condition of earning a diploma;

Synergy will participate in the Student Testing and Reporting (STAR) program (not limited to administering the California Standards Tests [CSTs], but also administering the California Modified Assessments [CMAs] or California Alternate Performance Assessment [CAPA] if specified in a pupil's individualized education program [IEP]); and

Synergy will administer the Physical Fitness Test (PFT) as required.

**Element D: Governance**

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

**Non Profit Public Benefit Corporation**

Synergy School will be a directly funded independent charter school and is operated by Synergy Education Project Inc. (“SEP, Inc”) a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation, pursuant to California law. Attached, as Appendix 3, please find the Charter School Articles of Incorporation, current Corporate Bylaws, and approved Conflicts of Interest Policy.

Depending on the final partnership structure that is mutually agreeable to all parties, the final terms of the operating partnership may include Encore Education Corporation (“EEC”) serving as the sole statutory member of SEP, Inc. EEC formed in 2007, and has operated Encore Jr./Sr. High School for the Performing and Visual Arts since inception in 2008. EEC has also recently received approval of the petition for Encore High School for the Arts – Riverside, which will open with 600 students in August 2015.

Under this possible structure, EEC would serve as the sole statutory member of Synergy’s nonprofit corporation, with the current Synergy Board members continuing to fulfill traditional roles and responsibilities of board members (approval of budgets, audits, and financial updates, approval of contracts, policy approvals, educational and staff reports, academic progress updates, etc.) As a sole statutory member, EEC’s role would include changes to board members, bylaws, loans and debt repayment, purchase and sale of land, buildings, and other fixed assets, and approval of larger non-budgeted expenditures. This type of governance structure would balance the benefits of maintaining local stakeholder input and decision-making by the existing Synergy board with the protections necessary to secure Encore’s substantial allocation of resources and intellectual property during the partnership term. As the sole statutory member, EEC would not be merging with SEP, Inc., and EEC would not be liable for the debts, liabilities, or obligations of SEP, Inc.

The operating partnership between SEP, Inc. and EEC will be finalized prior to the start of the 2015-16 school year, and both parties welcome input from CDE, ACCS and/or SBE regarding components of the partnership structure during the review of this revised petition.

**Conflict of Interest**

SEP shall be subject to Government Code Section 1090 *et seq.*, the Political Reform Act of 1974 (Gov. Code Section 87100 *et seq.*, the “PRA”) and any attendant regulations as they may be amended from time to time, and all conflict of interest laws and prohibitions applicable to California non-profit corporations and/or California charter

schools. All officers, employees, and members of the board of SEP shall comply with the requirements of each and all of those conflict of interest laws and regulations.

### **Brown Act Compliance**

SEP shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act as set forth in California Government Codes Section 54950 et seq. and any attendant regulations as they may be amended from time to time.

All meetings of the SEP Board of Directors shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act. Notices, agendas, and minutes of meetings will be recorded and retained in Encore's files. These records will be accessible to the public and the District in accordance with the Brown Act.

Meetings of the SEP Board of Directors take place on the second Tuesday of each month unless otherwise designated. Meeting agendas are posted in SEP office windows and SEP marquees that allow for continuous public access. Meetings are also posted on the SEP website.

All other public meetings, including boosters, standing and ad hoc committees formed by the SEP Board of Directors shall be held in compliance with the requirements of the Brown Act, as applicable.

The SEP Board of Directors, administration (including but not limited to the Cabinet), and curriculum development team members undergo Brown Act training by a qualified individual on an annual basis.

### **Liability and Indemnity**

The Synergy Education Project (SEP) will operate autonomously from the State Board of Education (SBE), with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute. Pursuant to California Education Code Section 47604(c), the SBE shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of the Charter School, operated by a California non-profit benefit corporation or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the Charter School as long as the SBE has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. Synergy Education Project will hold harmless and indemnify the State Board of Education from every liability, claim, or demand that may be made by reason of:

- Any injury to person or property sustained by Synergy Education Project employees or by any person, firm or corporation employed directly or indirectly by Synergy Education Project.
- Any injury to person or property sustained by any person, firm, or corporation caused by an act, neglect, default, or omission of Synergy Education Project, its officers, employees, or agents.

- The furnishing or use of any copyright or un-copyrighted composition, or patented or un-patented invention.

In order to mitigate both the potential legal and fiscal liabilities of the charter school, Synergy Education Project will have in force at all times prepaid liability insurance. Synergy will meet, in the minimum, all legal requirements for coverage amounts with complete coverage for the following:

- Workers' compensation insurance
- Liability insurance
- School board insurance
- Property insurance
- Student accident insurance

The SBE will be furnished with certificates of insurance signed by an authorized representative of the insurance carriers. The SBE will have the right to require complete certified copies of the required insurance policies. Certificates will be endorsed to say: "The insurance afforded by this policy will not be suspended, cancelled, reduced in coverage or limits or non-renewed except after thirty days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, has been given to the State Board of Education.

## **Board of Directors**

The following guidelines apply to the SEP Board of Directors. Under the potential sole statutory member partnership structure described above, certain roles would be performed by EEC as the sole statutory member (all of which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter), but the following board guidelines would still be applicable to the SEP Board.

The SEP Board shall have five to nine directors. Each board member shall serve a term of two years.

Terms for the initial Board of Directors shall be seven or nine seats for a term of either one or two year(s). The terms of the initial Board of Directors shall be staggered, with at least four members serving for one year and at least three members serving for two years. The staggering of the initial directors' terms of service will be drawn by lot.

No more than 49 percent of the persons serving on the Board of Directors 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 director as director; 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 has adopted a conflicts of interest policy in accordance with the Political Reform Act.

Board members shall have experience in one or more of the following areas: education, government, law, business, finance/accounting, fundraising, facilities, social services or public relations. Potential members shall submit an application and resume' detailing the appropriate experience. Each potential board member will be responsible for reading the Synergy School Charter Petition in preparation for their board interview. Existing board members in review of applications and resume's will be able to clearly identify the required career and/or community involvement experience prior to their recommending a board candidate for a seat on the board. It is highly desired that board candidates also demonstrate past board experience as well as significant experience and community involvement in areas related to programs that support children and families.

Every new director member is to be appointed at the corporation's annual meeting of the Board of Directors or on an as needed basis in the event a Director may not be able to fulfill the length of their term. The process by which new Directors are seated is as follows:

1. Synergy staff will post Board of Director position openings information publically in regular board meeting posting locations, on the school's website and other locations deemed appropriate. The posting will include information on the qualifications needed and the expectations for fulfillment of a two year term.
2. Interested parties shall submit an application and resume' as a show of interest that includes detailed information regarding their qualifications.
3. Existing board members will review each application and choose from those potential candidates a group of applicants to be interviewed by the Board.
4. Candidates will be notified and interviewed by the Board at a special board meeting or at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.
5. A vote for approval or disapproval interviewed candidates shall take place at a following board meeting or a motion can be made to continue the search for additional candidates.

Except for the initial Board of Directors, each director shall hold office unless otherwise removed from office in accordance with these bylaws for two (2) years and until a successor director has been appointed or elected as required by the position as described below.

The Synergy Education Project Board of Directors, once appointed, will elect a president and a vice president annually.

**Cabinet**

The entire executive team of EEC and the administrative team of SEP will act as Cabinet for the SEP Board of Directors. This Cabinet is responsible for setting the agendas for regular and special board meetings. Cabinet is also responsible for giving reports to SEP Board of Directors and researching topics as requested by the SEP Board of Directors. The responsibilities of the Cabinet can be updated from time to time as required by the SEP Board of Directors. The mission of the Cabinet is to advise the Board of Directors on relevant actions of Synergy Education Project. The members of the Cabinet are:

- CEO – will advise the SEP Board of Directors regarding finance, policies, and overall operations
- COO – will advise the SEP Board of Directors regarding public relations, student discipline, and facilities.
- Executive Officer of Student Affairs – will advise the SEP Board of Directors regarding student affairs including SPED, 504 plans, tutoring, counseling, college readiness, and course approvals
- Executive Officer of Enrollment / Marketing – will advise the SEP Board of Directors regarding student enrollment
- Executive Director of Academics – will advise the SEP Board of Directors regarding academic assessments and annual academic progress.
- Executive Director of Arts – will advise the SEP Board of Directors regarding arts courses, assessments, and annual arts progress.
- Staff Representative - will work with the staff to pinpoint concerns that arise with the staff. Will act as a liaison for employee disputes and will report directly to the SEP Board of Directors regarding employee relations.

**Appointee Requirements for SEP Board of Directors:**

1. Must be at least 25 years of age by June 1, during the year of appointment.
2. Cannot be a terminated employee, dismissed student, or direct relation (spouse, parent, sibling) of a terminated employee or dismissed student of SEP.
3. Cannot be an interested party or a direct relation of an interested party (ie: spouse, relative)
4. If a former employee or contractor of SEP, must be in good standing and have not been an employee or contractor in the past five years.
5. Must be eligible to work in the state of California
6. Must pass a LIVESCAN background check
7. Must possess a high school diploma
8. Must not have any felony convictions

**SEP Board of Directors Appointment Process:**

1. SEP Board of Directors appointments will take place every two years or as needed. The appointment will take place during a regular session meeting and will be outlined on the appropriate agenda.
2. Parties in consideration for appointment will be recommended by the SEP Board of Directors cabinet.
3. After all candidates are reviewed, appointment will take place via open voting of SEP Board of Directors during open session.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47604(b), the State Board of Education may appoint a representative to sit on the Board of Directors. If the SBE chooses to do so, the Charter School shall appoint a second community member to ensure that the Board is maintained with an odd number of Directors.

**Board of Directors Officers and Duties**

In accordance with Synergy Education Project Bylaws there shall be four officers of the board consisting of a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. These officers shall be collectively referred to as the Executive Committee. Their duties are as follows:

*The President* shall convene regularly scheduled board meetings, shall preside or arrange for other members of the Executive Committee to preside at each meeting in the following order: Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer.

*The Vice President* shall chair committees on special subjects as designated by the board.

*The Secretary* shall be responsible for keeping records of board actions, including overseeing the taking of minutes at all board meetings, sending out meeting announcements, distributing copies of minutes and the agenda to each board member, and assuring that corporate records are maintained.

*The Treasurer* shall make a report at each board meeting. The treasurer shall chair the finance committee, assist in the preparation of the budget, help develop fundraising plans and make financial information available to board members and the public.

**Board Committees**

The Board will establish committees in the event that more focused work regarding a specific aspect of governance of the charter school is needed. The establishment of board committees will be determined by the Executive Committee as well as the responsibilities and duties of each specific committee and its members. Some committees may be established and remain part of the board's composition like the Finance Committee while others may be established only for a short term need.

