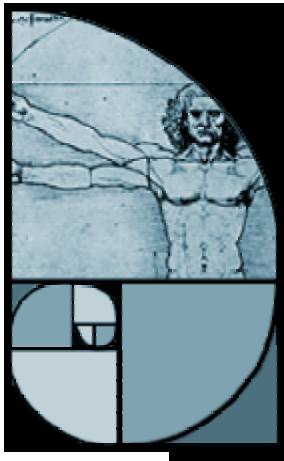


# RENAISSANCE ACADEMY

AN EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL



*Charter  
of the*  
**Renaissance Academy Charter High  
School**

*A California Public Charter School*

Presented by  
Paul McGlothlin, Founding Director

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## Briefing Page for Renaissance Academy Charter School

**Number of Students:** The Renaissance Academy (RA) will enroll 400 students over three years. It will open in 2003 with 200 to 230 ninth and tenth graders.

**Location/Facility Status:** The RA is investigating both sharing a campus with an LAUSD school and commercial facilities within LAUSD. The RA will notify the district of the location of its facility by August 1, 2003. If the RA cannot locate facilities by August 1, 2003, the school will delay opening until 2004 while it searches for appropriate facilities. The school has developed multiple budgets to address these different scenarios.

**Board Policy regarding location:** The RA will recruit students from all areas of LAUSD.

**Board Officers:** The RA is incorporated as a California Nonprofit Corporation, with 501(c) 3 status pending IRS approval. The current officers are: Paul McGlothlin, Executive Director; Howard Brock, Treasurer; Randy Pearlstein, Secretary.

**Mission and Philosophy:** The RA will be a small, personalized early college high school that will allow students, who might otherwise fall through the cracks in a large impersonal high school, to earn both a high school diploma and up to two years of college credit toward a bachelor's degree. The RA will focus on the visual and performing arts with an emphasis on filmmaking and interactive new media where the arts and sciences intersect. The Academy will combine a high-quality, learn to mastery, standards-based academic program with project-based, constructivist learning.

The RA will create a safe, nurturing academic environment that offers a personalized learning experience for all students. The RA will build a support system that fosters collaborative relationships among students, teachers, families, and community. We believe that this approach to learning will expand students' academic, artistic, philosophical, social, and economic horizons, and prepare them to continue with college or join the work force in a meaningful capacity. Our graduates will be creative, resilient, hardworking, dependable and caring citizens in a multicultural democratic society.

**Sources of Funding:** The RA has been awarded a \$450,000 federal Start-up grant through the Public Charter Schools Grant Program. Operating funds will come primarily from ADA. Planned fundraising activities include applications for grants from the Gates Foundation and federal and state governmental agencies including the CDE, The U.S. Dept. of Education, Ford, Casey, Johnson, Kellogg, and Mott foundations.

**Leadership:** Paul McGlothlin, Executive Director of the RA and 12 other founding teachers are working cooperatively with the Palisades Charter Foundation and Santa Monica College in the development of the charter school.

**Jurisdictions:** The RA has not applied to any other jurisdictions for approval.

**Affiliations:** The RA is a single charter entity. It has no affiliated charter.

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## **Affirmations**

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will be non-sectarian in programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations.

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will not charge tuition.

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability.

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will not enroll pupils over the age of 19 unless they have been continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements.

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will not require any child to attend a charter school nor any employee to work at a charter school.

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will comply with all laws relating to public agencies in general, all federal laws and regulations, and all state codes.

Admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil or of his or her parent or guardian within the state.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605 (d)(2) (A), Renaissance Academy Charter High School shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the school.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2) (B), if the number of pupils who wish to attend Renaissance Academy Charter High School exceeds the school capacity, attendance shall be determined by a public random drawing, with preference extended to pupils who reside in the district and further preference extended to pupils who reside within the vicinity of Pacific Palisades.

The Renaissance Academy agrees to adhere to the provisions of FERPA.

The Renaissance Academy agrees to adhere to applicable state and federal laws governing the privacy and confidentiality of pupil records.

## **A: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

This section satisfies Education Code § 47605(b)(5)(A), which requires a description of:

The educational program of the school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an “educated person” in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in this program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, confident, and lifelong learners.

### *Vision for Renaissance Academy Charter High School*

The Renaissance Academy will be a small, personalized Early College high school that will build a bridge to post-secondary education and employment for students who might otherwise fall through the cracks in a large impersonal high school. The Academy is structured on the small high school model recommended by the U.S. Department of Education's Smaller Learning Communities Project and is being developed cooperatively by the teachers of the New Media Academy program at Palisades Charter High School and Santa Monica College, an institution experienced in the creation of Early College programs for at-risk high school students.

The 400-student Academy intends to focus on the visual and performing arts with an emphasis on filmmaking, acting, animation, and interactive new media technologies that are revolutionizing the entertainment and media industries. The Academy will combine a high quality, standards-based, data-driven academic program with cross-curricular, constructivist, project-based learning. Through our extensive collaborations with community partners, we will create compelling project themes that will engage students in deeper and more meaningful explorations of the core academic subjects which in turn will make them self-motivated, competent, life-long learners. Moreover, the new media tools and technology used by the students to complete these projects will provide them with real world skills that can transfer to many different professions.

Coupled with its focus on project-based, constructivist learning at the intersection of art and science, the Renaissance Academy will create a safe, nurturing academic environment that can offer a personalized learning experience for all students. To encourage the students' learning and personal growth, the Renaissance Academy staff will build a support system that fosters collaborative relationships among students, teachers, families, and community. The Renaissance Academy staff believes that this approach to learning will expand students' academic, artistic, philosophical, social, and economic horizons, and prepare them to enter college or join the work force in a meaningful capacity. The Academy's students will also be creative, resilient, hardworking, dependable and caring citizens in a multicultural democratic society.

### *Mission*

The Renaissance Academy aims to prepare secondary school students from diverse backgrounds in the Los Angeles area to excel in a post-secondary school environment or in the workplace as self-motivated, productive, competent, critical thinking individuals. Through the project-based, integrated, constructivist curriculum, the Academy intends its students to understand how fields of knowledge interrelate and how to apply their knowledge and skills effectively to real-life tasks. As a result of their relationships with teachers, mentors, and artists-in-residence in the small school environment, students at the Renaissance Academy will grow to be compassionate citizens with a strong sense of community.

*Population the Renaissance Academy Charter School intends to educate*

The Renaissance Academy intends to serve students from around the Greater Los Angeles area, including Pacific Palisades. The Academy expects that the student body will reflect the tremendous ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and economic diversity of LAUSD. The Academy will reach out to communities where poverty, violence, homelessness, and chemical dependency have diminished the hopes of parents and students. The Academy will offer parents in these communities a choice in secondary education for their children and an invitation to become part of a learning community not defined by geographical, social, or ethnic boundaries.

The Academy will recruit a socially, racially, and academically heterogeneous group of students from across the city of Los Angeles. As a small-learning community located at Palisades Charter School campus, the demographic will closely resemble that of a Palisades campus. Fifty-four percent of the students on the Palisades campus travel to school by bus. The primary languages of the students include Spanish, Russian, Armenian, Korean, Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese. The student population exhibits both ethnic and geographic diversity. The ethnic composition of the student body is 26% African-American, 8% Asian, 25% Hispanic, 39% White, and 2% other.

Our teachers view a diverse student body as a great asset, but also a great challenge – a challenge that can be best addressed by a small school. In a small learning community, personalized attention and close relationships can help diffuse any tension that a diverse student body can cause. In a place where students feel individually empowered and appreciated, they are less likely to retreat into the relative safety of ethnic and socio-economic cliques. In this environment, diversity can be celebrated and embraced.

The Renaissance Academy will attempt to educate students in grades nine through twelve, inclusive. The school will begin in its first year with 100 9<sup>th</sup>-graders and 100 10<sup>th</sup>-graders, with the intent to add a new class of 100 9<sup>th</sup>-graders in each of the following two years, bringing total enrollment to 400 students spread over four classes.



Pupil attendance shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupils or of their parents.

### *An Educated Person in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills report (SCANS) developed by US Department of Labor in 1991 outlines what skills will prepare today's youth to participate in the modern workplace. The report breaks down these skills into "foundation skills" and "competencies." The former include communications skills, thinking and reasoning skills, and personal qualities such as responsibility, self-esteem, and sociability. The competencies include such things as interpersonal skills, technology competencies, information gathering and processing skills, and the ability to find, organize, and deploy resources. The staff at the Renaissance Academy agrees in large part with this report's conclusions and believes that educated people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must possess many of these skills in order to reach their potential and be productive members of society. Underlying this report is the realization that even more than in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, information and communication will be the hallmarks of the ever changing and ever shrinking 21<sup>st</sup> century world. To function effectively in this environment and in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace, an educated person will need to know how to:

- Acquire, manage, critically analyze, and use new information in many mediums;
- Communicate effectively using spoken words, written text, and symbols (mathematical and graphical);
- Think creatively and logically to make decisions and solve problems;
- Adapt to change and work within a multi-cultural society.

An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will also need a solid foundation of knowledge in math, science, history, and language arts to provide a context to understand and interpret new information and problems and to communicate with others. To build on this foundation and adapt to a changing world, an educated person will need to have a passion for learning: for learning how to learn and for asking questions and getting information. An educated person is self-motivated and driven to learn throughout his or her life.

An educated person will also need to have extensive computer skills. As information and communication move to a digital medium, the computer in its many forms will continue to grow in importance.

In order to communicate well, lead, and work in teams, an educated person should be self-reflective and know themselves – their strengths and weaknesses – and appreciate how their actions can affect others.

### *How Learning Best Occurs*

Learning best occurs when students and teachers feel engaged in the learning process. Students need to be internally motivated to learn, and should be inspired and challenged by teachers, not brow beaten by them. Ideally, teachers and students should act as partners working on a very important joint project – the students’ educational and personal development.

The staff at the Renaissance Academy believes that learning best occurs in small, safe, nurturing learning communities, where students receive personalized attention, mentorship, and guidance. Students have a harder time slipping through the cracks in a small community, and teachers can more easily accommodate differing learning styles at a small school.

Within the context of a small learning community, learning best occurs when the students understand the relevancy of what they are learning and can apply that learning to constructive projects and activities. Nothing motivates student learning more than understanding why a piece of information or skill will be valuable to the student. Applying knowledge and skills to projects or to solve problems also facilitates cross pollination among the disciplines which enhances comprehension of the subject areas individually and gives the student a complete picture of how bodies of knowledge fit together.

Professional practitioners and artists-in-residence can bolster the effectiveness of project-based learning for students. Students can model their work to professional standards, and gain an appreciation of how their knowledge and skills can translate into a career and fit into the workplace.

Insofar as it is possible and efficient, learning will best occur when students “discover” the knowledge for themselves. Self-directed learning is inherently more satisfying and engaging for students than direct instruction. Students feel more self-confident and are likely to explore topics more deeply when they have discovered the knowledge themselves.

Even the most motivated and engaged students will have a difficult time reaching their potential without the support of parents. Learning within the school environment will best occur when the environment the students encounter outside of the school is

supportive of the students' academic goals. A small learning community can help promote communication among parents, students, and teachers, and help parents create an environment that is conducive for their children's learning.

### *Educational Program Goals*

The primary mission of the school is to provide the best possible education to its students, accountable to state and national education standards through measurable test results, as well as practical assessment by professionals in the field. The Renaissance Academy intends to help its pupils become well-rounded, skilled, healthy individuals who are prepared to succeed in college or to enter the workforce directly. As such the primary goals of the educational program are to:

- Enable students to become self-motivated, self-confident, competent, and culturally-literate lifelong learners through discovery-based and project-based learning;
- Provide students with a solid grounding in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, technology, and the performing arts;
- Prepare students academically to be admitted to and succeed in college while giving them the skills to enter the workforce and lead a productive, enriching life;
- Promote eating and fitness habits that lead to a healthy physical and mental well-being;
- Expose students to many different career and higher education opportunities.

### *Instructional Methodology and Curriculum: How the Renaissance Academy Will Enable Students to Become Self-Motivated, Competent Lifelong Learners*

#### Motivating Students to Mastery of State Standards through Relevancy

The question, "how am I ever going to use this?" often rings out in the classroom when a teacher tries to deposit a litany of standards into a student's head without context or relevancy. The Renaissance Academy's instructional approach and curriculum revolves around answering that student's cliché question. The staff at the Renaissance Academy intends to show its students how these building blocks of higher learning will lead to an enriching life of learning and discovery and prepare them for satisfying, productive employment in a knowledge-based economy. Placing education in a context that has meaning and purpose for students and building skills for real jobs motivates students in general and at-risk students in particular. If students can see how education will further their economic progress and help them fruitfully pursue their own interests, then even the least-driven students will be motivated to learn.

The Renaissance Academy will offer an educational program that marries rigorous, engaging liberal arts academic study with practical, job-focused skills development. The specific curricular academic content and skills will be taken from the California State Board of Education content and performance standards. This academic content will be supplemented by knowledge-economy job skills training provided by ROP and field professional instructors and community partners. The Academy will use a variety of interconnected instructional methods to pull together the various strands of educational content into a cohesive curriculum that has meaning and purpose for the students. The Renaissance Academy curriculum will be:

- Project-based;
- Interdisciplinary;
- Constructivist;
- Individualized and Student Centered.

This curriculum will be supported by a large group of community and business partners, Santa Monica College, artists-in-residence, field professionals, and ROP instructors. It will be set in the context of a Small School Community where personalized attention is possible and encouraged, and teacher collaboration is expected. And, it will be in a state of constant evolution where teachers, who work in tight teams, use ongoing, useful assessments to evaluate and fine tune the curriculum and pedagogy.

This proven approach to learning – combining project-based, constructivist learning with strong mentorship – has been built on the strong foundations established by the New Media Academies and the Santa Monica College Academy of Entertainment & Technology. For years, these two programs have been successfully addressing the wide range of academic needs of our highly diverse students.

### Project-based Learning

As much as it is feasible, the Renaissance Academy will strive to teach the core subjects of mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts in the context of relevant class projects that span disciplines, including non-core disciplines. There is a strong research base supporting the notion that students learn best in the context of completing authentic, hands-on tasks and projects. Jean Lave, a well-respected professor of education and anthropology who has written a number of books on education, argues that learning is a function of the activity, context and culture in which it occurs.<sup>1</sup> Thus, students must be given learning tasks set in realistic contexts, “enabling [them] to

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<sup>1</sup> Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

acquire, develop and use cognitive tools in authentic domain activities.”<sup>2</sup> A realistic context requires that a student solve a meaningful problem while using a variety of skills and information. Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde, writing on best practices in education concur. They state that: “Active, hands-on, concrete experience is the most powerful and natural form of learning. Students should be immersed in the most direct possible experience of the content of every subject.”<sup>3</sup>

In addition to providing a context in which students understand and absorb information and concepts well, project-based curricula also put the students in control of their education and increases their motivation and interest to learn. Projects can be tailored to students’ interests while still meeting the State content and skill standards.

