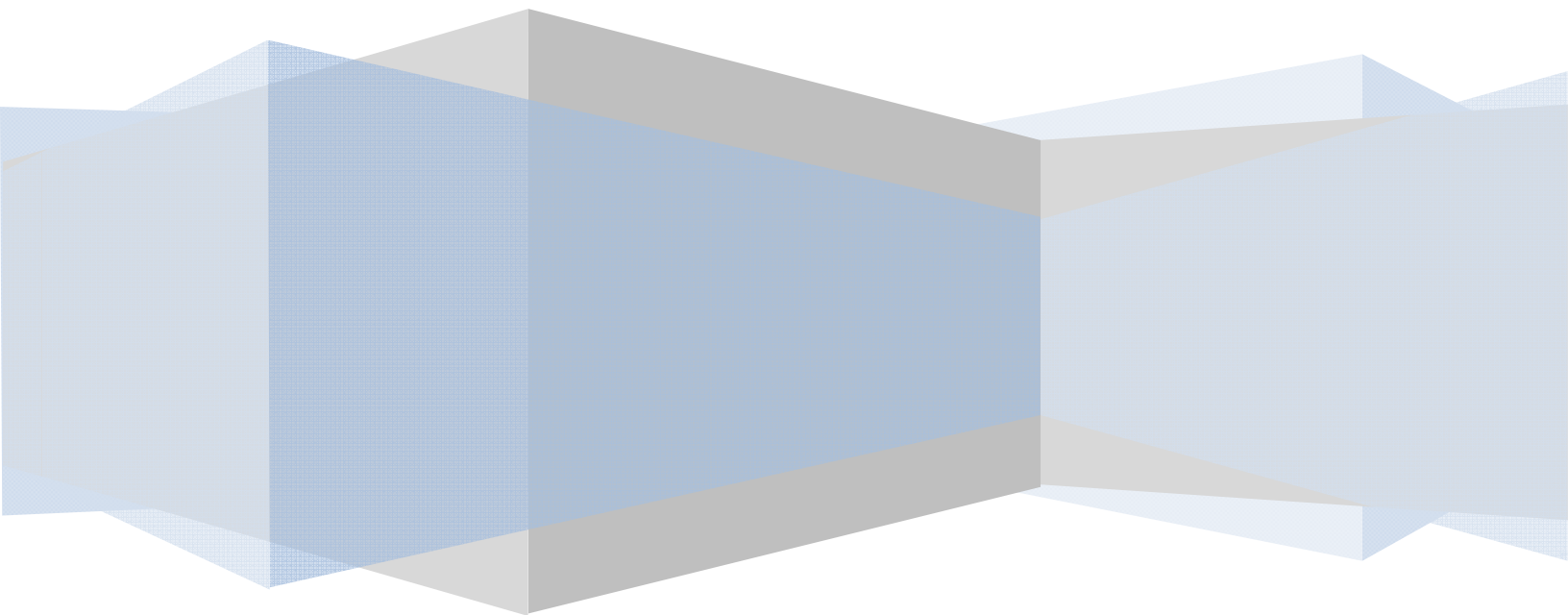


Partnership for Los Angeles Schools

Strategic Plan

2008 - 2009



The Partnership for Los Angeles Schools *“The Gold Standard for Excellence in Education”*

Executive Summary

The Partnership’s Mission

The Partnership for Los Angeles School’s (PLAS) mission is to transform schools into high-performing, language-centered communities; characterized by high quality, rigorous instruction; delivered by responsive, personally supportive teachers and staff; in a vibrant, clean, safe environment.