### **Board Meetings and Duties**

The Board of Directors of Synergy School will meet regularly, in most cases monthly, in accordance with the Brown Act. The Board of Directors is fully responsible for the oversight of operation and fiscal affairs of the Charter School including but not limited to the following:

- Uphold and support the mission, vision and core values of Synergy School
- Approve, supervise, evaluate, discipline, and dismissal of the Programs Director and the Finance Director of the Charter School
- Approve all contractual agreements for expenditures beyond \$10,000
- Approve and monitor the implementation of general policies of Synergy School. This includes effective human resource policies for career growth and compensation of the staff
- Approve and monitor Synergy School's annual budget and budget revisions
- Act as a fiscal agent. This includes but is not limited to the receipt of funds for the operation of Synergy School in accordance with applicable laws and the receipt of grants and donations consistent with the mission of Synergy School
- Contract with an external independent auditor with experience in education/school audits to produce an annual financial audit according to generally accepted accounting practices
- Establish operational committees as needed
- Regularly measure progress of both student and staff performance
- Involve parents and the community in school related programs
- Execute all applicable responsibilities provided for in the California Corporations Code
- Engage in ongoing strategic planning
- Approve the school calendar and schedule of board meetings
- Review requests for out of state or overnight field trips
- 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

The Board may initiate and carry on any program or activity or may otherwise act in a manner which is not in conflict with or inconsistent with or preempted by any law and which are not in conflict with this charter or the purposes for which schools are established.

The School has drafted a Conflicts of Interest Policy which complies with the Political Reform Act and Corporations Code Conflicts of Interest rules, and shall be updated with any charter school specific conflicts of interest laws or regulations.<sup>9</sup> As noted above,

<sup>9</sup> It is the understanding of Petitioners that recent legislation and regulatory action has been considered regarding charter school specific conflicts of interest.

the drafted Conflicts of Interest Policy is attached within Appendix 3. As required, the Conflicts Policy will be submitted to the County Board of Supervisors for approval.

The Synergy Education Project Board of Directors will attend periodic conferences and in-service opportunities for the purposes of training individual board members regarding their conduct, roles and responsibilities. As part of their board responsibilities each board member agrees to attend at least one conference per year whereby relevant governance training is available. Additional trainings and workshops will be held at special and regularly scheduled board meetings each year. Workshops and trainings will be provided by experts in each of the subject specific trainings. Trainings may be given by the school's legal counsel, the California Charter Schools Association, or the Charter Schools Development Center. Topics shall include but are not limited to:

- Conflicts of Interest
- Charter School Legal Compliance
- Budget and Finance
- The Brown Act
- Special Education and Section 504 Plans
- Personnel

### **The Programs Director**

The Programs Director will be the leader of the school, although certain management roles may be handled by Encore pursuant to the partnership agreement. The Programs Director will ensure that the curriculum is implemented in order to maximize student learning experiences. The Programs Director must report directly to the Synergy Education Project Board of Directors, and s/he is responsible for the orderly operation of the school and the supervision of all employees in the school with the exception of the Finance Director who shall report directly to the Board.

The Programs Director is assigned to perform tasks as directed by Synergy Education Project Board of Directors and is responsible for all of the tasks detailed below. These tasks may include but are not limited to the following:

- Ensure the charter school enacts its mission, vision and core values
- Supervise and evaluate teachers and staff
- Communicate and report to Synergy School's Board of Directors
- Work collaboratively with Synergy's Finance Director to ensure financial stability
- Participate in and develop professional development workshops as needed
- Serve or appoint a designee to serve on any committees of the school
- Interview and recommend employee hiring, promotion, discipline, and/or dismissal
- Ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and help secure local grants
- Communicate with parents, recruit new families and students, and assure families of academic growth

- Take responsible steps to secure full and regular attendance at school of the students enrolled in accordance with policies established by the Board of Directors
- Complete and submit required documents as requested or required by the SEP Board of Directors, State Board of Education and/or California Department of Education
- Identify the staffing needs of the school and offer staff development as needed
- Collaborate with the Finance Director to ensure up-to-date financial records
- Ensure that appropriate evaluation techniques are used for both students and staff
- Establish and maintain a system to handle organizational tasks such as student records, teacher records, teacher credentialing information, contemporaneous attendance logs, purchasing, budgets, and timetables
- Hire qualified substitute teachers as needed
- Ensure the security of the school building
- Promote and publish Synergy School in the community, promote positive public relations and interact effectively with media
- Encourage and support teacher professional development
- Attend SBE administrative meetings as requested by the SBE and stay in direct contact with the SBE regarding changes, progress, etc.
- Attend meetings as directed by the SBE on fiscal oversight issues as requested
- Provide all necessary financial reports as required for proper attendance reporting
- Develop the Synergy School's annual performance report and the SARC
- Work collaboratively with the Finance Director to present independent fiscal audit to the Synergy's Board of Directors and after review by the SEP Board of Directors present audit to the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, the State Board of Education and the California Department of Education
- Manage or designate student discipline responsibilities and as necessary participate in the suspension and expulsion process
- Participate in or appoint an administrator designee to participate in IEP meetings as necessary

The above duties, with the exception of personnel matters, may be delegated or contracted as approved by the Board of Directors to a business administrator of the School or other appropriate employee or third party provider.

### **Parent Involvement**

In addition to serving on the Oversight Council and Board of Directors, parents will be encouraged to participate in a minimum of eight (8) hours each semester. Parents will be invited to sit on committees within specific areas of the campus to help organize and/or fundraise for each of these areas of the campus. No student will be excluded from SEP or school activities due to the failure of his or her parent or legal guardian to fulfill the encouraged number of parent/guardian volunteer hours.

All parents and parent committee group calendars are organized by the help of a paid employee. These committees work together with the Associated Student Body in different activities and events throughout the year.

### **Student Involvement**

An on-campus Associated Student Body (ASB) will be established at the school site to involve students in the planning of student fundraisers, special events / activities, and help build campus culture. There will be an ASB President, ASB Vice President, ASB Secretary, and ASB Treasurer. There will also be class presidents, vice presidents, secretaries, and treasurers. The ASB shall meet within a regular class period to plan events at Encore and works to keep the faculty updated on their plans. The ASB shall be guided by the Assistant Dean of Students for Activities. Student government positions are chosen via election, interview, and/or appointment. Government positions are reassigned every year.

**Element E: Employee Qualifications**

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

SEP shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, including only employing highly qualified teachers for core subject courses, which includes a requirement that a teacher hold a Bachelor's degree, subject matter competency, and a basic teaching credential. SEP shall only assign teachers to subjects to which they are properly credentialed, including English Learner authorization.

Pursuant to –Education Code Section 47605(l), all teachers must hold the same certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. These documents shall be maintained on file at SEP and are subject to periodic inspection by the CDE. It is the intent of the Legislature that charter schools be given flexibility with regard to noncore, noncollege preparatory courses.

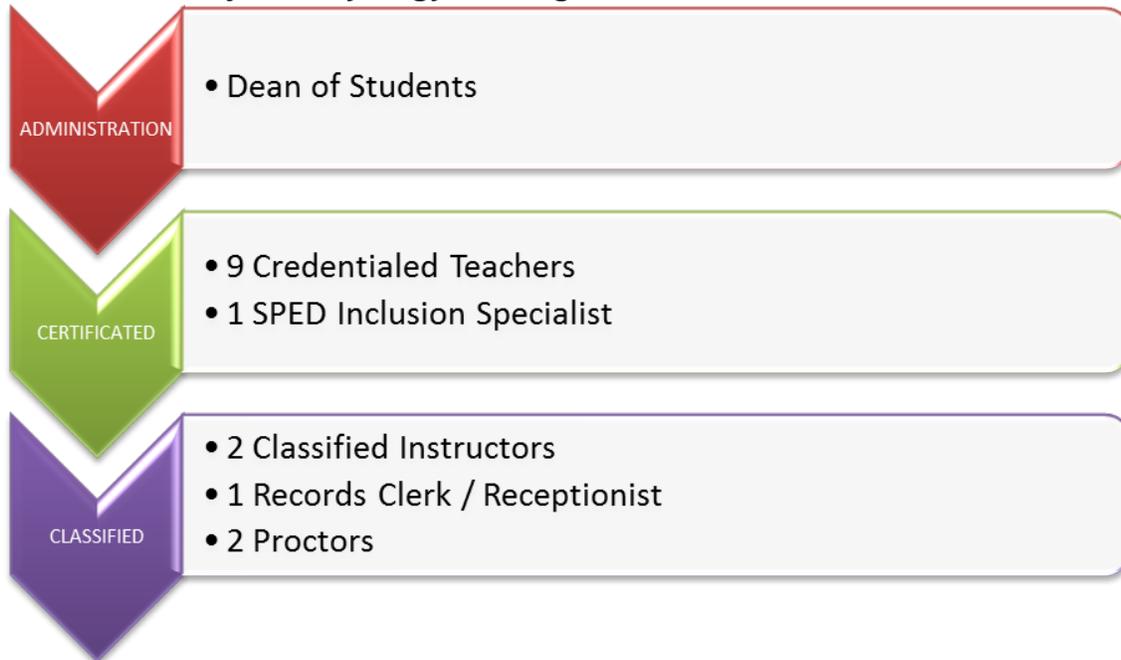
**Administration** – For all administrative positions at SEP, successful candidates must represent either college credentialed experience or life experience equivalent to five or more years in business management and/or teaching. Prior to employment approval, a candidate's credentials are verified and a Department of Justice Livescan is completed.

**Certificated Teachers** – Must be properly credentialed in their field plus have the necessary ESL certificate. They must also follow the definitions of a “highly qualified” teacher as outlined by the California Department of Education. Certificated teachers should have experience teaching or training for multiple levels of students from the low achievers to the high achievers. Every certificated teaching candidate will be required to submit a resume with a description of their teaching philosophy and letters of recommendation to make sure that their teaching philosophy is in line with SEP's overall mission. Prior to employment approval, a candidate teacher's credentials are verified and a Department of Justice Livescan is completed.

**Non-Core Classified Instructors** – For non core classified instructors, if they are teaching an academic core class, they must be considered a “highly qualified” teacher as outlined by the California Department of Education. For non-core enrichment courses, non-core enrichment instructors must have qualifying life experience in their field and complete an Executive teaching certification course (EEC developed, equivalent to BTSA) within the first two years of employment at SEP. Instructors must audition within a class environment and will be evaluated by Executive Officials and students prior to employment. Portfolios and/or audition pieces must be submitted at time of interview. Prior to employment approval, a candidate's credentials are verified and a Department of Justice Livescan is completed.

**School Staff** – Individual requirements will be outlined for specific jobs as the jobs become available. Prior to employment approval, a candidate’s credentials are verified and a Department of Justice Livescan is completed.

### 2015 / 2016 Projected Synergy Staffing



### Synergy Staff Required Commitments

All Synergy staff must be willing to commit to:

- Upholding, supporting and promoting Synergy’s mission, vision and core values in their work with all Synergy stakeholders
- Abide by federal, state, and local laws
- Maintain a professional relationship with all students
- Must not abuse alcohol or drugs
- Exemplify honor and integrity in the course of professional practice, particularly in the use of public funds and property
- Comply with state, federal, and local laws regarding the confidentiality of student records
- Fulfill the terms and obligations detailed in their Employee Agreements and in the Synergy Employee Handbook
- File necessary reports of child abuse
- Maintain a high level of professional conduct

## Staff

## Recruitment

All SEP employees must submit for a Department of Justice Livescan background check and a tuberculosis test.