Projects at the Academy may include writing an expository essay for the local paper, developing a fuel cell, running field experiments, or creating a documentary film on a local historical figure or event. Many of the projects will be collaborative so students can build social and team-building skills. Group work also gives students the opportunity to defend their ideas and question and teach others in a low risk environment. The Electronic Student Portfolio (ESP), which is a digital record of a student’s projects, will contain many examples of how students apply their knowledge and skills to authentic tasks. The ESP will be a source of pride and accomplishment for the students, and will be a good record of student progress.

### Constructivist Learning

In line with its project-based curriculum, the staff will also strive to create a constructivist learning environment where teachers act as facilitators, guiding students who draw on their prior knowledge to discover, or reinvent, meaning. The constructivist approach, which has been promoted by Dewey, Vygotsky, Bruner, and others, encourages interactive learning in which students are engaged in a dialogue with teachers rather than simply taking information on face value. Students are expected to ask questions, analyze and challenge hypotheses, and think independently. Teachers draw students into discussions by asking questions that follow from previously presented information and encouraging the students to come to their own conclusions and construct their own meaning (Socratic Method). By forming and expressing conclusions based on available information and analyzing the opinions and conclusions of others, the students build a solid understanding of a concept and learn how to think critically and independently.

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<sup>2</sup> Brown, J.S., Collins, A. & Duguid, S. (1989). Situated cognition and the culture of learning. *Educational Researcher*, 18(1), 32-42.

<sup>3</sup> Zemelman, S., Daniels, H., and Hyde, A. (1998). *Best Practice: New Standards for Teaching and Learning in America’s Schools*, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, p. 8.

The constructivist approach creates conditions for outstanding student achievement. Previously passive students become interested in learning. Setting an expectation that students will be engaged by the teachers eliminates the fog that besets a lecture-style learning environment. Even the most disadvantaged students can be engaged by an interactive learning environment, especially after they realize they have much to offer others.

The constructivist approach to education and project-based learning work well together because they both challenge the students to take responsibility for their learning. The constructivist approach in the classroom provides a pedagogical framework for the students to use when they work on their projects. Students will not settle for restating unexamined information, but instead will form their own ideas about the facts and concepts and will be prepared to defend them.

#### Interdisciplinary Approach to Learning

Buttressing the school's project- and constructivist-based learning is an interdisciplinary approach to teaching. Teachers at the Renaissance Academy will often team teach classes or modules with other core teachers, field professionals, or artists-in-residence. The core teachers for a grade level will work collaboratively to integrate the curriculum across subject areas so that the concepts and content that the students learn in one class will support the learning that is taking place in another class. The teachers will also link the core academic subjects through multi-disciplinary projects.

This approach to teaching helps students understand the interconnectedness of the different subjects and in so doing brings more relevance to each subject individually. As students construct their own knowledge in an interdisciplinary learning environment, they go beyond the narrow focus of a particular subject matter and begin to build higher level understanding of the systems and concepts that tie different subject matter together.

#### Individualized, student-centered instruction

One of the primary benefits of a small school is the ability for the teachers to make a personal connection with each of the students and understand the students' needs. Each student that enters the Renaissance Academy will come with a different set of experiences, interests, and goals. The staff at the Academy will attempt to meet the students where they are and help the students build upon their strengths as they master the content standards and skills developed by the State. The teachers will develop learning plans that address the needs of each of the students and grow out of the students' strengths and interests. Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde stress the importance of student-centered learning. In their book, *Best Practice*, they describe a "best practice" learning environment:

Teachers help students list their own questions, puzzles, and goals, and then structure for them widening circles of experience and investigation of those topics. Teachers infuse into such kid-driven curriculum all the skills, knowledge, and concepts that society mandates, though always in original sequences and combinations. <sup>4</sup>

Student-centered teaching works very well with the school's focus on project-based and constructivist learning. In partnership with the teacher and other student collaborators, the students develop projects that have particular interest to them. The students will need to show to the satisfaction of the teachers how their proposed projects meet the standards set forth by the State, but then will have a fair amount of latitude to explore ideas that interest them most. Teachers will help guide projects in a direction which meets the schools academic goals.

To provide a high level of student-centered instruction, the Renaissance Academy will need to rely on the help of its many community partners, field professionals, and artists-in-residence. With the addition of field professionals, artists-in-residence, and ROP instructors to the team of credentialed teachers, the Renaissance Academy in its first year of operation plans to have on average 3 FTE instructors in addition to the four core teachers per grade, resulting in an effective teacher-student ratio of about 1:17. The support of outside instructors will also leave adequate time for the core teachers to work on their lesson plans, confer with colleagues about integration strategies, and keep up on their oversight-governance responsibilities.

### School Design and Class schedule

In order to accommodate an interdisciplinary, project-based curriculum, the Renaissance Academy intends to offer a narrow range of classes that allow for a wide range of educational options, rather than a wide range of classes which exclude diverse educational options. This will create an intimate educational environment where cross-curricular teams of teachers -- who have multiple professional duties as teachers, counselors, and managers -- will develop a subjective knowledge of each and every student. This close relationship will allow both teacher and student to reach their respective potentials. Teachers will be pragmatic facilitators, helping students locate, identify, and process information that is accurate, relevant, and timely.

Most classes will be taught using a balance of different pedagogical techniques. About 15-20% of class time will be devoted to traditional, lecture-style teaching. This time will be used to present some of the foundational content and ideas upon which the students will build a more complex, higher-level understanding of the subject matter. Some

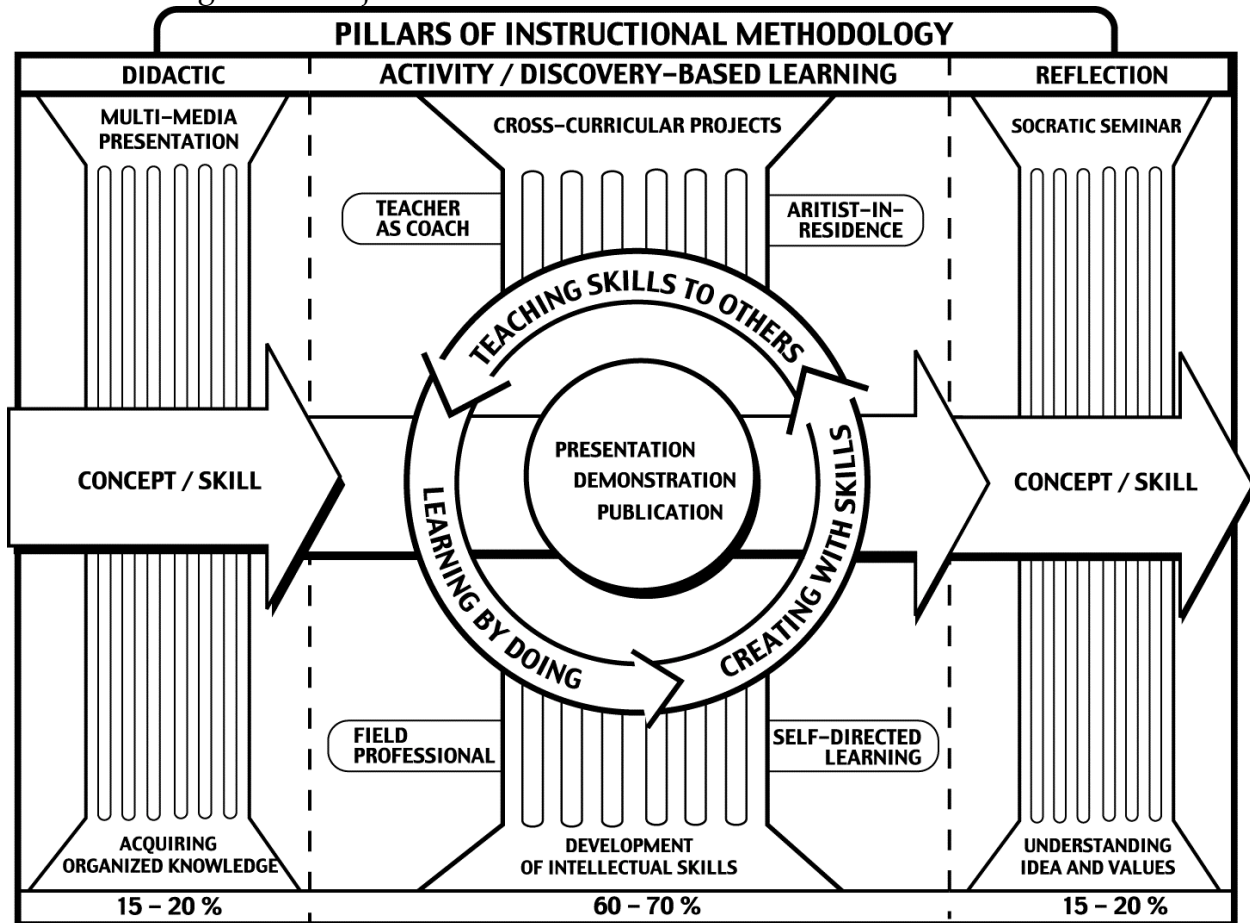
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<sup>4</sup> Zemelman, S., Daniels, H., and Hyde, A. (1998). Best Practice: New Standards for Teaching and Learning in America's Schools, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, p. 9.

classes may have a higher or lower proportion of lecture-style teaching depending on the subject to be presented.

Roughly 60-70% of the class time will be devoted to project-based learning and small group work. In this part of the class, the students will learn by doing and “discover” content by applying skills and knowledge to authentic tasks. In the small group time, the students will also have the opportunity to solidify their own understanding of a particular subject matter by teaching it to others.

The remaining 15-20% of class time will be focused on the Socratic method of teaching. By challenging the students, who come to the seminar with base-line knowledge of the subject, with appropriate, logical questions, teachers will help students build their own understanding of the subject matter.



The school day will be scheduled in blocks to accommodate cross-curricular and project-based learning and provide teachers with some flexibility in how they teach (see Attachment A). Tentatively, the school day will begin with the group student advisory session, and then move into two one and one-half hour teaching blocks devoted to the core classes separated by a nutrition break. At the discretion of the teacher (or team of



teachers), these long sessions will be broken into smaller sections utilizing the teaching methods and styles described above. Depending on the subject matter and the point the students are at in learning the content, substantial portions of this block may be devoted to developing or completing a highly-involved team-based class project. In other cases, this period may be broken down into smaller chunks of time alternating between didactic, lecture-style teaching by a core teacher or ROP teacher, and interactive discussion.

The afternoon following lunch will have one long block similar to the morning sessions and then a shorter block of time in the final period. The first class period after lunch will be similar in structure to the morning block session but will focus on electives. The final class period of the day will be devoted to self-directed learning under teacher supervision. Students can use the time to take elective classes off campus or online or explore areas of special interest through a teacher-guided independent study. The entire day on Fridays will be reserved for similar self-directed, teacher-supervised work. During periods of the school year when students have large, multi-week projects, such as when they are creating documentary films, the students will have long, uninterrupted blocks of time on Friday to work on their projects with the assistance and guidance of the core teachers, ROP teachers, and artists-in-residence.

### *Content Areas*

The focus of the Renaissance Academy on project-based learning and individualized, student-centered instruction does not lend itself to standard, off-the-shelf curricula. The founding staff of the Renaissance Academy has been working for months developing the outline of the school curriculum and refining the school design and pedagogical methods to be employed as described above. They have drawn upon personal experience teaching high school and exhaustive research into the curricula, methods, and best practices of successful project-based, interactive high school programs. During the summer, the founding teachers will fill in the finer details of the content and curriculum, following the content standards set forth by the State. The curriculum will meet the University of California (UC) and California State (CSU) *a-g* requirements.

It is expected that the curriculum will evolve over time in response to the teachers' reflection upon the ongoing assessment that the Academy will conduct with the assistance of Public Works (a non-profit organization that specializes in assessment). Given the importance the Academy places on collaborative teaching and whole-school involvement, it would be inappropriate to short-circuit the curriculum development process by preemptively describing the curriculum of the school down to fine detail. However, the aims and direction of the curriculum of the school is detailed below.

These descriptions, when taken in the context of the methodologies described above, should provide a well-rounded picture of how the school will educate its students to the satisfaction of LAUSD and the State.

### Language Arts

The Language Arts curriculum will draw from and be reflective of the State content standards for Language Arts. The Language Arts curriculum aims to develop fluent and versatile readers, skilled writers in multiple styles, and confident and thoughtful discussion participants who can succinctly and persuasively articulate their points of view. Students will read, reflect upon, and critique literature of many styles, periods, and genres, including: novels, short stories, poetry, plays, biography, critique, and screenplays. The literature chosen will provide the students with a solid grounding in the classics of literature as well as other culturally-relevant texts. Writing and analysis of literature will develop students' communicative power, appreciation of language and reading, and depth of understanding of content in other areas of study. Students will be expected to complete frequent writing assignments that require them to write in a variety of styles and for a wide range of audiences. Students will prepare presentations, participate in discussions, and listen for ideas and information in varied contexts and for varied purposes. Like the school as a whole, the curriculum in the English-Language Arts program will balance didactic, lecture-style lessons with small-group, student critique and project work.

### Mathematics

The Math curriculum will draw from and be reflective of the State content standards for Mathematics. Students will gain a conceptual understanding and mastery of the mechanical operations of basic math, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and statistics. Like other subject areas taught at the Renaissance Academy, instruction in math will emphasize hands-on activities and real world applications. Students will not only understand math algorithms, they will also know how to apply the algorithms to solve problems in everyday life and on the job. Cross-curricular projects, such as social science or biology projects, that have a heavy math component or require the expression of mathematical concepts or data through tables, charts, or graphs will reinforce the students' understanding of math concepts, help the students communicate mathematically, and demonstrate the relevancy of math to the students' future progress.

Students who are so inclined will be encouraged to expand their mathematical skills and understanding by taking classes in Calculus and econometrics through Santa Monica College, online, or as an independent study.

### Social Studies

The Social Studies curriculum will draw from and be reflective of the State content standards. Like other areas of the Academy, social studies will be taught with a balance of lecture, hands-on projects, and seminar-style, Socratic discussions. Rather than memorizing many facts, the students will be tasked with doing primary source research to develop their own interpretation of an historical event. Students will look at events with perspective and examine “facts” and documents with a critical eye. Students will work to uncover the underlying circumstances and motivations that precipitated an event or led to a particular situation, and try to understand how to use the past to inform how they look at the present and future.

The teachers will focus on making the curriculum accessible, meaningful, and relevant to students. Group classroom time will be highly interactive and include debates, simulations, and student presentations. Cross-curricular projects, such as a documentary film about a local historical event or figure, will help students make connections among subject areas and understand their communities better. These kinds of projects will also allow the students to look at their own values, perspectives, and identity as they form ideas about how to interpret and present a set of events based on information gathered through interviews, documents, and other resources.

### Integrated Sciences

The Science curriculum will follow the sequence of the California content standards. Instructors will focus on hands-on learning and will attempt to integrate the sciences as much as possible. Students will conduct many field studies so that they can understand the connection between the classroom-based instruction and the world around them. Small group laboratory work will be a central element of the Renaissance Academy’s hands-on science curriculum. As in other classes at the Academy, the students will be expected to make presentations and convincingly present conclusions that are supported by scientifically substantiated facts.

### Arts

The arts, particularly the visual and performing arts, will be emphasized at the Academy. Students will develop an understanding of how people use dance, music, theater, and the visual arts to express ideas and emotions that they cannot express through language alone. Students will learn to communicate in at least one artistic medium, and will perform or present their new skills for a public audience. The instruction will emphasize the roles of reflection, critical judgment, and imagination in the artistic process.

The students' academic study of the arts will be paired with advanced media arts job-training courses such as film making and web design. Projects in other subject areas will draw upon the students' academic and vocational arts training. Students may make documentary films about historical events, web sites illustrating a chemical process, or perform songs that are characteristic of a particular literary period.

### Foreign Language

Students will accurately read, write, speak, and comprehend a foreign language other than English to an intermediate level and be familiar with the customs and culture of the country from which the language originates. When there is demand, immersion classes in one or several languages will be offered during the final period of the day. Students may also take language classes at Santa Monica College and over the internet with teacher oversight.

### Media, Technology, and Job Skills Classes

A wide variety of media and job skills classes and seminars (ROP classes) will be offered to supplement the students' standards-based core coursework. The range of courses may include film making and editing, web design, print media design, and graphic arts among others. The students' will gain an understanding of the methods and techniques used in the media arts and will become facile users of the associated technology, tools, and software.

The students will use many of the skills they learn in the ROP classes in their other classes, particularly for cross-curricular projects.

### Physical fitness

Students at the Renaissance Academy will be required to participate in a rigorous physical fitness class regularly during the school year. This class will meet the *a-g* requirements for admittance to the UC/CSU university system. Although the Academy will not field any sports teams, the students are welcome to join the teams at partner high schools or athletic clubs. The Academy will offer a range of fitness options including such activities as yoga and outdoor orienteering.

### ***Other Defining Characteristics and Programs at the RA***

#### Mentors, Artists-in-Residence, and Field Professionals

The Renaissance Academy will engage exceptional practitioners in technology, the arts, humanities, and sciences to teach students about the practical applications of their instruction, complementing the Academy's focus on project-based, situational learning.

These mentors will serve as models for the students and will elevate the importance the students place on learning.

The Academy will also enlist the services of the ROP program of LAUSD to teach the students a variety of useful vocational skills such as web design and computer animation. Like the artists-in-residence and field professionals, the ROP instructors and their curriculum will be deeply integrated into the curriculum of the school. Students will apply the skills they learn in ROP classes to complete projects for core classes, which will reinforce the core class learning as well as refine the students' vocational skills.

Through their instruction in the ROP program and with other field professionals, students at the Renaissance Academy will become facile users of a wide variety of important computer and media technologies. Many class projects will utilize technology to enable authentic, constructive learning. The technology skills the students learn completing projects will be useful in higher-education and work contexts, and will help them become productive members of society.

### Community Partners

In addition to recruiting a committed group of mentors, artists-in-residence, and ROP teachers, the school will also utilize a large group of community partners to enhance the students' learning experience and provide outlets/resources for projects and discovery-based learning. Some of the likely community partners are listed below:

- Museum of Television and Radio (MT&R) is a full curriculum partner with the RA development team. Drawing on their extensive archives of television and radio programs, the museum has developed educational units in such fields as animation and documentary filmmaking. These archives are available after school and on weekends for student and faculty research. In addition to granting access to their database, the Museum is committed to offering job shadowing and internships to qualified Academy students.
- Inner-City Filmmakers (IFC) provides professional, technical and business skills training and paid work opportunities to low-income inner city students where they can gain knowledge, perfect skills and develop their potential to the fullest extent. ICF has successfully trained and placed students in paying entry-level jobs at film studios and production companies earning many students memberships in the Motion Picture Editors Guild, International Cinematographers Guild and the Studio Electrical Lighting Technicians.

- GLOBE (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment) is a worldwide network of students, teachers, and scientists working together to study and understand the global environment. RA students will – along with students and teachers from over 10,000 schools in more than 95 countries – work online with research scientists to learn more about our planet.
- CNN Student Bureau (CNNSB) Academy students will participate in the CNN Student Bureau program. CNNSB is a virtual, worldwide student news source. Designed as the official student news gathering program for CNN, the program offers students a unique opportunity to engage in real-world learning experiences in news gathering and to practice their reporting and writing skills.
- EAST Inc. will provide training and support for students enrolled in Environmental and Spatial Technology classes. Students will apply technologies such as computer aided design (CAD), computer animation, geographic information systems (GIS), web page design, etc., to service learning projects. EAST Inc. will invite students to local training seminars and manage a listserv where students can collaborate with other schools, universities and professionals on projects and share expertise with EAST technologies.
- ACME ANIMATION (ACME) uses interactive video-teleconferencing to connect top professionals in the animation industry. Students present their drawings and animations during these transmissions, and receive critical feedback from animation professionals direct from a studio.

### Early College Program

The Early College program at the Renaissance Academy will allow students to earn college credit towards an associate's degree at Santa Monica College for certain electives offered in the students' final two years of high school. Over the course of the first two years of the Renaissance Academy's charter, the staff of the Academy and the faculty of the Santa Monica College Academy of Entertainment & Technology will develop the instructional methodologies and curriculum for the Early College Program. The development, implementation and coordination of the Early College program will be lead by Santa Monica College Executive Vice President Thomas J. Donner, and Dean of External Programs, Katharine Muller along with their staff.

### *How the school will narrow the achievement gap among students*

It is a well-recognized fact that the aggregate performance of students in LAUSD varies dramatically between different socio-economic groups. The Renaissance Academy acknowledges this problem and believes that its individualized learning program will address this achievement gap directly. Research on small schools demonstrates that students from minority groups and economically disadvantaged backgrounds perform

dramatically better in small, nurturing environments where they feel connected to other students and teachers. Small schools lack the sense of isolation and anonymity that is commonly found at larger schools. In addition, the school's focus on project-based, practical learning will provide an incentive for students from all backgrounds to excel. Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are particularly motivated to learn when they can see clearly how their education will improve their economic prospects. The Renaissance Academy's vocational training within the context of a standards-based liberal arts education will provide this connection and motivation to students.

In order to track the school's progress toward closing the achievement gap, student performance data will be analyzed according to major ethnic groups, grade levels, and gender. This will enable the Renaissance Academy to ensure that student performance is consistent across all groups.

### ***Staff and Professional Development***

The Renaissance Academy will be a learning-rich environment for the adults as well as for the students. All four lead teachers will be brought on board full-time two months prior to the opening of the school for a comprehensive and intensive orientation and training program, and to further refine the curriculum. The rest of the staff will come on board for two weeks prior to the opening and be trained by the lead teachers. Training will include:

- Making the transition from the large high school to a small school learning community;
- Techniques to assist staff in their new multitasking roles as teacher-mentor-managers;
- Familiarizing staff with our educational and community partners.

The ongoing professional development after start up will be aligned with state standards and will be largely teacher designed and Renaissance Academy specific. It will be embedded in the work of teaching and of assessing one's effectiveness in the classroom. Teachers will also receive formal training on site and attend outside workshops that are specifically aligned with the needs and goals of the school as they manifest themselves after the Renaissance Academy is up and running. Staff will take seriously their responsibility to their own and each other's professional growth and will be actively engaged as both teachers and learners.

Time will be scheduled each week for the grade level and subject area teams of teachers to meet and plan joint lessons and share ideas and teaching strategies.

### *How Instructional Materials will be Selected*

During the summer before the Renaissance Academy opens (particularly in the last month before school), the lead teachers in each subject area will meet frequently to refine the curriculum and settle on the core instructional texts and materials. The teachers at the Renaissance Academy will be given substantial latitude in the instructional materials they choose to use, but all of the materials will conform to California content standards. No one set of “off-the-shelf” instructional materials may be appropriate for an entire classroom or grade of students, so various texts and curricula will be used that focus on experiential, project-based learning. Teachers will have the flexibility to use materials that will meet the individual educational goals of each of their students.

The Renaissance Academy will have a very self-reflective learning and teaching environment. Over the course of the year, the teachers will evaluate the effectiveness of the curricula and instructional materials, and may make modifications as necessary within the bounds of the California State content standards.

### *Students with Special Needs*

#### Academically gifted students

The founders and staff at the Renaissance Academy believe that schools should encourage students to grow and excel to the best of their ability without being stifled by a highly-structured learning environment. The individualized learning environment the Renaissance Academy will offer to its students will allow gifted students to move forward at their own pace. Student seminars and independent projects will provide gifted students with the opportunity to dive deeper into topics of interest, stretch their minds, and challenge themselves. The school’s connections with Santa Monica College will allow students to take advanced classes and make progress toward an associate’s degree while they are still in high school.

#### Academically low-achieving students

As a small, nurturing school, the Renaissance Academy is an ideal environment for students with non-standard needs. Each student will be assigned to a mentor group headed by a credentialed teacher. The teacher/mentor will oversee the progress of the students in his or her group and will help the student identify where extra help is needed. In addition to the personal attention the students will receive in the Academy’s small, tight-knit community, the Academy will also employ a variety of assessment



methods to direct the students' educational plan and develop an appropriate intervention, some of which are listed below:

- IEP reports;
- CAT-6 test scores;
- Graded tests and quizzes;
- Teacher and Lead Teacher observation;
- Class and project work.

Intervention will be provided in the following manner:

- One-to-one tutoring during school day
- Subject-specific enhancement classes with reduced class sizes, taught by primary core teachers (students struggling in a core subject will have at least three hours built into the day for help in that subject)
- Homework support after school
- Re-teaching in the classroom
- Counseling
- Parent support

### English Language Learners

English Language Learners will be supported through a combination of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, modified instruction, and additional academic support as needed. Students needing additional support in learning English will take ESL in lieu of a foreign language until they place out of the ESL 5-6 level. Teachers or other courses will provide sheltered instruction using SDAIE techniques when some students have difficulty understanding English. The school will promote the success of English Language Learners by valuing Spanish language as a valuable resource. English Language Learners will be paired with students who are learning Spanish to provide a mutual support and tutoring system.

The Renaissance Academy will seek to hire faculty who have received CLAD (Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development), scaffolding techniques, performance-based instruction, reciprocal teaching and other innovative practices to ensure that all students are provided with multiple avenues to access the curriculum.

In accordance with SB 638, the Renaissance Academy will use the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) to identify new-enrollees with a home language other than English, to monitor their progress in learning English, and to help reclassify them when they become proficient in English. New enrollees shall be tested within 30

calendar days of enrollment. Procedures and instruments used for identification, assessment, and reclassification may be the same as those used by LAUSD.

### ***Special Education***

*Renaissance Academy Charter High School will adhere to all provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Office for Civil Rights mandates, AB 602, the FAPE, and the Chanda Smith Consent Decree.*

Renaissance Academy Charter High School's status is a public school, as per Education Code Section 47646; it will not use disability status as a criterion for non-eligibility for enrollment.

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will adhere to the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), State Special Education Regulations, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Renaissance Academy will be responsible for providing special education services and instruction to the students it serves, as set forth in the IDEA. The Academy shall ensure the participation of a District Special Education representative at any IEP meeting when it is anticipated that special education service options will be considered within least restrictive environments other than those at the school.

The Academy will receive its allocated share of AB602 special education funds. The allocated amount will be calculated using a funding model based on pupil population (average daily attendance). The Academy may request specific services from the District on a fee basis, and such services will be granted subject to availability.

The District will be entitled to collect an encroachment from the charter school. The charter school's encroachment contribution will equal the percentage of general funds encroached by the District to support the Special Education Program for the prior fiscal year. The annual encroachment percentage collected from the charter school may vary from year to year depending on the District's internal encroachment. The calculation of the charter school's encroachment contribution will be based upon a formula designed by the District's Budget Services Office.

### **Consent Decrees**

During the life of the charter, the Renaissance Academy will adhere to all terms and conditions of any court orders and/or consent decrees imposed upon the Los Angeles

Unified School District as they pertain to special education. If the District, a court of law, or a federal or state agency determines that the charter school has failed to comply with the terms and conditions of any court order and/or consent decree, the charter school is solely responsible for all costs, attorneys' fees, or other remedies associated therewith.

### *The Special Education Process*

#### Step 1: Search and Serve Activities

Students in need of special education services will be identified in several ways. The first way is by obtaining all records from the student's previous school. If there are any special education needs, they will be evaluated and continued. Students Review Teams will also identify students who are having difficulty in the classroom. The Student Review Teams will include the student's team teachers, parents, and administrators. The Student Review Team will work with the student and parent to identify methods or procedures to help the student. Parents will be notified at the meeting that if the methods and procedures of the team are not effective, special education will be provided at no cost to the students.

#### Step 2: Referral for Assessment

In many cases, parents or guardians refer their child for assessment for special education services. Teachers, other school personnel, and community members may also refer a child for an assessment. Within fifteen days, not counting school vacations greater than five days, of the receipt of a referral for assessment, the parent or guardian will receive a written response from Renaissance Academy Charter High School. If Renaissance Academy Charter High School determines that assessment of a child is not appropriate, the parent will receive written notice of this decision. If Renaissance Academy Charter High School determines that assessment is appropriate, the parent will receive an Assessment Plan.

The parent must consent to the assessment plan (AP) by signing it before the assessment can take place. The school has fifty days, not counting school vacations greater than five days, from receipt of the parent's signed AP to complete the assessment and hold an Individualized Education Program meeting.

If the parent does not consent to the AP, Renaissance Academy Charter High School may take steps to protect the student if it is believed the student is being denied necessary services. Renaissance Academy Charter High School may request a meeting

with the parent to resolve this difference of opinion, or, failing that, may initiate a due process hearing to override the parent's refusal to consent.

### Step 2: Assessment

The assessment will gather information about the student to determine whether he or she has a disability and, if eligible, the nature and extent of special education services the student may need. Assessments may include individual testing, observations of the student at school, interviews with the student and school personnel who work with the student, and a review of school records, reports, and work samples. Renaissance Academy Charter High School will be fiscally responsible for any request to the sponsoring district to use district personnel for assessments.

Renaissance Academy Charter High School guidelines for assessment:

- Student will be assessed only after parent consents to the Assessment Plan.
- Student will be assessed in all areas related to his or her ostensible disability.
- Assessment will be administered in the student's primary language, or a qualified interpreter will be provided.
- Assessment will include a variety of appropriate tests to measure a student's strengths and needs. The person administering the tests will be qualified to conduct this assessment.
- Assessment will be adapted for students with impaired sensory, physical, or speaking skills.
- A multidisciplinary team, including at least one teacher or other specialist with knowledge of the student's supposed disability, will assess the student.
- Testing and assessment materials and procedures must not be racially, culturally, or sexually discriminatory.

If the parent disagrees with Renaissance Academy Charter High School's assessment of his or her child, the parent may obtain an independent educational assessment at public expense only if the school is not able to demonstrate that the evaluation was appropriate. Upon the parent's request, Renaissance Academy Charter High School will provide information about how to obtain this independent assessment from a qualified examiner.