All positions will be posted at edjoin.org. When necessary, SEP will use the newspaper or online sources to advertise positions. Applications will be open for a minimum of two weeks. All candidate employees will undergo a three tiered interview process. Final employment decisions will be made by the Executive Office. Each candidate will be chosen by their qualifications, experience, talent, and sharing the teaching philosophy / mission of Synergy Education Project.

In order to find and retain highly qualified teachers, SEP will take part in online and in person teaching job fairs and post openings on college campuses, in newspapers, and on the web site. With a comparable pay scale and smaller class sizes, SEP will attract teachers that share the mission of SEP. It is our goal to create a positive work environment that our faculty will want to start and keep a career at.

### Staff Selection and Hiring Process

Because of the unique nature of Synergy School, staff will be selected carefully so as to maintain the integrity of Synergy's mission, vision and core values. Only those who possess the pertinent skills, a similar education philosophy and appear to be a good fit for the school's culture will be considered for employment at Synergy School. All staff will participate in a thorough application and interview process that will include a variety of assessment tools needed to find the proper fit of employee within the School.

#### Step One: Cover Letter and Resume

The first step of the selection and hiring process will include submitting a cover letter and resume to the Programs Director. Once received, the Programs Director or designee will read over each one carefully and thoughtfully to evaluate whether the candidate will be a good fit for the position and Synergy School culture. Once the resume and cover letter have been read, the Programs Director or designee will place the candidates in one of three designations where they will be processed accordingly.

1. Candidates most likely to be a good fit for the position will move on and receive a phone call to schedule a phone interview.
2. Candidates who may be a good fit will be notified by email that their resume will be kept on file.
3. Candidates who do not possess the skills and attributes needed for successful employment will be notified by email thanking them for their interest but will not be granted an interview.

#### Step Two: Phone Interview

The phone interview shall be conducted by the Programs Director or designee. Prospective candidates will be asked to provide answers and engage in discussion related to a series of pre-determined questions specific to the position opening. Each

question will be scored using a rubric. The candidates scoring in the top bracket will be offered an in-person interview by phone or email. Candidates not offered an interview will be notified by email that their applications will be kept on file.

#### Step Three: In Person Interview with Hiring Panel

The interview shall be done by a Hiring Committee of no less than two employees qualified to evaluate for the specific position. A representative from the Parent Advisory Council may also participate in particular interviews as appropriate. Prospective candidates will be asked to provide answers and engage in discussion related to a series of pre-determined questions specific to the position opening. Each member of the Hiring Committee will score each of the questions using a rubric. The Hiring Committee then may choose from the top scoring candidates and hire for the position. Depending on the type of position vacancy candidates scoring in the top bracket will be invited to participate in an observed group activity related to the position opening.

#### Step Four: On-Site Activity and Observation

The school leadership level, coordinator level and teacher positions selection process may include an on-site activity to be observed and evaluated by the Hiring Committee. The type of activity will depend upon the position vacancy. Teachers, for example, may be required to participate in a group activity whereby they will develop a project to be assigned students. This will give the Hiring Committee an opportunity to observe not only their technical skills but their ability to work cooperatively amongst colleagues, a very important aspect of the Synergy School culture and practice. Each member of the Hiring Committee will score the candidates on a designated set of skills using the rubric provided. The Hiring Committee will then convene to compare scores and choose the best applicant/s for the position vacancies.

### **Staff Training and Development**

Training and staff development is critical to the success of Synergy's education programming. It is likely that many new hires will lack experience as it relates to various aspects of charter operations and legal compliance. As mentioned earlier, many teachers hired will have limited training and experience in Project Based Learning (PBL) development and execution. Synergy administrators will ensure that staff receives the necessary training prior to and throughout the course of each school year. The year will begin with an all staff orientation. Ten full days of PBL training and development for teachers will follow. In addition there are daily, weekly and monthly opportunities built into the school's schedule and calendar for staff development particularly as it relates to improving student learning. Clerical and administrative support staff will receive all the necessary trainings in order to keep the school up to date in the areas of finance, attendance reporting, testing/assessment, personnel and legal compliance. Element E of the petition provides extensive detail on the schools numerous allowances for staff training and development.

### **August Staff Orientation**

Synergy School holds firm to its belief that a solid and positively unified culture is one of

the major underpinnings of a successful school able to realize its mission, vision and to achieve its goals. Synergy's leadership seeks to create a tight-knit community prior to the first day of school that demonstrates the school's core values through a distinct school culture. The foundation for this school culture rests with each and every staff member of the Synergy team. Staff orientation trainings and activities are critical in that they will give all staff the opportunity to find their place within the school's culture. It will also help staff set in motion their professional goals and their personal commitments for the school year. All employees will experience training and team building that will strengthen the collaboration that is such an important part of Synergy's foundation. Staff orientation will take place in early August prior to the first day of school. New employees hired after the beginning of the year will also be required to participate in a version similar to August orientation. The following table outlines the basic structure of topics and activities engaged in at staff orientation.

<p>Introduction          Where We Are Now and          Where We Are Going</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synergy's Mission, Vision and Core Values</li> <li>• School Culture – The Synergy Way</li> <li>• The Year's Theme</li> <li>• Team Building Activity</li> </ul>
<p>All Staff Goal Setting</p>	<p>A structured discussion and planning activity that focuses on the development of three overarching, big picture goals. These goals will be documented along with specific steps that all staff members agree to carry out in the course of their work.</p>
<p>Department/Subject Area          Staff Goal Setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership and Coordinator Staff</li> <li>• Classified Staff</li> <li>• ELA Teachers</li> <li>• Math Teachers</li> <li>• Social Studies Teachers</li> <li>• Science Teachers</li> </ul>	<p>A structured discussion and planning activity that focuses on the development of three overarching, big picture goals related to student achievement in each particular subject area. These goals will be documented along with specific steps that all staff members agree to carry out in the course of their work.</p>
<p>Professional Learning          Communities Groups Goal          Setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EL PLC</li> <li>• At-Risk Students Support PLC</li> <li>• Internships and Community Service Development PLC</li> <li>• Response to Intervention PLC</li> <li>• Projects</li> </ul>	<p>A structured discussion and planning activity that focuses on the development of three overarching, big picture goals related to each group's focus work. These goals will be documented along with specific steps that all group members agree to carry out in the course of their work.</p>

Development PLC
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Research indicates that only a small portion of the content of staff developments and trainings ever becomes implemented in the classroom.<sup>10</sup> Researchers site the primary causes to be a lack of a solid implementation plan which calls for repeated follow up throughout a well thought out implementation phases. The key to increasing the likelihood of successful implementation is through continuous training, retraining and evaluation of the desired behaviors. All staff will begin each full-day staff development with a progress report on the goals set at orientation, a discussion of the group's progress and the development of any additional implementation strategies needed to realize the group's goals.

### **Staff Development**

The nature of staff development will be determined by the Board of Directors, Programs Director and upon the request of the staff. The highest quality training will be delivered as to show respect for Synergy's highly qualified and experienced staff and to enhance and further develop staff skills. August staff developments will be focused on preparations for the coming school year. There will be some trainings and information relevant to all staff but most trainings and activities will be departmental specific and will be developed by the Programs Director according to school's education and administrative program needs.

The most significant staff development taking place in August will require the school's leadership and teaching staff to come together for 10 full staff development days in efforts to create the basic structure for that year's Project Based Learning curriculum and learning opportunities. Synergy's leadership team will provide the structure and tools necessary for staff teachers to work in collaboration with their grade level colleagues and counseling staff to develop the primary student projects that cover the year's lessons, activities and presentations. The structure of the process and tools provided will ensure the complete coverage of all California State Content Standards. It should also be noted that instructors and teachers hired to teach in the Majors Program will also be required to participate in a staff development training regarding projects development and will be required submit their project proposals to the Programs Director or Principal for approval.

A lifelong love of learning is part of Synergy's school culture which will be embraced and modeled by all Synergy staff. In addition to August orientation and PBL staff development there will be no less than three additional planned full-day staff developments to be held periodically throughout the school year. These trainings and

<sup>10</sup> Short, P.M. & Greer, J.T. (1997). *Leadership in Empowered Schools: Themes from Innovative efforts*. Upper Saddle River, NY: Merrill/Prentice Hall. Guskey, Thomas R. "Staff Development and Teacher Change." Originally printed in *Educational Leadership* (April 1985): 57-60. Brand, G.A. (1997, Winter). Training Teachers for Using Technology. *Journal of Staff Development*, (Vol. 19, No. 1). Darling-Hammond, L., and McLaughlin, M.W., "[Policies That Support Professional Development in an Era of Reform,](#)" *Phi Delta Kappan*, 1995. Reprint by MiddleWeb.

learning opportunities will be departmental specific and relevant to professional skills development.

In addition to August orientation, PBL staff development and three days of ongoing staff development, all employees are encouraged to research staff development opportunities related to their job descriptions. For example, math teachers may request to participate, at the expense of the school, in the annual math teacher's conference at Asilomar. The Reporting and Compliance Coordinator may need to attend regular CalPADS and Student Information System trainings. The School's leadership team and Board of Directors will want to attend the California Charter Schools Association's annual conference typically held in March. A staff development and training budget will be made available for these types of yearly staff development events. Costs associated with the events will be paid for by the school. Staff will be informed of the process by which they request attendance at staff development opportunities. Requests will be approved by the Programs Director or designee. A number of factors will go into the approval of such requests such as available funding, the timing of the event, relevance of the content and the potential impact for such training on the organization as a whole.

### **Staff Evaluation and Goal Assessment**

Supervisor evaluation, self evaluation and professional goal setting permeate all aspects of staff development. It is part of Synergy's whole school culture to "know thy self." All teachers will be evaluated based on the merits of the tasks accomplished as they are outlined in their specific job descriptions including student achievement. Programs Director's and the Finance Director's evaluations will be conducted by Synergy's Board of Directors. The Counseling and Student Services Director and Principals as well as all coordinator level positions will be evaluated by the Programs Director. Teacher evaluations will be based on a combination of California's teacher performance standards as well as additional categories addressing tasks and activities related to Project Based Learning development and delivery. Other tools may be used in finalizing staff evaluations and may include but are not limited to information gathered from the following sources: peer reviews, goals set from prior year, parent surveys, student surveys and supervisor observations. See Appendix 5 for a draft of the teacher and classified staff evaluation forms.

All staff, as part of the school's orientation process, will work together to set school-wide goals prior to the beginning of each school year. Also done as part of the school's orientation, the teaching staff will divide by subject area and set school achievement goals related to their content subject area. At the end of each school year staff will come together in their groups to evaluate progress towards the achievement of all goals set. The administrative staff will use the documented outcomes of such goals as one component of the Annual School Improvement Plan. All employees will also set individual goals during the evaluation process. At the close of each school year, each teacher will be assessed, in part, through the lenses of those goals. Staff members not

meeting the expectations of Synergy and not fulfilling the commitment to making progress towards their goals will not receive an employment contract for the following school year.