### Step 3: Development and Implementation of an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

After a student has been assessed, an IEP meeting will be held at a time and place convenient for the parent, Renaissance Academy Charter High School, and any invited

district representative. At the meeting, the IEP team will discuss the assessment results and determine whether the student is eligible for special education services, based upon state and federal criteria. If the student is eligible, then an IEP will be developed at the meeting. The following people will be members of the IEP team:

- The parent or guardian and/or his or her representative.
- A Renaissance Academy Charter High School administrator or qualified representative who is knowledgeable about the program options appropriate for the student.
- The student's teachers. If the student does not presently have teachers, a teacher with the most recent and most complete knowledge of the student, who has observed the student's educational performance, will participate as an IEP team member. If a teacher with recent and complete knowledge is not available, the teacher on the IEP team will be a special education teacher qualified to teach children of the student's age.
- Other persons, such as the student, whom the parent or the school wishes to invite.
- A representative of LAUSD, when there is an expectation that a student with disabilities may be considered for any change in placement or services beyond the least restrictive environment of the school site.
- When appropriate, the persons who assessed the child or someone familiar with those assessment procedures.
- The parent is an important member of the IEP team. If the parent cannot attend the IEP meeting, Renaissance Academy Charter High School will ensure the parent's participation using other methods, such as conferencing by telephone. Renaissance Academy Charter High School will ensure that the parent understands what is occurring at the meeting; if necessary, the Charter School will provide an interpreter if the parent has a hearing disability or if his or her primary language is not English.

The team must consider the least restrictive setting. Mainstreaming to regular education will be considered to the extent it is possible. After the written IEP is completed, it will be implemented. The parent can review and request revisions of the plan. This IEP will contain:

- The services the student will receive.

- How these services will be delivered.
- The instructional program(s) where these services will be delivered.
- The rationale for placement decisions.
- Annual goals and short-term objectives focusing on the student's current level of performance.
- A statement of how the student's progress will be measured.
- Transition goals for work-related skills.
- ESL goals as necessary.

Renaissance Academy Charter High School students with disabilities will attend Renaissance Academy Charter High School unless the IEP determines that the best services and least restrictive environment are at another school.

#### Step 4: IEP Review

If a student is receiving special education services, his or her IEP will be reviewed in an IEP meeting at least once a year to determine how well it is meeting their needs. In addition, every three years, the student's progress will be reassessed and his or her IEP reviewed, in accordance with the 1997 IDEA regulations.

If a parent or teacher has concerns that the student's educational need are not being met, either the parent or the teacher may request a reassessment or an IEP meeting to review the IEP anytime during the school year. The parent or teacher may request a reassessment by sending a written request to the school or completing a Request for Special Education Assessment, which can be obtained at Renaissance Academy Charter High School. Renaissance Academy Charter High School will obtain written permission from the parent or guardian before it reassesses the child.

#### Times for IEP Meetings:

- Once a year to review and determine the student's progress and placement or to make any needed changes to the IEP.
- Every three years to review the results of a mandatory comprehensive reevaluation of the student's progress.
- After a student has received a formal assessment or reassessment.
- When a parent or teacher feels that the student has demonstrated significant educational growth or a lack of anticipated progress.
- When a parent or a teacher requests a meeting to develop, review, or revise an IEP.
- When a student is approaching a transitional period, such as childhood into adolescence or adolescence into adulthood.

When a student with an IEP is faced with a suspension for more than ten days or an expulsion, the IEP team will meet to determine whether the student's misconduct was a manifestation of his or her disability.

#### Step 5: Due Process

Parents have the right to initiate a due process hearing to challenge a decision regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of their child. If this occurs, the District and the charter school shall be named respondents and shall work together to defend the case.

Parents have the right to file a complaint if they believe that the school has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing special education. If this occurs, the District shall address and respond to the complaint under its Uniform Complaint procedure.

#### Special Education Strategies for Instruction and Services

Students will be educated to the maximum extent appropriate to maintain an effective school environment for all students.

Because each student will require different kinds of tasks for instruction and services, educational strategies should be built around the student's needs and how these fit within the general educational program.

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will employ qualified personnel to deliver the prescribed program in an IEP and a structure for personnel planning to focus on in-service to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

The charter school is responsible for keeping daily attendance for each student by reporting and certifying attendance monthly on District forms and filed with the District.

#### *No Child Left Behind*

The Renaissance Academy will meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind. If the Renaissance Academy should apply for federal funding, the school will comply in law and spirit with the provisions set forth in the No Child Left Behind legislation as they

pertain to certificated and classified staff at the charter as well as School Choice or Choice Student.



## **B: MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES**

This section satisfies Education Code §47605(b)(5)(B) which requires:

Measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. 'Pupil outcomes,' for the 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.

Renaissance Academy Charter High School shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the pupil assessments required pursuant to Education Code §60605 and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or pupil assessments applicable to pupils in non-charter public schools.

Specific skill-level standards will incorporate those included in the current State standards. In order to maintain our commitment to ethnic diversity, student performance data will be analyzed according to major ethnic groups, grade levels, and gender. This will enable the Renaissance Academy to ensure that student performance is consistent across all groups.

In order to prepare students for achievement on state standardized and performance-based tests, state and district standards in all academic areas will be addressed throughout the year in the content of the lessons. This will apply to all grade levels. Students will be given a variety of ongoing assessments, including school- and teacher-developed tasks and tests and school performance-based tests and grade level assignments, in order to prepare them for state standardized and performance-based tests. Assessments given will measure students' growth toward and mastery of state and district standards. Appropriate follow-up will be given to students relative to the assessment results. Follow-up will include re-teaching in the classroom, teaching using different strategies, peer-to-peer teaching, one-to-one tutoring during the school day, after-school tutoring, and parent conferences designed to give support and ideas to parents on how to assist their children.

### ***Overall School Outcome Goals***

The following are realistic levels of overall school performance regarding student achievement. These are the standards that the Renaissance Academy Charter High School will demonstrate it can achieve by the fifth year of operation, with assessment to be conducted on a mutually agreed-upon schedule. It is expected that the Renaissance Academy Charter High School charter will be renewed if the school can demonstrate it has met or made measurable progress toward these school outcome goals. Interim progress reports will be issued annually for the first two years, and in future years at

intervals to be agreed upon by the chartering agency and Renaissance Academy Charter High School.

### ***Curricular Outcomes***

The Renaissance Academy's project-based curriculum will include all of the elements listed below, which will prepare students to be educated people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

**Language Arts:** Students will demonstrate strong reading, writing, listening, speaking, and presentation skills in multiple forms of expression (e.g. written, oral, multimedia), with communication skills appropriate to the setting and audience. They will comprehend and critically interpret multiple forms and styles of expression, including literature from various periods and cultures.

**Social Studies:** Students will understand and apply their knowledge of civics, history, and geography in order to serve as citizens in today's world of diverse cultures.

**Mathematics:** Students will develop their abilities to reason logically and to understand and apply mathematical processes and concepts, including those within arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and other mathematical subjects which the staff and school governing board deem appropriate.

**Science:** Students will successfully utilize scientific research and inquiry methods to understand and apply the major concepts underlying various branches of science, which may include physics, chemistry, biology, ecology, astronomy, and the earth sciences.

**Foreign Language:** Students will gain a basic understanding of a foreign language, and how language affects culture.

**Computers and Media Technology:** Students will gain proficiency in the skills needed in a technological world, including basic programming, typing, word processing, and use of the Internet as a research tool. Students will also become proficient at a variety of media technology tools used in web design, film production, and graphic arts.

**Visual and Performing Arts:** Students will gain the means and skills to express themselves artistically; the students will present an artistic work to an audience of students.

### *Academic Growth*

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will make significant progress on the aggregate results of the student outcome goals listed in the previous section. All data will be disaggregated to show how subgroups (e.g. LEP, non-LEP, mobility, gender, etc.) perform.

1. Students will make continuous improvement toward graduation goals each year. The founders of the Renaissance Academy believe that grades, if assigned carefully and fairly, can be among the best indicators of student progress because they account for the totality of student work and participation, and are assigned by the people who know the students' work best. Students will be measured on the following scale:
  - A – Markedly superior work
  - B – Superior work
  - C – Satisfactory work
  - D – Unsatisfactory work; needs to improve
  - F – Little or no progress in work

The Renaissance Academy will use a benchmark GPA to measure continuous improvement. The percentage of students gaining a satisfactory grade average or above will increase by 5% each year.

2. All students will increase CAT-9 scores 5% from previous year.
3. The percentage of students satisfactorily completing the benchmark tasks contained in their Electronic Student Portfolio will increase by 5% per year.

### *Positive School Atmosphere*

The Renaissance Academy will strive toward developing a positive school atmosphere that fosters a love of learning and encourages and supports student achievement. The school considers student satisfaction with the school to be a strong indicator of a positive school atmosphere. Indicators of student satisfaction will include average daily

attendance, involvement in school government and extracurricular activities, ability to meet educational goals, and positive ratings on student surveys.

Our standards for student satisfaction include:

- attendance rate of 95% or higher
- graduation rate of 95% of seniors enrolled in October of their senior year
- a dropout rate of less than one percent

Parent satisfaction with the Renaissance Academy Charter High School is another indicator of a positive school atmosphere. The Renaissance Academy will strive toward above average re-enrollment figures (excluding those who cannot re-enroll due to relocation or similar factors), high levels of parent involvement measured by substantial volunteer participation, and favorable parent survey results.

Teacher satisfaction with the school will heavily influence the school atmosphere and the parent and student satisfaction. Educators will find the Renaissance Academy Charter High School a positive and exciting environment, as evidenced by their creating or trying innovations, developing new curricular materials, involving students and parents in the development process, working collaboratively with parents and community volunteers, and/or taking responsibility for the school as a whole.

## **C: METHOD BY WHICH PUPIL PROGRESS IN MEETING PUPIL OUTCOMES IS TO BE MEASURED**

This section satisfies Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(C), which requires a description of:

The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured.

At the Renaissance Academy, assessment will be used to track and improve student achievement, refine instruction and the curriculum, monitor the school's progress relative to other schools, and provide a useful means for external accountability to the state, LAUSD, and the community. Beyond meeting all statewide standards and conducting the pupil assessments required pursuant to Education Code §60605(c)(1), the Renaissance Academy will develop a variety of ongoing, formative assessments in partnership with Public Works, Inc., a local non-profit educational consulting firm specializing in program evaluation and accountability systems for schools. These formative assessments will help the staff at the Renaissance Academy continuously improve instruction and identify academic issues with students while there is time in the school year to address them. So that the results will be comparable and useful, Public Works will help the Renaissance Academy staff develop assessments that are:

1. Valid
2. Reliable
3. Fair
4. Feasible

The assessments and overall school evaluation will link quantitative data from state and school developed assessments with more qualitative measures of student and school performance such as self-assessments, electronic portfolios, and measures of student conduct. Below is a descriptive list of some of the assessments the Renaissance Academy will employ:

1. CAT-6: The Renaissance Academy will comply with state law regarding the administration of standardized testing. Public Works will help the Renaissance Academy develop a plan to interpret and use the CAT-6 results to their best effect to inform instructional practices in the context of the school's curriculum and expected student outcomes. The California English Language Development Test (CELDT) results will be used in the same manner.
2. High School Exit Exam Scores: Like the CAT-6, High School Exit Exam scores can provide an objective measure of student performance that is useful for external evaluation of the students and the school. These scores will be examined to see if there are areas where the school could be improved for later classes of students.

3. Teacher Designed Tests: Tests and quizzes aligned to State content standards and reflective of the work the students have learned in class will be administered regularly to chart students' mastery of core content area knowledge and skills. Grades will be assigned by a certificated teacher on the scale as described in Element B.
4. Electronic Student Portfolio: The Renaissance Academy will develop a set of rubrics to evaluate students' work (essays, documentary films, cross-curricular projects) contained in their Electronic Student Portfolios (ESP). These rubrics will align with State standards and will evaluate students' understanding of subject area concepts as well as the students' application of that knowledge to relevant, authentic tasks. The students' skill mastery of technology and non-core subject areas will also be evaluated. The Renaissance Academy's community of artists-in-residence and professional practitioners will help credentialed teachers evaluate the non-core subject aspects of student projects and provide an independent, outside assessment of student work. The ESP is also a good tool for parents to evaluate their student's school work. Grades will be assigned by a certificated teacher on the scale as described in Element B.
5. Written Qualitative Feedback: As a small school where teachers will know their students well, the Renaissance Academy will use regular written and oral feedback from teachers, outside professionals, and peers to monitor student progress. This type of feedback, which is personalized for each student, can capture aspects of learning not covered in standard assessment tools and can provide readily actionable ways to improve student performance.
6. Student Self-evaluation: Part and parcel of the Renaissance Academy's focus on a constructivist, project-based curriculum is the use of self-evaluation as a tool for student learning. Students will evaluate their performance against State standards and their own personal learning goals using school-defined rubrics. By taking responsibility for their own learning, students are motivated to excel.
7. Technology Certifications: In conjunction with the Academy's ROP program, students can earn technology certifications that confirm their mastery of technology and vocational skills.

The Renaissance Academy will also use a variety of statistical data to evaluate school performance. These data include:

1. Academic Performance Index (API): API scores, both relative and absolute, can provide a useful snapshot of school performance.

2. Average Daily Attendance: The Renaissance Academy will use ADA as a general benchmark of how well the school is engaging its students and community.
3. Discipline Report: One indicator of the students' personal development is the overall disciplinary report which will record student misbehavior from tardiness to suspension and expulsion. Trends in this report will be duly noted and acted upon.

In addition to assisting with the development and use of appropriate rubrics and assessments, Public Works will perform the Renaissance Academy's school-wide evaluation leading up to the Academy's charter renewal. However, instead of beginning that evaluation in the last year or two of the Academy's initial charter term, Public Works will look longitudinally at the school beginning in the school's first year. This kind of evaluative work will help the school improve in each successive year, and will provide a consistent basis for future evaluation.

## **D: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL**

This section satisfies Education Code §47605 (5)(D) which requires a description of:

The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.

The Renaissance Academy is a Nonprofit California Public Benefit Corporation acting as a separate legal entity from Palisades Charter High School and LAUSD. The Charter School shall assume sole responsibility for its operations, debts, and legal obligations, and be accountable to its chartering agency for its outcomes in accordance with the California State Charter Schools Act.

### *Duration of Initial Charter Period*

The duration of the initial charter petition will be five years. The term of this charter will begin upon board approval and expire five years thereafter, on or about June 30, 2008.

### *Renewal Process/Time Line*

Renewal of the charter shall be in accordance with the standards set forth in Education Code Section 47605. Per LAUSD policy, the renewal petition will be submitted by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the year the charter is scheduled to expire.

### *Severability*

The terms of this charter contract are severable. In the event that any of the provisions are determined to be unenforceable or invalid under the provisions of California State Charter Schools Act or other relevant state and/or federal statutes, the remainder of the charter shall remain in effect, unless mutually agreed otherwise by LAUSD and the Board of Directors of the Renaissance Academy. The District and the school agree to meet to discuss and resolve any issues or differences relating to invalidated provisions in a timely, good faith fashion in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures set forth in the charter.

### *Revocation of Charter*

The LAUSD may revoke the Renaissance Academy charter if the Renaissance Academy commits a breach of any terms of its charter. Further, the LAUSD may revoke the Renaissance Academy charter if the Renaissance Academy commits a breach of any provision set forth by the LAUSD Board of Education and/or any provisions set forth in



the Charter School Act of 1992. Specifically, the LAUSD may revoke the Renaissance Academy Charter on any of the following grounds:

1. The Renaissance Academy commits a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter.
2. The Renaissance Academy fails to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the charter.
3. The Renaissance Academy fails to meet generally accepted accounting principles or engages in fiscal mismanagement.
4. The Renaissance Academy violates any provision of law.

Prior to revocation, LAUSD shall notify Renaissance Academy in writing of the specific violation. The LAUSD will give the Renaissance Academy a reasonable opportunity to remedy the violation. Depending on the nature of the violation, the LAUSD will determine the amount of time needed to remedy the violation. In the case of disputes, the parties agree to adhere to the dispute resolution procedures identified in the charter.

The LAUSD shall retain the right to revoke the charter immediately if the Renaissance Academy is engaging in or has engaged in activities that constitute a severe and imminent threat to the health and safety of the students. Under these circumstances, the dispute resolution procedures will be inapplicable.

### ***Indemnification***

The Renaissance Academy Charter High School does hereby agree, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend, and hold the LAUSD, its officers, employees, and agents harmless from and against any and all claims, liabilities, or legal proceedings brought by any person or entity whatsoever, arising from, or relating to the charter agreement. The charter school further agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold the LAUSD, its officers, employees, and agents harmless from and against claims, liabilities, or legal proceedings brought by any person or entity if such claims, liabilities, or proceedings arise from or relate to acts or the omission for acts committed by the charter school, its officers, employees, or students.

The Renaissance Academy Charter High School shall be responsible at its own expense for defending any claims, liabilities, or legal proceedings brought against the charter school by any person or entity.

### ***District Facilities***

The Renaissance Academy is investigating both sharing facilities on an LAUSD campus and commercial facilities. The Renaissance Academy will inform the District by August 1, 2003 about where it will locate for the 2003-2004 school year. If a facility cannot be located by August 1, 2003, the Renaissance Academy will delay its opening by one year and open in the fall of 2004. If the school opening is delayed, the RA will inform LAUSD about the school site by August 1, 2004.

### ***School Liability Insurance and Indemnification***

#### *Liability of District/County:*

Renaissance Academy Charter High School is a California Public Benefit Corporation. The district/county has no liability to handle payments if the Charter School defaults.

#### Liability/Insurance/Legal:

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will not be covered under any of LAUSD's self-insured programs, or commercial insurance policies. The Academy will secure and maintain, as a minimum, insurance as set forth below with insurance companies acceptable to the District to protect the Academy from claims which may arise from its operations.

1. Workers' Compensation Insurance in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code, adequate to protect the Academy from claims under Workers' Compensation Acts which may arise from its operations.
2. Comprehensive Bodily Injury and Property Damage Liability for combined single limit coverage of not less than \$5,000,000 for each occurrence. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles as additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and the Academy's insurance primary despite any conflicting provisions in the Academy's policy. Coverage shall be maintained with no self-insured retention.
3. Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by the Academy to cover all of the Academy's employees who handle, process, or otherwise have responsibility for the Academy's funds, supplies, equipment, or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be \$50,000 per occurrence, with no self-insured retention.

### Insurance Certificates

The Renaissance Academy shall furnish to the District certificates of such insurance signed by an authorized representative of the insurance carrier. Certificates will be endorsed as follows:

The insurance afforded by this policy shall not be suspended, cancelled, reduced in coverage of limits or non-renewal except after thirty (30) days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, has been given to the District.

Facsimile or reproduced signatures will not be acceptable. The Academy understands that the District reserves the right to require complete certified copies of the required insurance policies.

### *LAUSD and Renaissance Academy Charter High School Operational Agreements*

All Renaissance Academy requested services from LAUSD will be on a fee-for-service basis. Mutually agreed upon fees must be in place prior to the requested service. The Renaissance Academy is not planning to contract with LAUSD for any services except for:

- School police (including filing theft reports, alarm monitoring, support during times of emergency, canine program, and patrol)
- School site maintenance including garbage pick-up (if the school is on the Palisades campus), which we expect to be governed by a joint agreement with LAUSD, the Palisades Governance Board, and the Renaissance Academy. The Governance Council of Palisades Charter High has agreed in a resolution passed on April 8, 2003 to work in good faith to accommodate the Renaissance Academy on the Palisades campus.
- Special Education, which is addressed more fully in the special education attachment of the charter.
- Food service, which will, on the near term, be contracted through LAUSD or Palisades Charter High School (governed under the MOU) depending on how Palisades Charter High arranges for its own food service.
- Student transportation. The Renaissance Academy intends to utilize the bus transportation that currently serves Palisades Charter High School.

The Renaissance Academy reserves the right to negotiate a contract with an outside contractor at any time if such a contract proves to be in the best interest of the school.

***Legal:***

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will constitute itself as a California Public Benefit Corporation pursuant to California law as provided for in Education Code §47604 (a). The school will be governed pursuant to the bylaws adopted by the incorporators, as subsequently amended pursuant to the amendment process specified in the bylaws.

Charter amendments will be developed by and voted upon by the Board of Directors and legal counsel before submittal to the District for approval.

***Governance:***

As provided for in the California Corporations Code, Renaissance Academy Charter High School will be governed by its Board of Directors whose members have a legal fiduciary responsibility for the well-being of the organization.

The Board shall conduct or direct the affairs of the corporation and exercise its powers, subject to the limitations of the California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law, the Articles of Incorporation, and the Bylaws. The Board may delegate the management of the activities of the corporation to others, so long as the affairs of the corporation are managed and its powers are exercised under the Board's ultimate jurisdiction.

The Board of Directors major roles and responsibilities will include:

- Approving and developing the educational and operational policies of the school;
- Approving and monitoring the school's annual budget and fiscal affairs;
- Approving all major contracts;
- Recruiting, evaluating, and hiring the school's headmaster;
- Approving the school's personnel policies and overseeing the implementation of these policies by the headmaster;
- Appoints and removes members of the Board;
- Prescribes the duties of the Board Directors except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws;
- Performing any and all duties imposed on it collectively or individually by law, the Articles of Incorporation, and the Bylaws of the corporation.

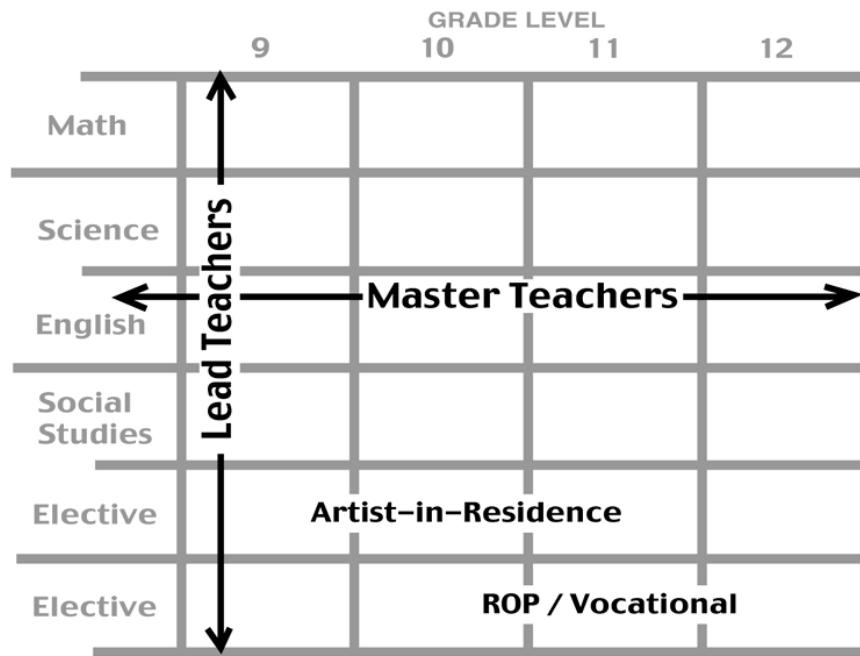
Day-to-day administration of the school will be overseen by the headmaster in conjunction with committees of the teaching staff. Business and financial administration such as SACS compliant financial accounting, cash flow management, accounts payable/receivable, and payroll will be provided by an outsourced financial services

company such as EdTec under the supervision of the headmaster and the board of directors. The financial services company will work closely with the headmaster to maintain the fiscal health of the school. Company representatives will inform the full board about the school's financial standing during regular board meetings (and at other times as needed) and will recommend budgetary modifications, as needed, to keep the school in the black. Internal financial controls will be implemented by the board under the guidance of legal counsel.

The Renaissance Academy will have a lean and broadly distributed administrative structure. Every credentialed staff member, including the headmaster, will teach at least part of the day. The headmaster will act as academic administrator whose primary concern will be the school's pedagogy and instruction, but he or she will also oversee the activities of the teacher committees, and ensure that they are upholding school policies. Rotating committees of teachers will manage discrete aspects of the school operation, including:

- Addressing discipline issues;
- Applying for and tracking grants;
- Developing school policies for approval by the Board;
- Managing student assessments and professional development.

Grade level academic affairs and subject level academic affairs/curriculum development will be the responsibility of the Lead Teacher and Master Teacher, respectively. Each of the four grade levels will have 100 to 125 students and a team of four to five credentialed teachers, one of which will be the Lead Teacher who will be responsible for administering that grade. There will also be a designated Master Teacher acting as a pedagogic leader for each of the four core subjects: Language Arts, Science, History/Social Studies, and Mathematics. The Master Teacher will insure the proper scope, sequence, and coordination of core subject matter across the grade levels. The Lead Teachers and Master Teachers will receive additional out of classroom time to complete their duties and will be compensated with an additional stipend.



This approach will distribute the administrative tasks across the staff and will eliminate the need for departments.

The artists-in-residence, outside professionals, and ROP teachers will help to alleviate some of the teaching burden from the core teachers during the day, freeing up time for the core teachers to tend to their administrative duties.

***Board of Directors***

The Board of Directors shall consist of a minimum of eight (8) and a maximum of 12 members. There will be a minimum of five (5) voting members and a maximum of 9 voting members. In addition, there may be three (3) *ex-officio*, nonvoting members. Among others, the Board will consist of:

A parent of a student of the Renaissance Academy Charter School, elected by the parent’s board and approved by the Academy board.

A Renaissance Academy Charter School teacher.

A Renaissance Academy Charter School student.

Community Member(s)

LAUSD representative, *ex officio*.

Headmaster of the Academy, *ex officio*.

Palisades Charter High School Governance Counsel Representative, *ex officio*.

Vacancies on the Board may be filled by a two-thirds vote of the Board. The number of directors may be changed by amendment of the bylaws, which would require two-thirds approval of the Board of Directors.

Education Code Section 47604 (b) provides that the governing board of a school district that grants a charter for the establishment of a charter school formed and organized pursuant to this section shall be entitled to a single representative on the board of directors of the nonprofit public benefit corporation. In accordance with Education Code Section 47604(b), the sponsoring district, Los Angeles Unified School District, shall be entitled to a single nonvoting representative on the Renaissance Academy Charter High School Board of Directors. However, pursuant Education Code §47604 (c), LAUSD's representative presence on the Board does not make it liable for the debts or obligations of the Renaissance Academy.

Terms of Office:

The term of office of all members of the initial Board shall be one year. At the end of the first year, the Board shall provide for staggered terms of its Directors, by designating approximately one-third of the Directors to two-, four- and six-year terms. Following the expiration of those designated terms, the term of each Director elected shall continue for six years, except the terms of any current student and teacher representative of Renaissance Academy Charter School shall be one year. The term of office of a Director elected to fill a vacancy in these Bylaws begins on the date of the Director's election, and continues: (1) for the balance of the un-expired term in the case of a vacancy created because of the resignation, removal, or death of a Director, or (2) for the term specified by the Board in the case of a vacancy resulting from the increase of the number of the Directors authorized. A Director's term of office shall not be shortened by any reduction in the number of Directors resulting from amendment of the Articles of Incorporation or the Bylaws or other Board action. A Director's term of office shall not be extended beyond that for which the Director was elected by amendment of the Articles of Incorporation or the Bylaws or other Board action.

Removal of Directors:

The Board may remove a Director without cause as provided by the California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation law. The Board may remove any Director who:

- a. Has failed to attend two or more of the Board's Regular Meetings in any calendar year;

- b. Has been declared of unsound mind by a final order of court;
- c. Has been convicted of a felony;
- d. Has been found by a final order or judgment of any court to have breached any duty imposed by the California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law; or
- e. For such other good causes as the Board may determine.

***How Board decisions are made:***

- No business shall be considered by the Board at any meeting at which a quorum is not present;
- A quorum shall consist of a majority of the then sitting voting directors;
- The Board will make decisions using a majority vote (51% of the board members attending the meeting);
- Board meetings will be conducted following Robert's Rules of Order and in compliance with the Brown Act;
- The Board members will at all times consider the voices of the stakeholder representatives in making decisions;
- A decision may be made by a committee of the Board authorized to act on behalf of the board on a matter in question;
- No director shall vote on any matter involving (a) a self-dealing transaction, (b) a conflict of interest, (c) indemnification of that director, or (d) any other matter at the discretion of a majority of the directors present.

All non-closed Board session deliberations and documents will be announced and posted as a matter of public record in compliance with the Brown Act.

***Process to ensure parent involvement***

In keeping with the Renaissance Academy's mission of creating a small community of learning where everyone has a sense of ownership and purpose, the Renaissance Academy Board of Directors is made up of parents, community members, and other stakeholders. This makes them, along with the 12 founding teachers, equal partners in the creation of the Academy.

It is the belief of the Renaissance Academy staff that increased parent involvement translates into increased student achievement. The Renaissance Academy will encourage, honor, and respect the parent voice. Parent involvement and the inclusion of the parent voice will be ensured in the following manner:



- The Renaissance Academy will form a parent committee that will meet at the school monthly to discuss school issues and policies. An elected representative of that committee will be given a seat on the Governing Board and will act as the communications liaison between the parents and the Governing Board. (Any parent may attend the meetings, pursuant the Brown Act.)
- Parent-teacher meetings will be held at least four times per year in order to facilitate communication among parents, teachers, administrators, and students, track the progress of the students, and develop any necessary interventions. Parents shall also be informed about student progress through monthly progress reports, and graded report cards.
- Parents will be encouraged to form committees that will plan events and fundraisers, review curriculum and policies, or get involved in other areas of interest consistent with the vision, mission, and policies of the school.
- Parents of each student will be encouraged to provide a minimum of three hours of service per month, or equivalent, to the school. Service opportunities will include, but not be limited to, assistance in classrooms, tutoring, translating, supervision, communications, facilitation, and clerical support.
- The staff and headmaster of the Renaissance Academy will maintain open lines of communication at all times with all parents. Beyond meeting with staff at parent-teacher conference, parents will be advised that the headmaster and teachers will be available for additional conferences as needed.

### *Process to ensure teacher involvement*

The nature of the Renaissance Academy's collaborative teaching environment and its matrix governance structure ensures teacher input and control at every level of the school's operations. Teacher involvement will be ensured in other ways as well, including:

- Teachers at Renaissance will elect a single representative to serve on the Board of Directors. Elections will be held annually. The elected teacher will represent the voice of the teachers by serving as a voting member of the Board of Directors and acting as a communications liaison between the teachers and the governing board. Teachers will abstain from voting on any salary issues.