## **EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION**

*Governing Law: The manner by which staff members of Encores will be covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System, the Public Employees' Retirement System, or federal social security. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(K).*

To provide the best employment experience possible and also to attract qualified candidates, certificated employees at SEP participate in the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS), and eligible, non-certificated employees will participate in the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). All other employees will participate in the federal social security program.

EEC shall be responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for retirement coverage have been made for all employees, with the assistance of SEP's in-house or outsourced business services provider.

All employees will be paid once per month. Wages will be commensurate with experience and budget limitations.

SEP shall provide reports evidencing that SEP is making required payments of payroll taxes and payments into STRS, PERS, and federal social security and Medicare/Medicaid programs on behalf of all SEP employees.

## **RETURN RIGHTS OF SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES**

*Governing Law: 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. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(M).*

No public school district employee shall be required to work at SEP. Employees of the District who choose to leave the employment of the District to work at SEP will have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment by SEP unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement. SEP employees shall have any right upon leaving the District to work in SEP that the District may specify, any rights of return to employment in a school district after employment in SEP that the District may specify, and any other rights upon leaving employment to work in SEP that the District determines to be reasonable and not in conflict with any law.

All employees of SEP will be considered the exclusive employees of Synergy Education Project 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 SEP. Employment by SEP provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of SEP.

### **EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION**

*Governing Law: A declaration whether or not Encore shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of Encore for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)*

SEP shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of SEP for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act ("EERA"). Synergy Education Project recognizes the employees' rights under the EERA provisions to organize for collective bargaining and shall comply with the EERA.

**Element F: 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 record summary as described in Section 44237—California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(F).”*

**Student and Staff Health and Safety Provisions**

In order to provide safety for all students and staff, Synergy School will adopt and implement full health and safety procedures and risk management policies at our school site in consultation with our insurance carriers and risk management experts. A full draft will be provided to the State Board of Education for review at least 30 days prior to operation.

The following is a summary of the health and safety policies of the Synergy School:

**Procedures for Background Checks**

Employees and contractors of Synergy School will be required to submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Ed. Code 44237 and 45125.1. New employees not possessing a valid California Teaching Credential must be Live Scanned to initiate a background check by the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Programs Director of the school or designee shall monitor compliance with this policy and report to Synergy Education Project Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. The Board President shall monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the Programs Director. Volunteers who will have direct contact with Synergy students outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be Live Scanned and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

**Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters**

All non-certificated and certificated staff will be mandated child abuse reporters and will follow all applicable reporting laws.

**Comprehensive Sexual Harassment Policies and Procedures**

Synergy School is committed to providing an environment that is free from sexual harassment, as well as any other types of harassment based upon such factors as race, religion, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. The School will develop and submit to the Board of Directors for approval a comprehensive policy to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about sexual discrimination or harassment at the School (including employee to employee, employee to student, and student to employee misconduct). Misconduct of this nature is very serious and will be addressed in accordance with the School's sexual harassment policy.

**TB Testing**

Faculty, staff and volunteers will be tested for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment and working with students as required by Education Code Section 49406. All TB test results will be maintained in the employees file. Files will be reviewed each year. For those staff members who are due to complete an updated TB test a reminder will be sent. Staff that does not have a current test card on file will be placed on unpaid leave until a current test is on file.

**Immunizations**

All students enrolled and staff will be required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Section 6000-6075. This is a requirement of attendance to the same extent as is for students attending non-charter schools.

**Medication in School**

Synergy School will adhere to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school.

**Vision, Hearing/Scoliosis**

Students will be screened for vision, hearing and scoliosis. The Charter School will adhere to Education Code Section 49450, et seq., as applicable to the grade levels served by the school. This is a requirement of attendance to the same extent as is for students attending non-charter schools.

**Blood Borne Pathogens**

Synergy School shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with blood borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the work place. The Board shall establish a written infectious control plan designed to protect employees and students from possible infection due to contact with blood borne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus ("HIV") and hepatitis B virus ("HBV"). Whenever exposed to blood or other bodily fluids through injury or accident, staff and students shall follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures. Such disinfecting procedures will be explained in the school's handbook.

**Drug Free/Alcohol Free/Smoke Free Environment**

Synergy School shall function as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.

**Facility Safety**

Synergy School shall comply with Education Code Section 47610 by either utilizing facilities that are compliant with the Field Act or facilities that are compliant with the local building codes. The School agrees to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. The School shall conduct fire drills monthly. The School will

coordinate such drills if the School is located at a Pittsburg Unified School District school.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

Synergy School shall adhere to an Emergency Preparedness Handbook drafted specifically to the needs of the school site in conjunction with law enforcement and the Fire Marshall. This handbook shall include, but not be limited to the following responses: fire, flood, earthquake, shelter-in-place, lockdown, hostile intruder situations and other natural disasters. If assuming a facility used prior as a school site, any existing emergency preparedness plan for the school site shall be used as a starting basis for updating the handbook for Synergy School. If the building has not been used as a school site prior to Synergy the school will design its own Emergency Preparedness Handbook to be developed once there is a secured facility.

Since emergency preparedness requires planning and training on the execution all staff members will be trained in accordance to the policies and procedures outlined in Synergy's Emergency Preparedness Handbook. Training will take place each August and also for any new employees hired during the school year.

All staff will be required to hold up to date CPR and First Aid Certification. New staff hired without the certificate will be given an appropriate amount of time to secure the proper training. Synergy will create periodic training and recertification opportunities for staff needing new or recertification training.

**Element G: Means to Achieve 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.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(G)*

Synergy’s Project Based Learning model calls for a tremendous amount of peer collaboration. High quality collaborative experiences depend, in part, on participants that come to the classroom from a variety of different backgrounds, life experiences and belief systems. Embedded in Synergy’s philosophy is the belief that students need to learn from others how to respect different viewpoints and to work towards finding the commonalities in all people. Therefore it is crucial that Synergy staff develop recruitment methods to ensure that its students come from all walks of life that are representative of the Pittsburg community. Synergy staff will use steps such as the following to ensure that students who are representative of the school’s respective communities are recruited and feel welcome:

- Ensure that recruitment efforts include relevant foreign language-speaking staff as available
- Post flyers and notices in local supermarkets, restaurants, businesses, churches, community centers, and apartment complexes in low-income neighborhoods
- Develop informational and marketing materials in multiple languages; materials are currently available in English and Spanish
- Visit and speak at local community based organizations
- Conduct parent information sessions to explain the education program
- Promote the school at neighborhood festivals and Farmer’s Markets
- Encourage referrals from Synergy students and families
- Speak at civic organizations with a particular focus on local community populations
- Invite local television and print media reporters to report on the school

Recruitment efforts will be ongoing with stepped up efforts during periods of open enrollment January – June as well as early August if there is no enrollment waiting list.

In its recruitment efforts Synergy School will provide translated promotional materials in Spanish and other languages as appropriate to Pittsburg’s foreign born population demographics. To supplement its recruiting efforts, the school will partner with neighborhood associations such as the Boys and Girls Club and STS.

Synergy School commits to reviewing the outreach plan annually and revising the plan as needed to attract a broad base of applicants.

Synergy School will keep on file documentation of the efforts the school made to achieve student racial and ethnic balance and the results it achieved, as well as an accurate accounting of the ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled in the school through the school’s student information system.

**Element H: Admissions Requirements**

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

**Legal Assurances**

Charter schools are schools of choice and admissions policies will reflect this compliance with state and federal requirements. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605 (d)(2)(A),

Synergy School will admit all students who wish to attend, up to the school's enrollment capacity.

Attendance at Synergy is fully voluntary.

Synergy School will:

- be non-sectarian in all areas of operations, including student admission
- not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code
- not be selective in admitting students based on the location of student or parent residence and will enroll students regardless of where they live provided there is space available
- not charge tuition
- accept all students who are California residents
- not require any pupil to attend the charter school
- not enroll pupils over 19 years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements
- comply with all laws establishing minimum age for public school attendance
- adhere to 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

If a pupil leaves the charter school without graduating or completing the school year for reasons other than expulsion, Synergy School will 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.

SEP will admit all students who wish to attend and are residents of the State of California, subject to SEP's capacity. SEP will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools. Admission, except in the case of a public random drawing, shall not be determined by the place of residence of the pupil or his or her parent or legal guardian within the state.

SEP shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations, shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, perceived sexual orientation, home language, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Penal Code Section 422.55, or any other characteristic prohibited by law. No student residing within the boundaries of Pittsburg Unified School District shall be required to attend SEP, and alternative school choices are available at any high school within the Pittsburg Unified School District.

SEP shall at all times comply with the terms and requirements of the free schools guarantee of the California Constitution, Article IX, Section 5, in all aspects of the Encore program.

SEP shall maintain the confidentiality of student information, including compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") 20 USC Section 1232g.

SEP is planning a student population of 300 during the 2015/2016 school year. Plans to grow the population of SEP to accommodate 700 students within five years are pending student interest, charter approval, and facility capacities. SEP reserves the right to increase / decrease student population numbers within 10% of the overall capacity enrollment and student teacher ratios.

### **Admission Requirements**

- Students must be a California resident, grades 6 through 12.
- Complete an application for admission
- Parents/Guardians and students must sign a contract agreeing to abide by School Code of Conduct including but not limited to dress code, media, attendance, and behavior.
- Guardians must complete an enrollment packet and turn the completed packet to the records office.
- Students must complete an academic assessment test.
- Students and parents/guardians must attend an on-campus orientation and tour prior to admission to school.

**Getting on the list** - A parent or guardian can fill out the enrollment packet only after attending a school tour. This packet must be completed in its entirety and turned in to the enrollment office. SEP will not be responsible for students whose contact information is not accurate. If the number of admission applications exceeds the enrollment capacity by the enrollment deadline, SEP will hold a public random lottery to determine admission for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students, who are guaranteed admission in the following school year. Admission

preferences in the case of a public random lottery shall be given to the following students in the following order:

1. Siblings of students already attending SEP, children of SEP educators, administration, and staff
2. Students on the prior year's waitlist
3. Students residing in the Pittsburg Unified School District
4. Other California residents

SEP and the District mutually agree that the preferences in the public random drawing as listed above are consistent with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2) and applicable federal law and non-regulatory guidance; however, should the preferences require modification in order to meet requirements of the Public Charter School Grant Program (PCSGP), such modifications may be made at SEP's discretion.

Any applications not accepted through this lottery process will be used to develop a wait list pool of applicants on an ongoing basis and will be added to the wait list pool. The waitlist pool will be updated annually in the second semester. A waiting list of applicants at each grade level shall be maintained to fill vacancies that occur during the school year. Applicants who were waitlisted in the previous year will be given preference within their waitlist priority group in a subsequent year's lottery.