- Teachers will have a common pupil-free period daily (7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.) to discuss curricular issues, plan, and evaluate ongoing program effectiveness.

### *Process to ensure student involvement*

One of the major benefits of small schools, as articulated by the US Department of Education, is the level of connectedness students feel in small learning communities. Students that feel connected and that their presence is valued have higher self-worth and increased achievement. The Renaissance Academy Charter High School will foster strong and ongoing relationships among students, teachers, and parents through an extensive mentoring and advisory program.

Beyond the close informal interactions that students will have with teachers and staff, students will also have the opportunity to provide input about the school policies and curriculum in the following ways:

- Each student will be assigned to an advisory group of between 18 and 20 students headed by an adult. The advisory group will meet briefly each day to disseminate information and discuss school issues. As part of this experience, the students will learn useful conflict management, team building, and presentation skills. In addition, mentors will meet one-on-one with their advisees as needed to ensure they are performing well, are on track to graduate, and are making worthwhile post-graduation plans. Several times during the school year parents will be included in the individual advisory sessions.
- Renaissance Academy Charter High School students shall elect a student council which will assume a leadership and facilitation role for school-wide events and projects.
- Student representatives will be consulted in the development of the student contract.

### *Process to ensure community involvement*

Representatives from the business community and/or the Academy's community partners shall serve as voting members of the Renaissance Academy Board of Directors.

The headmaster, staff, and Board of Directors will continually seek community partnerships that will enhance the instructional program and support the vision and goals of the Renaissance Academy. The following are a few active partnerships that the 12 founding teachers have developed and will integrate into the learning community of the Renaissance Academy:

- Museum of Television and Radio (MT&R) is a full curriculum partner with the RA development team. Drawing on their extensive archives of television and radio programs, the museum has developed educational units in such fields as animation and documentary filmmaking. These archives are available after school and on weekends for student and faculty research. In addition to granting access to their database, the Museum is committed to offering job shadowing and internships to qualified Academy students.
- Inner-City Filmmakers (IFC) provides professional, technical and business skills training and paid work opportunities to low-income inner city students where they can gain knowledge, perfect skills and develop their potential to the fullest extent. ICF has successfully trained and placed students in paying entry-level jobs at film studios and production companies earning many students memberships in the Motion Picture Editors Guild, International Cinematographers Guild and the Studio Electrical Lighting Technicians.
- GLOBE (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment) is a worldwide network of students, teachers, and scientists working together to study and understand the global environment. RA students will – along with students and teachers from over 10,000 schools in more than 95 countries – work online with research scientists to learn more about our planet.
- CNN Student Bureau (CNNSB) Academy students will participate in the CNN Student Bureau program. CNNSB is a virtual, worldwide student news source. Designed as the official student news gathering program for CNN, the program offers students a unique opportunity to engage in real-world learning experiences in news gathering and to practice their reporting and writing skills.
- EAST Inc. will provide training and support for students enrolled in Environmental and Spatial Technology classes. Students will apply technologies such as computer aided design (CAD), computer animation, geographic information systems (GIS), web page design, etc., to service learning projects. EAST Inc. will invite students to local training seminars and manage a listserv where students can collaborate with other schools, universities and professionals on projects and share expertise with EAST technologies.
- ACME ANIMATION (ACME) uses interactive video-teleconferencing to connect top professionals in the animation industry. Students present their drawings and animations during these transmissions, and receive critical feedback from animation professionals direct from a studio.

In addition, the Renaissance Academy will continually recruit more artists-in-residence to share their passion, knowledge, and expertise.

## **E: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS AND OTHER PERSONNEL MATTERS**

This section satisfies Education Code §47605(b)(5)(E), which requires a description of:

The qualifications to be met by individuals employed by the school, including the credentials held by the teachers of the school.

### ***Staff Selection***

In its first year of operation, the Renaissance Academy Charter High School will employ 8 of the founding RA teachers to meet the needs of the first classes of 200-225 students in 9th and 10th grades. Each year, the school will add 100 students and hire four additional teachers. Representatives of the school will scout the schools of education throughout the State of California and take advantage of organizations such as CANEC that have annual job fairs for teachers. The Renaissance Academy staff will seek the most promising teachers and administrators in their various fields of expertise. Additionally, the staff will seek the advice and council of Santa Monica College for assistance in hiring qualified Early College instructors.

The selection procedures shall not discriminate on the basis of affiliations, political or religious acts or opinions, race, color, gender, marital status, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, actual or perceived sexual orientation, medical condition (cancer-related), sex, or age. The Renaissance Academy will recruit staff of diverse backgrounds to reflect the diverse student body.

### **Job Descriptions**

Headmaster:

Day-to-day administration of the school will be overseen by the headmaster in conjunction with committees of the teaching staff. The headmaster will act as academic administrator whose primary concern will be the school's pedagogy and instruction. He or she will hire, lead, and manage the teaching staff and will also oversee the activities of the teacher committees, and ensure that they are upholding school policies. The headmaster is also responsible for the day-to-day finances of the school through his or her oversight of/partnership with the outsourced business and financial services provider.

Teachers:

Teachers will be responsible for teaching the students. In addition, they will have responsibilities on committees managing discrete aspects of the school operation, including:

- Addressing discipline issues;
- Applying for and tracking grants;
- Developing school policies for approval by the Board;
- Managing student assessments and professional development.

Grade level academic affairs and subject level academic affairs/curriculum development will be the responsibility of the Lead Teacher and Master Teacher, respectively. Each of the four grade levels will have 100 to 125 students and a team of four to five credentialed teachers, one of which will be the Lead Teacher who will be responsible for administering that grade. There will also be a designated Master Teacher acting as a pedagogic leader for each of the four core subjects: Language Arts, Science, History/Social Studies, and Mathematics. The Master Teacher will insure the proper scope, sequence, and coordination of core subject matter across the grade levels. The Lead Teachers and Master Teachers will receive additional out of classroom time to complete their duties and will be compensated with an additional stipend.

#### Selection of Administrators

New administrators, including the position of headmaster, shall be recruited and interviewed by a committee of teachers and approved by a super-majority (60%) of all full-time teaching staff. Following the teacher's vote, the simple majority approval of the Board of Directors of the Renaissance Charter Academy will be required to finalize the process.

#### Selection of Teachers

New teacher candidates shall be interviewed and selected by the Chief Education Officer (headmaster), the Master Teachers (pedagogic leaders of core subjects), and the grade level Lead Teacher.

#### *Qualifications*

All employees must have potential or demonstrated effectiveness in working with students and parents from diverse backgrounds. They must be willing to take on responsibility and exercise leadership for the school. They must have an educational vision that is consistent with the school's mission and educational program.

#### Headmaster qualifications:

- Master's degree in education and/or equivalent experience;
- Strong, demonstrable leadership skills in educational and administrative areas;

- Ability to work effectively with the diversity of parents, community, Board of Directors, and students involved with the school;
- Educational vision that is consistent with the school's mission and educational program;
- Passion for educating underserved students.

Core subject teacher qualifications:

- Valid teaching certificate, permit, or other document issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing;
- Expertise in the core subject they want to teach;
- Evidence of successful classroom teaching experience;
- Ability to work in a team environment and a willingness to embrace the cross-curricular educational focus of the school.
- Willingness to take responsibility and exercise leadership for the school as a whole.

Non-core subject teaching staff (artists-in-residence and ROP) qualifications:

- Expertise and practical experience in field of instruction;
- Experience working with and/or teaching diverse groups of people;
- Ability to work in a team environment and a willingness to embrace the cross-curricular emphasis of the school.

All classified candidates will be required to read, sign, and comply with the District Legal Requirements, Policies, and Rules for Classified Employees.

Renaissance Academy Charter School may also employ or retain qualified non-certified instructional support staff to serve in an instructional support capacity. These employees will have an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and a demonstrated capacity to work successfully in the role of instructional support. Instructional support staff will not assign grades or approve student work assignments without the approval of a teacher except in non-core or non-college preparatory courses and activities.

Each student will be assigned to an advisory/mentor group made up of 20-25 students and a credentialed teacher. This group will meet daily in an informal homeroom to disseminate information, learn study skills, and resolve conflicts. The teacher/mentor will meet individually with the students to oversee the student's academic progress,

monitor grading and matriculation decisions, and advise the student on making positive post-graduation plans.

### Assessment

As with the students, the teachers and staff will take part in ongoing assessments. The headmaster, lead teacher, and master teacher will perform at least bi-yearly 360-degree assessments with all of the teachers. Each teaching team will perform their own internal evaluations on a quarterly basis. More frequent assessments may be performed as needed. The lead teachers and master teachers will be responsible for monitoring teacher performance between the bi-yearly assessments.

At the end of each school year, the headmaster, lead, and master teacher will perform a year-end evaluation of all the teachers that will incorporate student performance and student evaluations.

If a teacher consistently underperforms based on a series of negative assessments over the course of a semester, the teacher will be put on probation for a period of one semester. If the teacher does not improve by the end of the semester, the teacher may be let go from the staff based on the recommendation of the headmaster, lead teacher, and master teacher.



## **F: HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code §47605(5) (F), which requires a description of:

The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in Education Code § 44237. The procedures shall also address safe housing and employee clearance for tuberculosis.

Renaissance Academy Charter High School shall comply with all provisions of Education Code § 44237, including the requirement that as a condition of employment each new employee not possessing a valid California Teaching Credential must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary.

Records of students' immunizations shall be maintained to the extent required for enrollment in non-charter public schools. All staff must provide evidence that they are free from tuberculosis. A Mantoux TB is required of all employees who have not been tested previously. The headmaster will be responsible for maintaining compliance with § 44237 and all applicable health and safety laws.

Prior to commencing instruction, the Renaissance Academy Charter High School will adopt and implement a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies in consultation with the school's insurance carriers and at a minimum will address the following topics:

- Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires and earthquakes based on the guidelines set forth by LAUSD.
- Policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens.
- A policy requiring that instructional and administrative staff receive training in emergency response once per year, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent.
- Storage of water, food, and first aid supplies for three days as outlined in LAUSD's emergency preparedness bulletin.
- Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines.
- A policy that the school will be housed in facilities that have received Fire Marshal approval and that have been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer who has determined that the facilities present no substantial seismic safety hazard.
- A policy that the school location and facility will be investigated, inspected, and tested in order to determine that it is free from environmental hazards.

- A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug-, alcohol-, and tobacco-free workplace.
- A policy mandating that all teachers and staff at Renaissance Academy Charter High School report suspected child abuse in accordance with California state law reporting procedures. The Renaissance Academy will follow the procedures outlined in the LAUSD bulletin No. 10 – Child Abuse Reporting.

These policies will be incorporated, as appropriate, into the school's student and staff handbooks and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis as part of the school's staff development efforts and governing board policies.

In addition, the school will participate in the Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) program to help stop substance abuse before it begins in students.

### *School Safety*

Per state law, the Renaissance Academy will maintain a Safe School Plan.

### *Location of facility*

The Renaissance Academy developers are investigating sharing a current LAUSD campus as well as off-campus, commercial facilities. The final facilities will be approved by the District and will comply with Uniform Building Codes, federal American Disabilities Act (ADA) access requirements, and other applicable fire, health, and structural safety codes.

The Renaissance Academy will inform LAUSD about the location of its facility by August 1, 2003 for the 2003-2004 school year. If the Renaissance Academy cannot secure a location by August 1, 2003 for the 2003-2004 school year, the developers will wait to open the school in the 2004-2005 school year in an off-campus, commercial facility. In this case, the school will notify LAUSD by August 1, 2004 of its facility.

The Renaissance Academy with the assistance of Exed and EdTec has developed multiple budgets to accommodate the various facility arrangements listed above.

## **G: MEANS TO ACHIEVE RACIAL/ETHNIC BALANCE REFLECTING THE DISTRICT & ITS ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code §47605(5)(G), which requires a description of:

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.

The Renaissance Academy Charter High School will recruit a socio-economically, racially, and academically heterogeneous group of students from across the city of Los Angeles. The school shall attempt to achieve a stable pupil population that represents the racial and ethnic diversity of the territorial jurisdiction. The start-up budget of the school allots for an extensive community outreach program to disseminate multi-lingual information and brochures to all LAUSD middle and high schools about enrollment in the Academy as well as about busing. Outreach meetings in several areas of the district, particularly Los Angeles's poorest and most ethnically diverse areas, will be conducted by the staff and community partners of the school in Spanish and English.

In addition, the Academy will tap into the networks and communities of its academic partners, such as Santa Monica College. The summer Early College program at Santa Monica College attracts a diverse group of students who may be interested in attending the Renaissance Academy.

### Court-Ordered Integration Funds:

When accepting Court-Ordered Integration Funds, Renaissance Academy Charter High School will comply with LAUSD's court-ordered Integration Funds policy as set forth in *Crawford vs. Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles*. The policy applies to all schools within or schools chartered through the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD).

Contingent upon available funds and after the Renaissance Academy Charter High School submits the ethnic survey information, the type of class-size reduction will be determined during the first year of operation. If Court-ordered Integration funding is appropriate, either the Predominantly Hispanic, Black, Asian and Other Non-Anglo (PHBAO) or Desegregated/Receiver teacher to pupil norming ratio would be approved for the first year of operation. If Renaissance Academy Charter High School wishes to reduce class size to a lower ratio, Court-Ordered Integration funds cannot be used, and the funding source(s) must be identified. Additionally, as documentation for initial and yearly funding, both Budget Services and Financial Planning Division of the Office of Student Integration will continue to use the information listed below:

-Norm Day Classification	-List of All Certificated Personnel
-Total School Enrollment	-List of Emergency-Credentialed Teachers
-Number of Students by Grade Levels	-Unfilled Classroom Teacher Positions
-Number of Students by Ethnicities and Grade Levels	-Fiscal Year-End Financial Report
-List of Register-Carrying Teachers in Classrooms	-Number of Students Living Outside the LAUSD Attendance Area

Court-ordered Integration compliance will also include appropriate record keeping within Renaissance Academy Charter High School’s budget line items to ensure that the Court-ordered Integration funds are used specifically as designated, e.g., number and cost of class-size reduction position(s). Renaissance Academy Charter High School will provide to LAUSD all requested information using District forms, including ethnic surveys and, if appropriate, PHBAO Parent Conferences Program documentation.

Any modification to the Court-Ordered Integration Program must first be approved by the Office of Student Integration Services and in the Specially Funded & Parent/Community Program Division of LAUSD.

Title 1 Funds and NCLB:

In accordance with current federal legislation and No Child Left Behind, Renaissance Academy Charter High School may receive Title 1 funding based on eligibility of students. Expenditures of Title 1 funds will conform to all guidelines, rules, and regulations pertaining to the expenditure of such funds as outlined in NCLB.

## **H: Admission Requirements**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code §47605(5)(H), which requires a description of:

admission requirements, if applicable.