**School Transcripts** – Once accepted, a student must supply the final transcripts from the last school attended before enrollment into SEP. Fax and/or certified copies of transcripts are acceptable for out of state transcripts for initial enrollment, but must be replaced with actual transcripts within 90 days of enrollment.

**Mid Term Acceptance** – If a student is accepted for enrollment mid term, they will have a maximum of two days to respond and enroll into SEP. If they do not enroll within two business days, their spot will go to the next available candidate.

**Parent Involvement**

### **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

If a student falls below the 2.0 GPA minimum academic requirement at SEP after they have been accepted to SEP, they will be placed on an Academic Probation Contract where they will have 60 days to raise their academic grades. During this Contract, they will have to submit weekly progress reports to their school counselor. If after 60 days, the grades have not been improved, the student will be required to enroll with an RTI Coach (Response to Intervention), and a Study Skills Class. They will also be required to attend after school tutoring at least one day per week and will be given an action plan on how to plan the week in study hall. If a student is not making an attempt (i.e. attendance and assignment completion) to raise their grades to at least a 2.0 GPA, they will be considered for removal from SEP in accordance with SEP's discipline policies.

**NOTICE AND HEARING PROCESS FOR ANY TYPE OF STUDENT DISMISSAL**

Students that are facing dismissal for disciplinary, attendance, or academic reasons have due process that gives parents of the students and the students the opportunity to receive notice and be heard prior to implementation and to appeal disciplinary actions.

**DUE PROCESS –**

1. When a student has an incident or complaint made against them, a member of administration will conduct an investigation. Administration will collect evidence including: incident reports from witnesses and interview the student that the incident or complaint was made against.
2. If the administration has deemed that the offense requires a dismissal or expulsion, the parent of the student will be contacted by the administrator that has conducted the investigation. When necessary, the student will be placed on suspension until a formal hearing can be scheduled with the discipline committee. The student's parent or guardian will be given at least ten calendar days prior to the date of the hearing, unless this grace period is waived by the parent.
3. The discipline committee will be comprised of three members of the teacher / instructor staff that does not currently have the student enrolled in a class and that was not a part of the disciplinary investigation.
4. The student and his/her parent/guardian will be invited to the hearing and to present evidence to the discipline committee in a closed hearing. At this meeting, the Administrator that conducted the investigation will explain to the discipline committee what the offense was and the circumstances surrounding the offense.
5. The student and his/her parent/guardian are given opportunity to explain to the discipline committee the circumstances surrounding the offense and any additional information during the confidential meeting.
6. The discipline committee can ask questions of all parties in attendance at the confidential meeting to help come to a decision with regard to action taken in regard to dismissal or expulsion.
7. After completion of the meeting, the discipline committee will meet in a private meeting to make a decision regarding the dismissal or expulsion. Once the decision has been made, a member of the discipline committee will contact the parent or guardian regarding the outcome of the meeting.
8. If the parent, guardian, or student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the discipline committee meeting, the parent, guardian, or student may make an appeal to the Encore Education Corporation Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will hear the appeal in closed session.
9. Once the appeal is heard, the Board of Directors will meet in closed session to discuss the appeal and render a decision. The decision will be provided to the family in writing.
- 10.

## **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION PROCEDURES**

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well being of all students at Encore. In creating this policy, Encore 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.* Encore 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 Encore'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. Charter School staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This Policy and its Procedures will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook and will clearly describe discipline expectations. 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.

Encore administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice shall state that this Policy and Procedures are available on request at the Assistant Dean of Student's office.

## **EXPULSION**

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether they should be expelled. The hearing will be held within thirty (30) days after Administration determines that an act warranting expulsion has occurred. If all parties agree to the expulsion, the hearing can be waived.

Written notice of the hearing will be sent to the student's parent or guardian at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the date of the hearing unless the grace period is waived by the parent. The notice shall include:

- date and place of hearing
- statement specifying the facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based.
- copy of the School's disciplinary rules as it relates to the alleged violation.
- statement that the student and/or student's parent or guardian may appear in person at the hearing.

Should the student be expelled, written notice of expulsion will be sent by Administration to the student's parent or guardian including the following:

- specific offense committed by the student that was interpreted to be within the Reasons for Suspension or Expulsion.
- notice of the student and/or parent or guardian's obligation to inform any new school district in which the student seeks to enroll about their status with Encore.
- Encore will notify the school where transcripts are requested of the expulsion from EHS.

In the event of an expulsion, Encore will work cooperatively with the district of residence, county and or private school to assist with the appropriate educational placement of the student who has been expelled. Any incident of violent and/or serious student misconduct will be communicated to the district/school to which the student matriculates.

SEP is a safe school. All dangerous behavior will be investigated and may result in immediate suspension and/or expulsion. All criminal behavior will be immediately reported to local law authorities.

## **SUSPENSION**

### **Due Process.**

#### **- Behavioral Intervention**

If a student violates School policies enumerated in the School handbook that are not specified in the Education Code as grounds for suspension or expulsion, a conference will be held between administrative staff, the student and the parents/guardians. The student 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. A behavior contract will then be designed and signed by all parties present in which the student pledges to complete specified tasks or uphold specified codes of behavior within a given time frame. If this behavior contract is broken by the student, another conference will be scheduled from which dismissal or suspension is a possible outcome.

#### **- Informal Conference**

Suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the administrative staff, with the student and his/her parent/guardian. 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. The conference may be omitted if the administrative staff determines that an emergency situation exists. An "Emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or School personnel. If the student is suspended without conference, the parent/guardian shall be notified of the suspension and a conference will be requested as soon as possible.

**- Notice to Parents/Guardians**

At the time of suspension, a School employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person to be followed up with a written notification. This notice will state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time the student may return to school. If the School officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may note that the parents/guardians are required to respond to this request within three business days following suspension and that violation of School rules can result in expulsion from School.

**-Length of Suspension**

The length of suspension for students may not exceed a period of 5 consecutive days without first scheduling a second conference between administrators and parents/guardians to discuss the progress of the suspension upon the completion of the 5<sup>th</sup> day of suspension. All arrangements will be made to provide the student with supplied curriculum packets to be completed at home during the length of suspension. ANY STUDENT SUSPENDED FOR ANY REASON WILL BE SUSPENDED FROM ALL PERFORMANCE AND/OR ART SHOWS FOR THE PERIOD OF 30 DAYS FOLLOWING THEIR SUSPENSION.

Incidents a pupil maybe suspended or expelled for are:

1. Caused, attempted to cause or threatened to cause physical injury to another person
2. Willfully used force or violence upon a person of another, except in self defense
3. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the object from the Dean of students
4. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished or been under the influence of any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind
5. Unlawfully offered, arranged or negotiated to sell any controlled substance
6. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion
7. Caused, attempted to cause damage to school or private property
8. Stolen or attempted to steal school or private property
9. Possessed or used tobacco, or any products containing nicotine products including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, e-cigarettes, electronic hookah, and betel.
10. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
11. Had unlawful possession of, or willfully offered, arranged or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia.
12. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
13. Knowingly received stolen school or private property.
14. 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.

15. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault.
16. Committed a sexual battery.
17. Harassed, threatened or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witnesses in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose or either preventing that student from being a witness or retaliating against that student for being a witness, or both.
18. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell prescription drugs.
19. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing.
20. Aids or abets the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person.
21. Caused, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence.
22. Made terrorist threats against school officials or school property, or both.
23. Sale of any goods for private or fundraising purposes without express written consent from the school administration.
24. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in bullying or cyberbullying.

In the event that any of these infractions lead a student to suspension or expulsion, the administration of SEP High School will notify the parents immediately of the infraction and will arrange a parent student conference with administration to discuss the infraction and consequences of the act.

If a student receives more than a total of fifteen suspension days within a single school year, they will be dismissed from SEP for behavioral issues.

SEP will collect and produce data regarding the suspension and expulsion of special education students as required by the Modified Consent Decree. SEP will adhere to all provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its amendments.

The decision to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the SEP administration to determine whether the student has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan designated by the school / district that expelled the pupil and to determine whether the student poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The student's readmission is also contingent upon the capacity of SEP at the time the student seeks readmission or admission. All previously expelled students will be required to complete all admissions requirements including but not limited to a new audition and portfolio.

## **RIGHT OF APPEAL FOR SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS**

Parents and students will have the right to appeal a decision for suspension or expulsion by administration. If a student or parent wishes to appeal the decision to suspend or expel, they must submit a formal letter of appeal to the SEP Board of Directors within seven business days of the Administration's formal decision.

Upon receipt of the appeal, the SEP Board of Directors will have ten business days to review the case and give their recommendations regarding the specific suspension or expulsion. SEP will arrange for an appeal hearing during closed session at the next

regularly scheduled board meeting. SEP Administration will be required to uphold the final recommendations by the SEP Corporation Board of Directors.

The Suspension and Expulsion policy will be reviewed annually and when necessary, modified.

### **No Right to Appeal**

The pupil shall have no right of appeal from expulsion from SEP as SEP Board of Directors's decision to expel shall be final.

### **Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education**

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. SEP shall work cooperatively with parents/guardians as requested by parents/guardians or by the school district of residence to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion.

### **Rehabilitation Plans**

Students who are expelled from SEP shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Board 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 Encore for readmission.

### **Readmission**

The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Board following a meeting with the 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 Dean of Students or designee shall make a recommendation to the Board following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon SEP's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

### **Special Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities**

#### **1. Notification of SELPA**

SEP 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 SEP or 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 or functional analysis, 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, SEP, 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 SEP, 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 SEP, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP/504 Team shall:

- a. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that SEP 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 SEP agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If SEP, 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 SEP 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 SEP 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 SEP, 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 SEP 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 SEP's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if Encore had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

SEP 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 director of special education or to other Charter School supervisory personnel.

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

SEP 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 I: Annual Independent 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. At a minimum, (a) specify who is responsible for contracting and overseeing the independent audit; (b) Specify that the auditor will have experience in education finance; (c) Outline the process of providing audit reports to the SBE, California Department of Education, or other agency as the SBE may direct, and specifying the time line in which audit exceptions will typically be addressed, and (d) indicate the process that the charter school will follow to address any audit findings and/or resolve any audit exceptions. Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(I)*

Synergy Education Project’s Board of Directors shall form an Audit Committee, a majority of whose members shall be independent members of the Board. No Board members that hold board positions allocated for school employees shall sit on the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee shall annually oversee the selection of and contractual arrangement with an independent auditor who has experience in education finance, who is listed with the State Controller as an auditing firm authorized to perform public school audits, and who is familiar with the K-12 Audit Guide. This auditor will complete an annual audit of Synergy School’s financial books and records by December 15<sup>th</sup> following the close of its first full year of operation and each year thereafter. This audit will be conducted in accordance with the applicable Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and the K-12 Audit Guide. The auditor will verify the accuracy of Synergy School’s financial activities, state and federal compliance, attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and a review of internal controls.

To the extent required by federal law, the scope of this audit will be expanded to include any relevant items or processes identified by the Office of Management and Budget. Synergy School will provide the internal controls policy, the full general ledger, and any reports requested to be provided by the client to the auditors. The school will also make available any other records as requested.

The annual audit will be completed and submitted to the California Department of Education, State Board of Education as the charter’s authorizer and the Office of the State Controller by December 15<sup>th</sup> of each year.

Synergy’s Audit Committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report recommendations to the School’s full Board at the next regularly scheduled board meeting or special board meeting as to how these have been, or will be, resolved. Synergy’s Board will review the full audit report and take action upon these recommendations within 60 days, and report its actions to the State Board of Education (SBE). Any disagreement by the SBE concerning the resolution of audit exceptions or deficiencies shall be referred to the dispute resolution processed described in Element N herein.

Synergy School and the SBE will jointly develop any other evaluation criteria that they request in connection with these annual reports. In addition, the SBE and Synergy School will jointly coordinate an annual site visitation procedure to enable the SBE's staff to independently confirm the school's performance and compliance with the terms of its charter.

### **POLICIES, CONTROLS, GUIDELINES**

Synergy will develop, implement, and ensure compliance with health, safety, and risk management guidelines in consultation with its insurance carriers and risk management experts.

Synergy shall develop and maintain other fiscal control policies as recommended by independent certified public accountants.

Synergy Education Project shall enter into and maintain in full force and effect a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") MOU with the State Board of Education to legally establish the specifics of the mutual relationship, as necessary and/or required by SBE. Such MOU, as it may be amended from time to time, is incorporated into the Charter and made a part hereof as if set forth in full in the Charter.

Synergy will act as its own fiscal agent to the fullest extent of the law.

**Element J: Student Discipline, Suspension and Expulsion Procedures**

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

**Student Discipline**

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well being of all students at the school. When the Policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular attendance at school and from all school related activities and functions. This policy shall serve as Synergy'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.

Synergy School staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This policy and its procedures will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook and will clearly describe discipline expectations. Discipline includes but is not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, use of alternative educational environments, additional assignments, 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.

Synergy's administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice shall state that these policy and administrative procedures are available on request at the School's administrative offices.

A positive school culture demonstrating safety, order, and effective methods of student discipline are fundamental to learning at Synergy School. While students need a challenging curriculum, dedicated teachers and proper materials, they must also have a secure learning environment in which they feel safe. Synergy staff must promote, by the terms of their employment contract, the school's core value in creating a positive school culture which demonstrates a healthy respect for all students especially when it comes to discipline.

**NOTICE AND HEARING PROCESS FOR ANY TYPE OF STUDENT DISMISSAL**

Students that are facing dismissal for disciplinary, attendance, or academic reasons have due process that gives parents of the students and the students the opportunity to receive notice and be heard prior to implementation and to appeal disciplinary actions.

## DUE PROCESS –

11. When a student has an incident or complaint made against them, a member of administration will conduct an investigation. Administration will collect evidence including: incident reports from witnesses and interview the student that the incident or complaint was made against.
12. If the administration has deemed that the offense requires a dismissal or expulsion, the parent of the student will be contacted by the administrator that has conducted the investigation. When necessary, the student will be placed on suspension until a formal hearing can be scheduled with the discipline committee. The student's parent or guardian will be given at least ten calendar days prior to the date of the hearing, unless this grace period is waived by the parent.
13. The discipline committee will be comprised of three members of the teacher / instructor staff that does not currently have the student enrolled in a class and that was not a part of the disciplinary investigation.
14. The student and his/her parent/guardian will be invited to the hearing and to present evidence to the discipline committee in a closed hearing. At this meeting, the Administrator that conducted the investigation will explain to the discipline committee what the offense was and the circumstances surrounding the offense.
15. The student and his/her parent/guardian are given opportunity to explain to the discipline committee the circumstances surrounding the offense and any additional information during the confidential meeting.
16. The discipline committee can ask questions of all parties in attendance at the confidential meeting to help come to a decision with regard to action taken in regard to dismissal or expulsion.
17. After completion of the meeting, the discipline committee will meet in a private meeting to make a decision regarding the dismissal or expulsion. Once the decision has been made, a member of the discipline committee will contact the parent or guardian regarding the outcome of the meeting.
18. If the parent, guardian, or student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the discipline committee meeting, the parent, guardian, or student may make an appeal to the Encore Education Corporation Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will hear the appeal in closed session.
19. Once the appeal is heard, the Board of Directors will meet in closed session to discuss the appeal and render a decision. The decision will be provided to the family in writing.

## **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION PROCEDURES**

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well being of all students at Synergy. In creating this policy, Synergy 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.* Synergy 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 Synergy'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. Charter School staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This Policy and its Procedures will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook and will clearly describe discipline expectations. 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.

Synergy administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice shall state that this Policy and Procedures are available on request at the Dean of Student's office.

## **EXPULSION**

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether they should be expelled. The hearing will be held within thirty (30) days after Administration determines that an act warranting expulsion has occurred. If all parties agree to the expulsion, the hearing can be waived.

Written notice of the hearing will be sent to the student's parent or guardian at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the date of the hearing unless the grace period is waived by the parent. The notice shall include:

- date and place of hearing
- statement specifying the facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based.
- copy of the School's disciplinary rules as it relates to the alleged violation.
- statement that the student and/or student's parent or guardian may appear in person at the hearing.

Should the student be expelled, written notice of expulsion will be sent by Administration to the student's parent or guardian including the following:

- specific offense committed by the student that was interpreted to be within the Reasons for Suspension or Expulsion.
- notice of the student and/or parent or guardian's obligation to inform any new school district in which the student seeks to enroll about their status with Encore.

- Synergy will notify the school where transcripts are requested of the expulsion from Synergy.

In the event of an expulsion, Synergy will work cooperatively with the district of residence, county and or private school to assist with the appropriate educational placement of the student who has been expelled. Any incident of violent and/or serious student misconduct will be communicated to the district/school to which the student matriculates.

Synergy is a safe school. All dangerous behavior will be investigated and may result in immediate suspension and/or expulsion. All criminal behavior will be immediately reported to local law authorities.

## **SUSPENSION**

### **Due Process.**

#### **- Behavioral Intervention**

If a student violates School policies enumerated in the School handbook that are not specified in the Education Code as grounds for suspension or expulsion, a conference will be held between administrative staff, the student and the parents/guardians. The student 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. A behavior contract will then be designed and signed by all parties present in which the student pledges to complete specified tasks or uphold specified codes of behavior within a given time frame. If this behavior contract is broken by the student, another conference will be scheduled from which dismissal or suspension is a possible outcome.

#### **- Informal Conference**

Suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the administrative staff, with the student and his/her parent/guardian. 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. The conference may be omitted if the administrative staff determines that an emergency situation exists. An "Emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or School personnel. If the student is suspended without conference, the parent/guardian shall be notified of the suspension and a conference will be requested as soon as possible.

#### **- Notice to Parents/Guardians**

At the time of suspension, a School employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person to be followed up with a written notification. This notice will state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time the student may return to school. If the School officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters

pertinent to the suspension, the notice may note that the parents/guardians are required to respond to this request within three business days following suspension and that violation of School rules can result in expulsion from School.

### **-Length of Suspension**

The length of suspension for students may not exceed a period of 5 consecutive days without first scheduling a second conference between administrators and parents/guardians to discuss the progress of the suspension upon the completion of the 5<sup>th</sup> day of suspension. All arrangements will be made to provide the student with supplied curriculum packets to be completed at home during the length of suspension. ANY STUDENT SUSPENDED FOR ANY REASON WILL BE SUSPENDED FROM ALL PERFORMANCE AND/OR ART SHOWS FOR THE PERIOD OF 30 DAYS FOLLOWING THEIR SUSPENSION.

Incidents a pupil maybe suspended or expelled for are:

1. Caused, attempted to cause or threatened to cause physical injury to another person
2. Willfully used force or violence upon a person of another, except in self defense
3. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the object from the Dean of students
4. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished or been under the influence of any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind
5. Unlawfully offered, arranged or negotiated to sell any controlled substance
6. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion
7. Caused, attempted to cause damage to school or private property
8. Stolen or attempted to steal school or private property
9. Possessed or used tobacco, or any products containing nicotine products including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, e-cigarettes, electronic hookah, and betel.
10. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
11. Had unlawful possession of, or willfully offered, arranged or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia.
12. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
13. Knowingly received stolen school or private property.
14. 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.
15. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault.
16. Committed a sexual battery.
17. Harassed, threatened or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witnesses in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose or either preventing that student from being a witness or retaliating against that student for being a witness, or both.

18. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell prescription drugs.
19. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing.
20. Aids or abets the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person.
21. Caused, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence.
22. Made terrorist threats against school officials or school property, or both.
23. Sale of any goods for private or fundraising purposes without express written consent from the school administration.
24. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in bullying or cyberbullying.

In the event that any of these infractions lead a student to suspension or expulsion, the administration of Synergy Education Project School will notify the parents immediately of the infraction and will arrange a parent student conference with administration to discuss the infraction and consequences of the act.

If a student receives more than a total of fifteen suspension days within a single school year, they will be dismissed from Synergy for behavioral issues.

Synergy will collect and produce data regarding the suspension and expulsion of special education students as required by the Modified Consent Decree. Synergy will adhere to all provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its amendments.

The decision to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Synergy administration to determine whether the student has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan designated by the school / district that expelled the pupil and to determine whether the student poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The student's readmission is also contingent upon the capacity of Synergy at the time the student seeks readmission or admission. All previously expelled students will be required to complete all admissions requirements including but not limited to a new audition and portfolio.

## **RIGHT OF APPEAL FOR SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS**

Parents and students will have the right to appeal a decision for suspension or expulsion by administration. If a student or parent wishes to appeal the decision to suspend or expel, they must submit a formal letter of appeal to the Encore Education Corporation Board of Directors within seven business days of the Administration's formal decision.

Upon receipt of the appeal, the Encore Education Corporation Board of Directors will have ten business days to review the case and give their recommendations regarding the specific suspension or expulsion. The Encore Education Corporation will arrange for an appeal hearing during closed session at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. Synergy Administration will be required to uphold the final recommendations by the Encore Education Corporation Board of Directors.

The Suspension and Expulsion policy will be reviewed annually and when necessary, modified.

### **No Right to Appeal**

The pupil shall have no right of appeal from expulsion from Synergy as Encore Education Corporation Board of Directors's decision to expel shall be final.

### **Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education**

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. Synergy shall work cooperatively with parents/guardians as requested by parents/guardians or by the school district of residence to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion.

### **Rehabilitation Plans**

Students who are expelled from Synergy shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Board 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 Synergy for readmission.