All students are eligible to enroll at the Renaissance Academy. For admission to the Renaissance Academy, students must apply directly to the school. The Renaissance Academy uses an open enrollment admission policy for all students, and does not discriminate on the basis of residency, gender, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, immigration status, ethnic and racial background, language spoken, religion or political belief. The Renaissance Academy will not charge tuition.

All students are eligible to apply, and admission will not be based on the residence of the student or his or her parent or guardian, except that preference will be given to students residing within the “previous attendance area” of Palisades Charter High School. If the Academy is on the Palisades campus, the “attendance area” of the school would be defined as both the local neighborhood and those geographic neighborhoods, which are now sending and have traditionally sent students to the Palisades campus. If the Academy is on another campus, the “attendance area” would be defined as both the local neighborhood and those geographic neighborhoods, which are now sending and have traditionally sent students to the campus where the Academy is located.

The Renaissance Academy will comply with all state laws pertaining to student admission and enrollment.

The Renaissance Academy Charter High School is committed to maintaining a socio-economically, ethnically, and racially diverse student body that understands and values the school’s mission and is committed to the school’s instructional and operational philosophy. As described in section VII, the Academy will actively recruit students from the poorest and most ethnically diverse areas of Los Angeles.

Before students enroll, the Renaissance Academy will provide parents and students with information that explains the instructional program and policies of the school, including, but not limited to the following:

- Student behavior codes
- Student attendance policy
- Parental involvement expectations
- Care of school property
- Commitment to the academic program.

## Admission Requirements

Admissions policies are under the purview of the Board of Directors. As noted above, students and their parents/guardians must complete an application and submit it directly to the Renaissance Academy. All students will be required to attend an orientation prior to the opening of the school year. Parents and students will be required to sign an agreement that they will abide by the school policies on academics, attendance, and conduct. In accordance with California State Education Code 47605 (d) (2), a public random drawing shall be used when admissions requests exceed the available space. In order to build a sense of community, the Board of Directors may consider on an annual basis the issuance of special permits (e.g. continuing enrollment, children of staff, siblings of students, etc.) based on available space and provided that these permits are consistent with the school's obligation to not determine admission to the school based on geographic place of residence of the pupil or their parents/guardians.

## Special Education Enrollment

Students in special education programs may apply to attend the Renaissance Academy. As with regular enrollment, they are not discriminated against on the basis of residency, gender, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, immigration status, ethnic and racial background, language spoken, religion or political belief. The school will adhere to federal, state, and judicial mandates regarding admission of special education students. The LAUSD enrollment form will be used; and if a student is indicated as receiving services, and IEP will be required. Cumulative files are checked and the green folder reviewed to ensure appropriate services are provided. Applications and a recent IEP must be submitted by the same deadlines as those of regular students.

## **I: INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL AUDIT**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code § 47605(5)(1), which requires a description of:

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.

The Renaissance Academy Charter High School will retain the services of an independent public accountant who is certified by the State of California to audit the school's financial statements in accordance with GAAP and the audit guide issued by the Controller of the State of California. Two interim reports and year-end report, in a format to be provided by the District, which will include actual and revised budget figures and projected revenues, expenditures and fund balances, will be submitted to the sponsoring district unless a different system is agreed to by all parties. In addition, financial statements audited by a Certified Public Accountant will be submitted to the sponsoring District within four months following the close of the fiscal year. Any audit exceptions or deficiencies will be resolved to the satisfaction of the LAUSD.

In compliance with AB1994, the Renaissance Academy will provide an annual financial report to LAUSD, in a format developed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, which LAUSD will send to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Renaissance Academy will submit its annual audit to the State Controller, COE, CDE, and LAUSD.

The Renaissance Academy will be responsible for its own financial services (accounting, budgeting, and payroll) and personnel services. The District may charge for the actual costs of supervisory oversight of the Renaissance Academy not to exceed 1 percent of the revenue of the school. If the charter school is able to obtain substantially rent-free facilities from the District, the District may charge for the actual cost of supervisory oversight of the charter school not to exceed 3 percent of the revenue of the charter school.

The Renaissance Academy shall conduct all of its financial operations in a timely manner and for all programs (regular, categorical, and special education) through procedures established by the State of California and the Federal Government, as appropriate. For Federal programs, including Title I, the criteria for eligibility and fiscal guidance will be as established by the Federal Government. In receiving this funding directly, the Renaissance Academy is responsible for meeting eligibility and fiscal requirements established by the Federal Government and for completing the Consolidated Application. The Renaissance Academy shall provide the District with all financial and related reports, including enrollment attendance to enable the District to

meet its requirements by law. Notwithstanding the Academy's expectation to receive Title I funding under Federal guidelines, said funding may not be forthcoming until the school meets established criteria for a determined school year.

The Renaissance Academy shall promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries, including but not limited to, inquiries regarding financial records, from the LAUSD and shall consult with the LAUSD regarding these inquiries.

### ***Programmatic Audit***

The Renaissance Academy will compile and provide to LAUSD an annual performance audit. This report will include the following data:

- Summary data showing pupil progress toward the goals and outcomes specified in Element 2;
- A summary of major decisions and policies established by the school's Board of Directors during the year;
- Data regarding the number of staff working at the school;
- A summary of any major changes to the school's health and safety procedures;
- Data regarding the numbers of pupils enrolled, the number on waiting lists, and the number of pupils suspended and/or expelled.

Other audits will be at the requesting authority's expense.

### ***LAUSD and Renaissance Academy Charter High School Operational Agreements***

The District may at its discretion provide services to the Charter School on a fee-per-service basis, if requested by the Charter School to do so. In such a case, the District will determine the cost of providing such services, and these fees must be in place prior to the requested service. Any service agreements will be subject to MOUs. The Renaissance Academy is not planning to contract with LAUSD for any services except for:

- School police (including filing theft reports, alarm monitoring, support during times of emergency, canine program, and patrol)
- School site maintenance including garbage pick-up (if the school is on an LAUSD property), which we expect to be governed by a joint agreement with LAUSD, the Governance Board of the host school, and the Renaissance Academy.
- Special Education, which is addressed more fully in the special education attachment of the charter.



- Food service (if the school is in District facilities)
- Student transportation. If feasible, the Renaissance Academy intends to access the Integration Funds bussing and will also explore other transportation including public transportation.

The Renaissance Academy reserves the right to negotiate a contract with an outside contractor at any time if such a contract proves to be in the best interest of the school.

## **J: DISCIPLINE POLICY/SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code § 47605(5)(J), which requires a description of:

The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled (and a description of any appeal process).

The Renaissance Academy Charter High School will develop and maintain a comprehensive set of student discipline policies based on the input of the staff, parents, Board of Directors and students. These policies will be printed and distributed as part of the school's student handbook and will clearly describe the school's expectations regarding attendance, mutual respect, substance abuse, violence, safety and work habits. Each student and his or her parent or guardian will be required to verify that they have reviewed and understand the policies prior to enrollment. Students who violate the school rules shall expect consequences that will increase based on the seriousness and frequency of the proscribed behavior. The list below shall be amended based on staff, parent, Board of Director, and student feedback.

1. Warnings
2. Loss of privileges
3. Notices to parents by telephone or letter
4. Request for parent conference with written remediation agreement outlining the school's future expectation of the student and consequences for failure to meet those expectations.
5. Suspension
6. Expulsion

Students who present an immediate threat to the health and safety of themselves or others may be suspended immediately to protect the safety of students and staff. All of the finalized discipline policies will be adapted to conform to applicable federal law regarding students with exceptional needs, and students and parents will be accorded due process. The school will notify the district of any expulsions and will include suspension and expulsion data in its annual performance audit.

### ***Grounds for Suspension***

Below is a partial list of acceptable grounds for suspension, pending input from the staff, board, and parents:

1. Threatened, attempted, or caused physical injury to another person.
2. Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.

3. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object.
4. Possessed, sold or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
5. Offered, furnished, or sold any substitute substance represented as a controlled substance, or intoxicant of any kind.
6. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion,
7. Stolen or attempted to steal school or private property.
8. Possessed or used tobacco or any product containing tobacco or nicotine products, including clove cigarettes.
9. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
10. Unlawfully possessed, offered, furnished, or sold any drug paraphernalia.
11. Disrupted school activities or willfully defied the valid authority of school personnel.
12. Knowingly received stolen school or private property.
13. Committed sexual harassment.
14. Committed sexual assault.
15. Committed hate crimes.

### ***Due Process for Parents/Students Appealing a Suspension***

The parent or guardian of a suspended student or the suspended student him- or herself may appeal the suspension decision directly to the headmaster. The headmaster will expeditiously convene the staff discipline committee to review the matter with the parent and/or student in question. If the discipline committee determines that the student has not violated one of the rules in the student handbook as agreed to by the student and parent or believes that extenuating circumstances should mitigate the consequences of such an action, then the suspension decision may be reversed.

### ***Procedures for Expulsion***

The headmaster shall have the authority to recommend expulsion. The school shall inform the parent or guardian of its intent to expel the student in writing and provide the student/parent(s)/guardian appropriate time for preparation of a response and participation in a hearing with the headmaster and full-time staff prior to any final decision regarding the expulsion. The final decision to expel a student will be by a super majority vote of the headmaster and full-time staff.

### ***Due Process for Parents or Students Appealing an Expulsion***

If a parent or guardian is not satisfied with the final decision of the staff/headmaster, he or she may petition the Board of Directors in writing to ask for an appeal. The Board of Directors will meet and submit a final decision on the matter.

## **K: RETIREMENT BENEFITS**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code §47605(5)(K), which requires a description of:

The manner by which staff members of charter school will be covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System, the Public Employees' Retirement System, or federal social security.

The Renaissance Academy Charter High School shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Education Employment Relations Act.

All employee policies will be determined by the Board of Directors of the Renaissance Academy in consultation with the teacher committee and teacher board representative. Below are preliminary policies.

### Mandatory Benefits for all Full-Time Staff Members

The Renaissance Academy will continue to provide mandatory benefits in accordance to the law. These include:

- Workers' Compensation Insurance
- Unemployment Insurance
- Medicare
- Social Security (if applicable)

### STRS

All full-time certificated employees of the Renaissance Academy Charter School will have the option to contribute to STRS. The employees will contribute the required percentage and the Academy will contribute the employer's portion. All withholdings from employees and from the Academy will be forwarded to the STRS fund as required. Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of STRS.

### PERS

All classified employees of the Academy will have the option to contribute to PERS. All withholdings will be forwarded to the PERS fund as required. Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of PERS.

Certified, classified, and other staff members at Renaissance Academy Charter High School shall retain all previously vested rights in their respective retirement systems, including but not limited to STRS, PERS, and the social security system.

### Health Benefits

The Renaissance Academy will provide a health and wellness stipend to all full-time employees at a level determined by the Board of Directors.

### Salary Schedule

The Renaissance Academy will establish salary schedules based on employee preparation and experience. The salary schedule will be reviewed on an annual basis. The Academy will adopt the salary schedule of LAUSD in its first year, but reserves the right to explore options in developing a performance-based system for salary allocation in the future.

### Illness/Personal Days

All accrued illness/personal days will remain with the sponsoring district for employees who previously worked with the district and are on approved charter leave to work at the Renaissance Academy. In the event an employee wishes to return to the sponsoring district, he/she is eligible to use these accrued illness days per district/bargaining unit contract terms. These contract terms include the use of accrued illness days for long-term illness and maternity leaves that exceed 20 days. Upon exhaustion of illness/personal days granted by the Renaissance Academy, employees may access their illness/personal necessity days from the district's bank.

Certificated and classified employees will earn illness/release days each school year at a rate to be determined by the Board of Directors before the start of school.

### Vacation Days

Qualifying certificated and classified employees will receive the same number of earned vacation days per sponsoring district/bargaining contract terms for the initial year of operation, but reserves the right to develop its own plan in the future.

All employees on charter school leave who have accrued vacation days with the sponsoring district will keep their accumulated vacation balance with the sponsoring district's vacation bank.

### Paid Legal Holidays

The Renaissance Academy will offer the same legal holidays currently offered by LAUSD.

### Work day

All teachers at the school will be required to be at the school during school hours, which will in the first year mirror the Palisades Charter High School bell schedule (See Attachment A).

### Process for resolving complaints and grievances and Due Process

If a staff member has a complaint or grievance, he or she may approach the headmaster directly with his/her concern, or voice his/her concern through the teacher committee representative on the board, who will take the issue to the headmaster or board as appropriate. If the staff member is not satisfied with the resolution, the teacher may escalate the matter directly to the Chairman of the Board of the Directors and ask for a closed or open session hearing of the issue at the next board meeting.

## **L: ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code §47605(5)(L), which requires a description of:

The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools.

Students who opt not to attend the Renaissance Academy Charter High School may attend other LAUSD high schools, subject to the District's placement policies and procedures.



## **M: RETURN RIGHTS OF EMPLOYEES**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code §47605(5)(M), which requires:

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.

All employees join the Renaissance Academy Charter High School staff voluntarily. An employee joining the Academy staff may do so as a result of taking leave from employment with the sponsoring district, Los Angeles Unified School District. All employees may feel free to leave the Charter School with return rights to the sponsoring district as specified in appropriate collective bargaining agreements. If an employee returns to the sponsoring district prior to the expiration of the leave from the sponsoring district, the return will be at the discretion of the sponsoring district. Employees leaving the Charter School may return to the Charter School after an opportunity leave for up to 24 months should a vacancy be available and their performance is considered acceptable.

## **N: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code §47605(5)(N), which requires a description of:

The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.

Any controversy, claim, or dispute arising out of or relating to the charter agreement shall be handled first through an informal process in accordance with the procedures set forth below.

1. Any controversy, claim, or dispute arising out of or relating to the charter agreement, or the breach thereof, must be submitted in writing (“Written Notification”). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the dispute. The Written Notification may be tendered by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail. Written Notifications shall be addressed as follows:

To Charter School:

Paul McGlothlin  
Renaissance Academy  
Pacific Palisades, CA

To Director of Charter Schools:

Charter Schools Director  
Charter Schools Unit, 25<sup>th</sup> Floor  
333 S. Beaudry Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

2. A written response (“Written Response”) shall be tendered to the other party within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification. The parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss and resolve the controversy, claim, or dispute at issue (“Issue Conference”). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date the Written Response is received by the other party. The Written Response may be tendered by personal delivery, facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by

facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

3. If the controversy, claim, or dispute cannot be resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, then either party may request that the matter be resolved by mediation. Each party shall bear its own costs and expenses associated with the mediation. The mediator's fees and the administrative fees of the mediation shall be shared equally among the parties. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 120 days from the date of the Issue Conference. The parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator to resolve the controversy or claim at dispute. The mediator may be selected from the approved list of mediators prepared by the American Arbitration Association. Mediation proceedings must be administered in accordance with the mediation rules or guidelines of the American Arbitration Association.
4. If mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to settle the controversy, claim, or dispute by arbitration, conducted by a single arbitrator in accordance with the rules or guidelines of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the California State Bar or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California. Each party shall bear its own costs and expenses associated with the arbitration. The arbitrator's fees and the administrative fees of the arbitration shall be shared equally among the parties.
5. Any party who fails or refuses to submit to arbitration shall bear all costs and expenses incurred by such other party in compelling arbitration of any controversy, claim, or dispute.