### **Readmission**

The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Board following a meeting with the 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 Dean of Students or designee shall make a recommendation to the Board following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon Synergy's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

### **Special Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities**

#### **1. Notification of SELPA**

Synergy 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 Synergy or 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 or functional analysis, 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, Synergy, 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:

- c. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- d. If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan.

If Synergy, 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 Synergy, 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:

- d. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that Synergy had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;
- e. 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
- f. Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and Synergy agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If Synergy, 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 Synergy 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 Synergy 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 Synergy, 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 Synergy 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:

- d. 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;
- e. 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
- f. 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 Synergy's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if Synergy had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

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

- d. 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.
- e. The parent has requested an evaluation of the child.
- f. 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 director of special education or to other Charter School supervisory personnel.

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

Synergy 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 K: The Retirement System**

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

**Assurances**

Synergy School will make any contribution that is legally required of the employer, including STRS, PERS, and unemployment insurance.

Synergy Education Project Board of Directors will approve salary scales, health/dental/vision benefits, working conditions, calendars, holidays, vacations, work days, and the work year. When appropriate, the Board will obtain feedback from the school community (i.e., administrators, teachers, Parent Advisory Committee) on these items. In the very minimum, salary scales will be no lower than the Pittsburg Unified School District’s with every effort being made to offer higher pay scales consistent with a Contra Costa County’s averaged pay scales in order to attract and retain the highest quality staff. Placement on the salary scale shall be competitive and consistent with the practices of Pittsburg Unified School District and surrounding districts. Health, dental and vision benefits packages will be offered to all full and part-time employees based on the percentage of employee work time for those employees working at least 50% positions. For example, if an employee holds an 80% of full time position then the school will pay 80% of the cost of the benefits package with the employee contributing the other 20%.

The Board will evaluate salary scales and benefits offerings each year and make changes as needed. A commitment will be made to make positive improvements in salaries and benefits packages as the budget allows.

Synergy’s Program Director and Finance Director will be responsible for working with any applicable vendors (i.e., payroll companies, service providers, etc.), to ensure that the following retirement program data, paperwork, and payments are completed and submitted accordingly and that contributions are made on behalf of all eligible staff members.

**State Teachers’ Retirement System (STRS)**

Synergy’s certificated teachers and eligible administrators shall be a part of the State Teachers’ Retirement System, (STRS). Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of STRS. Any certificated employees who are eligible may elect to participate in the State Teachers’ Retirement System (STRS). Participating employees will contribute the required percentage (currently 8% of salary), and Synergy School will contribute the employer’s portion (currently 8.25%) required by STRS.

**Public Employees Retirement System (PERS)**

Synergy’s non-certificated employee may elect to be a member of the Public Employees Retirement System, (PERS). Any non-certificated employees who are eligible may

elect to participate in PERS. Participating employees will contribute the required percentage with Synergy contributing the employer's portion required by PERS.

**403b Retirement Benefit Option**

Synergy's non-certificated employees who elect not to participate in PERS can opt to have a percentage of their pay withheld for contribution into a 403b retirement plan. Synergy school will match non-certificated employee contributions up to 3%.

**Element L: Attendance Alternatives**

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

A student who chooses not to attend Synergy School may choose to attend their designated school in their district of residence. Students may also choose another education option or pursue an inter-district transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of that district. Parents or guardians of pupils enrolled in Synergy will have no right to admission in a particular school of any local educational agency (LEA) as a consequence of enrollment in Synergy, except that such a right is extended by the LEA.

**Element M: Description of Employee Rights**

*“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.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(M)*

Permanent employees of schools in districts within Pittsburg Unified School District boundaries who leave their positions to work for Synergy School shall retain no rights to their district’s employment policies unless specified by that district or the district’s collective bargaining agreement. Any rights of return to employment shall be specified by the specific district. Employment at Synergy is fully voluntary.

**Element N: Dispute Resolution**

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

The following provisions are intended to define a mechanism for: (a) the resolution of any disputes within Synergy School pursuant to their policies and; (b) the resolution of any disputes between Synergy and State Board of Education. With respect to each of these procedures, it is Synergy’s intention that all public commentary be withheld pending full resolution.

Synergy School will provide the State Board of Education a copy of its Uniform Complaint Process in accordance with provisions of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 76.780-783, as defined in Title 5-Education, California Code of Regulations, 4600-4671.

Synergy acknowledges that the State Board of Education is not a Local Education Agency (LEA) for purposes of this section. Furthermore, Synergy acknowledges SBE’s right under law to allow for immediate revocation of the charter if the basis of the revocation is a severe and imminent threat to the health and safety of pupils; and finally, that that the SBE may choose to resolve any dispute with SCS directly if it so chooses.

**Disputes within Synergy School**

Any dispute arising within Synergy School, whether among or between students, staff, parents, partnering organizations or board members, shall be resolved pursuant to policies and procedures developed by the school. The State Board of Education will not be involved in any such dispute unless it has reasonable cause to believe that there has been a violation of the charter or any related laws or agreements. Synergy’s dispute resolution policies will be adopted as to maintain the highest quality operational standards and to minimize the oversight burdens upon the State Board of Education.

**Disputes Between Synergy School and State Board of Education**

Synergy School and the State Board of Education (SBE) will be encouraged to attempt to resolve any disputes with the SBE amicably and reasonably without resorting to formal procedures. The School acknowledges the SBE’s ongoing right to inspect or observe the charter school under Education Code Section 47607, et seq., and such inspection and observation is not subject to this dispute resolution mechanism.

In the event of a dispute between Synergy and the SBE, the staff, employees, and Board members of the school and the SBE agree to first frame the issue in written format (“dispute statement”) and refer the issue to the SBE and the Programs Director. In the event that the SBE believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter in accordance with Education Code Section 47607, this shall be noted in the written dispute statement. However, participation in the dispute resolution procedures outlined in this section shall not be interpreted to impede or as a

pre-requisite to the SBE's ability to proceed with revocation in accordance with Education Code Section 47607.

Synergy's Programs Director or designee and the SBE's designee shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute, not later than 10 business days from receipt of the dispute statement. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, Synergy shall identify two board members from the their Board of Directors who shall jointly meet with two SBE designees as well as the Programs Director of the School and attempt to resolve the dispute within 20 business days from receipt of the dispute statement. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, a SBE designee and the Programs Director shall meet to jointly identify a neutral third party mediator to engage the Parties in a non-binding arbitration session designed to facilitate resolution of the dispute. The format of the non-binding arbitration session shall be developed jointly by the SBE designee and the Programs Director. The non-binding arbitration shall be held within sixty business days of receipt of the dispute statement. The costs of the arbitrator shall be split equally between the SBE and the School. If the non-binding arbitration does not resolve the dispute either party may pursue any other remedy available under the law. All timelines in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement of the SBE and the School.

**Element O: Labor Relations**

*“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 Section 3540) of division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code).” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(O)*

Synergy School shall be deemed the exclusive and independent public school employer of the employees of Synergy School for the purposes of the Education Employment Relations Act and with respect to collective bargaining. As such, Synergy School will comply with all provisions of the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA) and will act independently for bargaining purposes.

In accordance with the EERA, employees may join and be represented by an organization of their choice for collective bargaining purposes. However, unless the employees elect to be represented by an organization for bargaining purposes, all employees will be employed on an individual basis.

**Element P: School Closure Procedures**

*“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.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(P)*

The following procedures shall apply in the event that Synergy School closes. The following procedures apply regardless of the reason for closure.

Closure of Synergy School will be documented by official action of Synergy Education Project's Board of Directors. The action will identify the reason for closure. Synergy's Board will promptly notify the State Board of Education, California Department of Education, Contra Costa County Office of Education, and the school's governing SELPA of the closure and of the effective date of the closure. As soon as closure is imminent, Synergy School will notify the SBE to schedule a meeting to discuss a payment plan for any funds owed by the state to the School, or owed to the state by the School.

Synergy Education Project's Board of Directors will ensure notification to the parents and students of the school of the closure and to provide information to assist parents and students in locating suitable alternative programs. This notice will be provided promptly following the Board's decision to close the school.

As applicable, Synergy School will provide parents, students and the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE) with copies of all appropriate student records and will otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. All transfers of personnel and student records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) 20 U.S.C. § 1232g. The School will ask the County to store original records of Synergy students and personnel. All records of the school shall be transferred to the CCCOE upon school closure.

As soon as reasonably practical, Synergy School will prepare final financial records. The School will also have an independent audit completed as soon as reasonably practical, which period is generally no more than six months after closure. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by the school and will be provided to the State Board of Education and the California Department of Education promptly upon its completion.

On closure of Synergy School, all assets of the school, including but not limited to all leaseholds, personal property, intellectual property and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by students attending the school, remain the sole property of the Synergy Education Project. Should the Synergy Education Project dissolve all school property as mentioned above shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation to another public educational entity. On closure, the school shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of the school.

As the school is operated by a nonprofit public benefit corporation, should the corporation dissolve with the closure of the school, the Board will follow the procedures set forth in the California Corporations Code for the dissolution of a nonprofit public benefit corporation and file all necessary filings with the appropriate state and federal agencies.

## **Additional Requirements**

### **Facilities**

Synergy School intends to occupy a facility that supports the school's mission, vision, curricular and physical education programs. The school may seek the support of the Pittsburg Unified School District in securing a district owned facility through the annual presentation of a Proposition 39 facilities request. Since the school is planned for slow growth over time, the facilities needs will change each year in order to accommodate growth in ADA and staffing. Through the support of the District, Synergy hopes to secure facilities that will allow for growth each year without the prospect of having to move as the school's facilities needs change.

Synergy may also consider leasing private facilities for the operation of the school. Should this be the case, Synergy has already established a relationship with an agent from Colliers International for the purposes of searching for and securing an alternate location within the Pittsburg Unified School District's boundaries. Synergy School shall ensure that such facilities will be secured at least two months prior to the first day of school and that the facility will comply with local building and zoning ordinances. The School will obtain the proper Certificate of Occupancy and any other necessary permits under local ordinances for operating a school.

Synergy will continue the lease on the current property on Leland Avenue within the Pittsburg Unified School District boundaries. This is Synergy's sole campus at present.

Plans to move operations to a larger site will be executed when/if Synergy enrollment warrants the facilities change. Currently, the most likely site is a larger building in foreclosure as of April 2015, located in Pittsburg (exact address withheld from public disclosure until property negotiations are completed).

Facilities occupied by Synergy shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations applicable to California charter school facilities, including but not limited to accessibility and safety requirements.

Synergy shall provide the SBE with a copy of any executed lease or other facility agreement prior to locating Synergy in a facility.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Synergy will not provide transportation to and from school, except as required by law for students with disabilities in accordance with a student's IEP. Synergy reserves the right to elect to start a bus service for a fee to the students if the need arises.

### **SITE SAFETY and COMPLIANCE**

Synergy shall comply with Education Code Section 47610 by either utilizing facilities that are compliant with the Field Act or facilities that are compliant with the California Building Standards Code. The Certificate of Occupancy and other pertinent records will

be kept on file by Synergy In the event Synergy is cited by any agency, e.g. Cal OSHA or the Fire marshal, for failure to comply with regulations, the District's Charter Office will be notified immediately.