## **O: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code §47605(5)(O), which requires:

A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (Chapter 10.7 (commencing with §3540) of Division 4 of Title I of the Government Code).

The Renaissance Academy Charter High School shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Education Employment Relations Act. The Academy will adhere to the provisions of EERA.

## **P: CHARTER SCHOOL CLOSING**

This section meets the requirements of Education Code §47605(5)(P), which requires:

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.

The Renaissance Academy shall abide by the regulations set forth in AB 1994. If the Renaissance Academy were to close, the following procedures would be followed to ensure an orderly closing of the school:

1. An independent educational consultant, approved by the District, would be hired to collect, organize, and submit all student records to the District and/or the school that receives the students.
2. An independent auditor, approved by the District, would be hired to catalogue all assets and determine the extent of liabilities of the school. The auditor would also perform a final audit of the school's finances.
3. The school lawyer would pay down all liabilities and transfer all remaining assets, as allowable by law, to another non-profit educational institution.

Additional policies and procedures will be determined as needed by the Board of Directors.

## **FACILITIES/ BUDGET/ BUSINESS/ ACCOUNTING**

This section satisfies the requirements of Education Code Section 57605(g), which states:

"petitioners provide information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the school, including, but not limited to, the facilities to be utilized by the school, the manner in which administrative services of the school are to be provided, and potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and upon the school district."

The petitioner or petitioners shall also be required to provide financial statements that include a proposed first-year operational budget, including start-up costs, and cash-flow and financial projections for the first three years of operation.

### *Facilities*

The Renaissance Academy will seek commercial facilities and inform LAUSD of these prior to school opening in September 2003. LAUSD will be furnished with all documentation pertaining to the facilities according to LAUSD Charter School Policy. Renaissance Academy will be responsible for securing and paying for its own services such as food service and custodial services.

If the RA should be unable to find facilities by August 1, 2003, the school will delay its opening by one year while it secures facilities. In this case, the RA will inform LAUSD about its school site by August 1, 2004.

### *LAUSD and Renaissance Academy Charter High School Operational Agreements*

The District may at its discretion provide services to the Charter School on a fee-per-service basis, if requested by the Charter School to do so. In such a case, the District will determine the cost of providing such services, and these fees must be in place prior to the requested service. Any service agreements will be subject to MOUs. The Renaissance Academy is not planning to contract with LAUSD for any services except for:

- School police (including filing theft reports, alarm monitoring, support during times of emergency, canine program, and patrol)
- School site maintenance including garbage pick-up (if the school is on an LAUSD property), which we expect to be governed by a joint agreement with LAUSD, the Governance Board of the host school, and the Renaissance Academy.
- Special Education, which is addressed more fully in the special education attachment of the charter.
- Food service (if the school is in District facilities) If the RA is on commercial real estate, the school will likely contract with a commercial food service provider such as Sodexo or Aramark for its food service.

- Student transportation. If feasible, the Renaissance Academy intends to access the Integration Funds bussing and will also explore other transportation including public transportation.

The Renaissance Academy reserves the right to negotiate a contract with an outside contractor at any time if such a contract proves to be in the best interest of the school.

#### Food Services Program:

If the school is in a commercial facility, the Academy will outsource foodservice to a food service vendor such as Aramark, Sodexo, a nearby school or university, or a local vendor. The District will verify eligibility and apply to the state on the school's behalf. In accordance with the Federal Lunch Act, eligible students will be provided free or reduced-rate breakfast and lunch. Renaissance Academy Charter High School reserves the right to operate its own food service program or contract with an outside vendor.

#### Revenue Flow:

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will work cooperatively and collaboratively with the California Department of Education (CDE), Los Angeles Unified School District (sponsoring district) and the Los Angeles Office of Education (LACOE) personnel to achieve a direct revenue flow from CDE to Renaissance Academy Charter High School. Funds transferred directly from CDE to Renaissance Academy Charter High School will be transferred to the Charter School account in the Los Angeles County treasury by LACOE in the most expeditious manner possible. Revenue Limit funds still flowing through the sponsoring district will be transferred via journal voucher entry two weeks after receipt of funds by the District. Renaissance Academy Charter High School will apply directly for all categorical funding that is not included in the block grant.

#### Budget Development/Fiscal Reports/Audit:

Budget development will begin each year immediately following the January announcement of the governor's K-12 State Budget Proposals and will be continually refined through the May Revision to the State Budget Act. Budgeted resources will always be consistent with Charter School goals as identified by the governing council. Two interim reports and a year-end estimated actual budget will be submitted to the sponsoring district and LACOE unless a different system is agreed to by all parties.

#### Depository/Accounting/Payroll:

All revenue generated by Renaissance Academy Charter High School will be deposited in the Los Angeles County Treasury. All payments (including payroll) will be drawn on the County Treasury, which enables the County PBAS (Program Budgeting and Accounting System) to account for all revenue and expenditures. Two revolving accounts with a local financial institution will be maintained for day-to-day expenditures from the General Fund and from Food Services. Other arrangements for payments may be made if mutually agreeable to the County Treasury and the RA.

Payroll services may be provided by the Los Angeles County Office of Education or through an outsourced provider.

#### AB 544 Direct Funding Model:

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will follow the process outlined in AB 544 relative to the Direct Funding Model.

#### Purchasing and Contracting:

Renaissance Academy Charter High School will always utilize effective business practices which will result in the best quality at the best price. Contracts for major services, equipment, and alterations and improvements will be open to multiple bidders when time permits. All things being equal, preference will be given to local bidders.

#### Attendance Accounting:

Attendance accounting procedures will satisfy CDE, LACOE, and LAUSD requirements. Daily attendance will be recorded on attendance cards by classroom teachers. Official registers will be completed on a monthly basis, documenting the month's attendance. Required reports will be completed regarding daily attendance and submitted to the requesting agencies. This includes reporting enrollment and attendance figures to the Los Angeles Unified School District each month.

#### Transportation:

If Renaissance Academy Charter High School is on the Palisades Charter High School campus, it will use the transportation that currently operates on the campus. The students that use this transportation come from over 100 zip codes in LAUSD including



some of the poorest areas of the city. If the Renaissance Academy is on another campus, other plans will be set in place to provide transportation to students coming from other parts of the District.

Financial Services:

Policy is set by the Charter School Board of Directors, and day-to-day operations will be carried out by the headmaster and staff. Business consultation and support to the headmaster will be provided by an outsourced school business services company such as EdTec. The accounting system would adhere to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, and there will be adequate internal controls within the system. The headmaster will oversee the work of the business services company, which will handle the timely and appropriate reporting regarding student outcomes, budget, etc. Reporting will be implemented in accordance with specific agreements between the school and the sponsoring district. Evaluation and hiring criteria, decisions, and procedures are set forth in this petition.

# ATTACHMENT A: SAMPLE CLASS SCHEDULE

## Renaissance Academy: *Example Week* Documentary Project (Grade 10)

	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI
7:50	<b>ADVISORY</b>				
8:10	<p><b>Language Arts</b></p> <p><i>Didactic instruction:</i> writing research proposal</p> <p><i>Investigation:</i> locating web sites for research proposal</p> <p><i>Presentation:</i> initial proposal ideas</p>	<p><b>Integrated Sci 2</b></p> <p><i>Didactic inst:</i> scientific aspects of research issue</p> <p><i>Investigation:</i> locating video clips for documentary video</p> <p><i>Presentation:</i> sharing video clips</p>	<p><b>Intergrated Sci 2</b></p> <p><i>Field trip:</i> to natural history museum to hear research lecturer and gather information from museum library</p>	<p><b>Social Studies</b></p> <p><i>Didactic inst:</i> documentary video rubric</p> <p><i>Investigation:</i> viewing documentary models (professional and student)</p> <p><i>Discussion:</i> results of rating documentary models</p>	<p>SAT-prep</p> <p><i>Media Lab:</i> working with artist-in-residence to learn the inputting and editing of source materials in documentary videos</p>
9:34	<b>NUTRITION</b>				
9:59	<p><b>Social Studies</b></p> <p><i>Didactic inst:</i> forming essential questions</p> <p><i>Investigation:</i> location source documents</p> <p><i>Presentation:</i> student-led discussion of found documents</p>	<p><b>Math Lab</b></p> <p><i>Didactic inst:</i> survey statistics</p> <p><i>Investigation:</i> gathering in-class survey results</p> <p><i>Presentation:</i> in-class survey results</p>	<p><b>Language Arts</b></p> <p><i>Field trip:</i> to natural history museum to gather information from museum library</p> <p><i>Media lab:</i> Work on written research proposal with individualized assistance</p>	<p><b>Math Lab</b></p> <p><i>Didactic inst:</i> Spreadsheet software</p> <p><i>Investigation:</i> processing survey data with spreadsheet software</p> <p>Quiz on survey terms and techniques</p>	<p>French 2 (On-line Course)</p> <p>Yoga</p>
11:41	<b>LUNCH</b>				
12:21	<p><b>Electives</b> (Arts, Physical Education, skill building, test prep)</p> <p>Self-Directed Learning</p>	<p><b>Electives</b> (Arts, Physical Education, skill building, test prep)</p> <p>Self-Directed Learning</p>	<p><b>Electives</b> (Arts, Physical Education, skill building, test prep)</p> <p>Self-Directed Learning</p>	<p><b>Electives</b> (Arts, Physical Education, skill building, test prep)</p> <p>Self-Directed Learning</p>	<p><b>Electives</b> (Arts, Physical Education, skill building, test prep)</p> <p>Self-Directed Learning</p>
2:03	<p>French 2 (On-line Course)</p>	<p>Basketball Practice</p>	<p>French 2 (On-line Course)</p>	<p>Basketball Practice</p>	<p>Basketball Game</p>
2:13					
3:08					

## **ATTACHMENT B: SCHOOL CALENDAR**

The Renaissance Academy will follow the LAUSD school calendar for single track instruction. School will commence on September 2, 2003 and conclude on June 17, 2004.

The holiday schedule will be as follows:

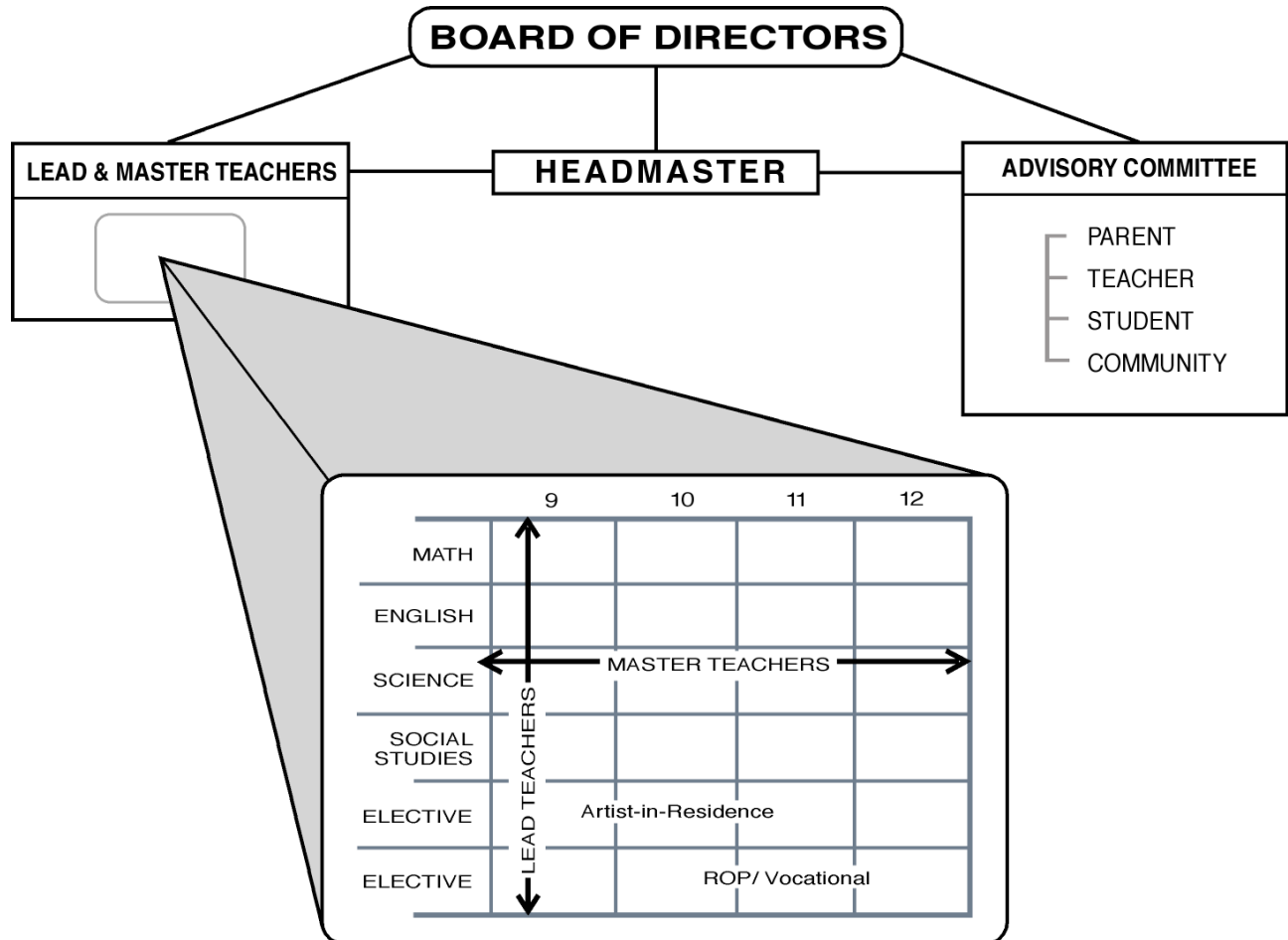
- 11/11/03 – Veterans' Day
- 11/27/03 – 11/28/03 – Thanksgiving
- 12/22/03 – 1/9/04 – Winter recess
- 1/19/04 – MLK Day
- 2/16/04 – Presidents' Day
- 4/5/04 – 4/9/04 – Spring Break
- 5/31/04 – Memorial Day

Teacher professional development days will be as follows:

- 10/6/03
- 11/26/03

In total, the school will have 180 days of instruction.

# ATTACHMENT C: ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



## **ATTACHMENT D: THREE YEAR BUDGETS**

The attached budgets reflect three possible facilities scenarios:

- A. Renaissance Academy opens in the Fall of 2003 on a District campus without an advance apportionment.
- B. Renaissance Academy opens in the Fall of 2003 in a commercial facility without an advance apportionment.
- C. Renaissance Academy opens in the Fall of 2004 in a commercial facility with advance apportionment.

## **ATTACHMENT E: TEACHER SIGNATURES/CREDENTIAL NUMBERS**

**ATTACHMENT F: CERTIFICATES OF STATUS DOMESTIC CORPORATION**

**ATTACHMENT G: BYLAWS OF THE RENAISSANCE ACADEMY  
CHARTER SCHOOL**



## **ATTACHMENT H: PROOF OF ASSETS**

- A. Certification of Award (PCSGP)
- B. Line of Credit Letter

## **ATTACHMENT I: LETTERS OF SUPPORT**