The District will be provided a Certificate of Occupancy, allowing Synergy to use and occupy the site at least 15 days prior to the date Synergy is scheduled to open, or as otherwise agreed upon by the parties. A temporary certificate will be acceptable as long as there is a plan to complete the work to obtain the final Certificate of Occupancy.

### **ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT**

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) 40 CFR part 763 requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a School or administrative building be initially inspected for asbestos-containing materials by an accredited inspector. Additionally, Synergy will comply with all other AHERA requirements, such as performing re-inspections and maintaining an asbestos management plan.

### **BUDGET DOCUMENTS**

*Governing Law: The petitioner or petitioners shall also be required to provide financial statements that include a proposed first-year operational budget, including startup costs, and cashflow and financial projections for the first three years of operation. Education Code Section 47605(g).*

Synergy will be relying on State and Federal funding sources to support the basic program, instruction and curriculum. Federal, Private, and State Grants will be used to enhance learning opportunities and provide extra activities and events.

### **SEGREGATION OF DUTIES**

All proposed expenditures must be approved by the CEO or designee who will review the proposed expenditure to determine whether it is consistent with the adopted budget and sign the check request form. All transactions will be posted on an electronic general ledger. The transactions will be posted on the ledger by Synergy site bookkeeper at the school site. To ensure segregation of recording and authorization, the bookkeeper may not co-sign check requests or purchase orders.

### **ON SITE BANKING ARRANGEMENTS**

Synergy Education Project will maintain an account with an established bank or credit union. The Executive bookkeeper (maintained currently through Delta Managed Solutions LLC) will reconcile Synergy's ledger(s) with its accounts in the bank or credit union on a monthly basis and prepare (1) a balance sheet, (2) comparison of budgeted to actual revenues and expenditures to date, and (3) a cash flow statement. This information will be made public in Encore Education Corporation Board of Directors meetings.

The Executive Office will regularly review these statements. Synergy will deposit all funds received as soon as practical upon receipt.

A petty cash fund not to exceed \$1,000 will be established with an appropriate ledger to be reconciled monthly by Synergy's bookkeeper, who shall not be authorized to spend petty cash.

Additional fiscal responsibilities will be handled by an outsourced Administrative Services Company, currently Delta Managed Solutions, LLC. All references herein to "Delta Managed Solutions, LLC" or "DMS" refer to Delta Managed Solutions, LLC, or a replacement qualified provider. The District shall at all times be provided with a current copy of any contract between Synergy and any outside business services provider. Fees of the outside service provider shall not be on a contingency or percentage basis, or other basis whereby the service provider could make service decisions affecting their service fees at the expense of Synergy and its students.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTING**

In order to maintain proper bookkeeping, the Synergy records clerk will be responsible for keeping day to day monetary income and expenditures for the office. All bookkeeping will be checked and approved by the Executive Office, then sent to an outside contracted payroll and bookkeeping service that will make records appropriate for tax and audits (currently Delta Managed Solutions, LLC.) A copy of these records will be kept on hand in the administrative office, and in an offsite secure location. Deposits will be made as needed to the correct financial institution.

Synergy will adhere to the District's reporting requirements.

1. Synergy will provide the following reports as required by Education Code Section 47604.33:
  - a. By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year. For a charter school in its first year of operation, financial statements submitted with the charter petition pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(g) will satisfy this requirement.
  - b. By July 1, an annual update (LCAP) required pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5.
  - c. By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of Synergy's annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the District, State Controller, State Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools.
  - d. By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.

- e. By September 15, a final unaudited report for the full prior year. The report submitted to the District shall include an annual statement of all Synergy's receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

The District shall use any financial information it obtains from Synergy, including, but not limited to the reports required by this section, to assess the fiscal condition of Synergy pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 47604.32.

2. Synergy will provide the following data and reports as required by the District:
  - a. If placed on the "Financial Watch List", monthly statements of accounts;
  - b. Test results for all state mandated assessments, which are:
    - i. CAASPP (California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress)
    - ii. CELDT (California English Language Development Test)
    - iii. SABE/2 (Spanish Assessment of Basic Education)
  - c. CBEDS (California Basic Educational Data System)
  - d. ADA (Average Daily Attendance) reports J18/19
  - e. SARC (School Accountability Report Card – charter schools may use their own formats).
  - f. By July 1 annually, an annual update (LCAP) required pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5

## **PURCHASING PROCEDURES**

All purchases over \$10,000 must include documentation of a good faith effort to secure the lowest possible cost for comparable goods or services. The Executive Office shall not approve purchase orders or warrant requests lacking such documentation. Documentation shall be attached to all warrant and purchase order requests showing that at least (3) vendors were contacted and such documentation shall be maintained for (3) years.

## **PROPERTY INVENTORY**

The Executive Office will work with contracted administrative services provided (currently Delta Managed Solutions, LLC) to establish and maintain an inventory of all non-consumable goods and equipment over \$500. This inventory shall include the original purchase price and date, a brief description, serial numbers and other information on an annual basis and lists of any missing property shall be presented to the Encore Education Corporation Board of Directors.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

*Governing Law: The manner in which administrative services of the school are to be provided. Education Code Section 47605(g).*

Many core operations in the Encore Executive Office are outsourced to an appropriate firm with a solid background in charter school business services. Currently, these

services are provided by Delta Managed Solutions, LLC. Delta Managed Solutions, LLC deals with over 40 charter schools within the state of California and keeps current with the ever changing charter laws. By outsourcing the following operations, Encore Education Corporation is able to focus on student success. The contract service provider covers the following administrative services:

### ***FISCAL SERVICES -***

1. ACCOUNTING – all accounting and bookkeeping functions using AptaFund (SACS-compliant with additional customized teacher element), with monthly reporting to Board of year to date budget vs. actual, trends, and projections.
2. BUDGETING – oversight and advisory role during the initial and ongoing budgeting process, assisting staff and Board with recommendations where requested.
3. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE/RECEIVABLE – timely processing of all invoices, maintenance of solid vendor relationships, establishment of credit as an independent school, coordinate with District, County and CDE staff to ensure timely and accurate apportionment transfers.

### ***HUMAN RESOURCES -***

1. PAYROLL – all payroll functions handled in house, including distributing checks and/or direct deposit, tracking and paying all payroll tax deductions, and STRS/PERS reporting/integration.
2. BENEFITS – researching and recommending benefit plan alternatives (matching or exceeding existing plan benefits), assisting all employees in subscribing for benefits.
3. GENERAL HR – coordinating initial hiring paperwork, DOJ clearances, contracts, general oversight of all HR matters.

### ***PURCHASING/PROCUREMENT -***

1. PURCHASING – coordinating purchasing of all materials using AptaFund – teachers will be able to see teacher-specific budgets in real-time and can order materials online – SACS coding handled by the contracted administrative services provider (currently Delta Managed Solutions, LLC) (including teacher-specific coding).
2. FIXED ASSET INVENTORY MANAGEMENT – compile and maintain complete fixed asset list.

### ***STUDENT INFORMATION OVERSIGHT -***

1. ADA REPORTING – including all required 20-day, P-1, P-2, and Annual Reports.
2. DATA TRACKING ASSISTANCE – ARRA, Cash Management, EL, etc.

## **INSURANCE**

Synergy shall acquire and finance general liability, workers compensation, and other necessary insurance of the types and in the amounts required for an enterprise of similar purpose and circumstance. Coverage amounts will be based on recommendations provided by the District and Encore's insurer. The District Board of Education shall be named as an additional insured on all policies of SEP. Prior to opening, SEP will provide evidence of the above insurance coverage to the District.

## **POLICES, CONTROLS, GUIDELINES**

Synergy will develop, implement, and ensure compliance with health, safety, and risk management guidelines in consultation with its insurance carriers and risk management experts.

Synergy shall develop and maintain other fiscal control policies as recommended by independent certified public accountant retained by Encore to advise it on fiscal control policy matters.

Synergy Education Project and Encore Education Corporation shall enter into and maintain in full force and effect a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") MOU with the District to legally establish the specifics of the mutual relationship, as necessary and/or required by the District. Such MOU, as it may be amended from time to time, is incorporated into the Charter and made a part hereof as if set forth in full in the Charter.

Synergy will act as its own fiscal agent to the fullest extent of the law.

## **DISTRICT OVERSIGHT**

Petitioner understands that current law mandates that the District provide oversight and performance monitoring services, including monitoring School and student performance data, financial statements and audit reports, enrollment verification, performing annual site visits, engaging in the Dispute Resolution Process, and considering charter amendment and renewal requests. Synergy shall at all times work cooperatively and support the District in its oversight role over Synergy, providing all information and documentation necessary for the District efficiently to carry out its oversight function. The District may charge for the actual cost of supervisory oversight of Synergy, up to any maximum permitted by law (currently described and limited in Education Code Section 47613). Synergy and the District agree that the District's actual oversight costs will meet or exceed the maximum fee permitted by law and that the District does not have to submit invoices or other proof of its oversight costs.

**Impact of Synergy School on State Board of Education and Liabilities**

Synergy School will minimize its impact on the State Board of Education. The SBE has the right to monitor Synergy School in any manner permitted by law, including site visits and reviews of documents. The following impacts are restated here for clarity.

1. **Enrollment** – Synergy School will seek to recruit and enroll up to 700 students in grades 6-12. The school expects that the majority of these students are currently attending Pittsburg schools.
2. **Financial benefits** – A supervisory fee of up to 3% of public funds, excluding funds secured by the charter school on its own behalf and restricted funds designated solely for specific purposes, is eligible for collection by the SBE for actual costs of oversight. The operating budget reflects the minimum 1% allocation towards the state.
3. **Facilities** – Synergy School may work in partnership with the Pittsburg Unified School District to discuss options for the use of a facility under Proposition 39. Otherwise it will secure private facilities working through licensed real estate professionals. Facilities will be located within the Pittsburg Unified School District boundaries.
4. **Insurance Coverage** – Synergy School will retain insurance which is based on the policies that other charter schools in California currently maintain. The estimate included in the budget is based on 225 students, with an increase annually that reflects Synergy's growth pattern until it reaches full capacity of 700 students.
5. **Special Education.** The School will seek to operate as its own Local Education Agency (LEA) for special education purposes. As such, Synergy will seek membership with the El Dorado Charter SELPA or other charter SELPA. Synergy will provide for all services needed for evaluations and those called for in individual student IEPs by contracting services with local qualified special education service providers.
6. **Legal Structure.** The School will be held by Synergy Education Project, an independent non-profit corporation registered in the State of California. The operation of Synergy School will be governed by Synergy Education Project's Board of Directors.
7. **Liability and Indemnity.** The State Board of Education will be held harmless to all debts accrued by the School. Synergy School does not expect the State Board of Education to assume any debt on its behalf. The School will have in force its own liability insurance and hold harmless and indemnify the State Board of Education and the California Department of Education from all liabilities.