PLAS Performance Outcomes for 2008 – 2009

- ✓ **Increase the Academic Performance Index (API)**
PLAS schools will increase their Academic Performance Index (API) scores by 30 points on average, representing an increase in API scores of approximately 5 percent.
- ✓ **Accelerate performance in English/Language Arts**
PLAS schools will increase the percentage of students scoring at the “proficient” and “advanced” levels on the California Standards Test (CST) in English/Language Arts by a combined 5 percent increase over the 2007-2008 CST scores.
- ✓ **Accelerate performance in Math**
PLAS schools will increase the percentage of students scoring at the “proficient” and “advanced” levels on the California Standards Test (CST) in Mathematics by a combined 5 percent increase over the 2007-2008 CST scores.
- ✓ **Decrease the High School Dropout Rate**
As reported by the State of California, on average 39.4 percent of students at the PLAS high schools (Santee Educational Complex and Roosevelt High School) drop out of school. PLAS high schools will decrease the dropout rate to 36.4 percent in the 2008-2009 school year, with continued decreases in each subsequent year.
- ✓ **Increase School-wide Efficacy**
PLAS is dedicated to serving those that most directly serve students, parents, teachers, administrators, counselors, and school site staff. PLAS will provide surveys annually to parents, teachers, and other school staff and expects an increase in school-wide efficacy from the majority of members of the school community during the 2008-2009 school year.

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PLAS Strategies to Meet Outcomes

1. Improved Leadership Development
2. Accelerate Student Performance
3. Positive Learning Environments
4. Family and Community Engagement Development
5. Streamlined and Improved School Operations

Strategy 1: Improved Leadership Development

PLAS will utilize an “*apprenticeship*” leadership model to develop effective instructional leadership skills among all site administrators.

- PLAS leaders (Principals and Assistant Principals) will refine their practice through intensive individualized coaching and monthly leadership conferences facilitated by the Family of School Leaders.
- All principals will participate in support groups for intensive work on issues of practice and leadership.
- PLAS will foster a professional learning community among principals whom will learn from one another through school inter-visitations.
- PLAS leaders will develop communities of learning at their school sites, including collaborative inquiries and community involvement.
- PLAS schools will practice shared decision-making, and administrators, teachers, classified staff and parents will be trained to effectively make student-centered decisions in a shared decision-making environment.

Strategy 2: Accelerate Student Performance

PLAS, in collaboration with parents, students, and the school staffs, will develop, implement, and monitor comprehensive, coherent, student-centered school improvement strategies to accelerate performance across all PLAS schools. Improvement strategies will incorporate

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continuous feedback systems using multiple sources of school data to improve the instructional program.

PLAS schools will accelerate student performance through the following strands:

- Implementing the PLAS Core Instructional Values, which include Expectations, Rigor, Relevance and Relationships, Engagement, and Environment
- Creating Language-Centered Learning Communities with Particular Year 1 Emphasis on English Language Development (ELD) and Academic Language Development (ALD)
- Building a Culture of Data-Driven Decision-Making through Professional Learning Communities
- Implementing Targeted Student Intervention
- Developing Instructional Coaching

Strategy 3: Positive Learning Environments

PLAS schools are small, safe, and clean academic environments that provide positive learning experiences for all students, staff, families, and community members.

- PLAS schools will establish welcoming learning environments that promote academic achievement and collaboration. Training will be provided to school site staff to help them improve in their respective roles and maintain a school environment that is conducive to student learning.
- PLAS schools will be positive social environments where staff, parents, and community members develop quality relationships, build coherence, develop leadership capacity, and foster a shared collaborative spirit striving toward a clear, commonly shared purpose for student success.
- PLAS will focus on transforming its high schools into small schools in the 2008-2009 year and on transforming its middle schools into small schools the following year.

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Strategy 4: Family and Community Engagement Development

PLAS is dedicated to ensuring that parents and community members are active partners in the effort to improve schools and uplift families and neighborhoods where PLAS schools are located.

- PLAS schools will dramatically increase parent participation and parent volunteerism.
- PLAS schools will establish parent centers that promote parent participation and learning activities on every campus.
- PLAS will work with schools to increase parents’ knowledge, awareness, and accountability for student achievement.
- PLAS schools will foster strong partnerships with community organizations, youth programs, universities and colleges, in concert with city services in order to increase support to students and their families.

Strategy 5: Streamlined and Improved School Operations

PLAS school-site operations will be highly effective and customer-focused in order to support student achievement. This aspiration is based on PLAS’s core belief that school-site operations is vital to accelerating student achievement because effective operations directly impacts students’ learning environment and allows school staff to focus on instructional rather than operational issues.

- PLAS will develop the capacity necessary for schools to dramatically accelerate performance, and work collaboratively with LAUSD, the State of California, LAUSD labor unions and Partnership school staff.
- PLAS schools will experience dramatically improved operational service delivery in targeted areas, with a focus on safety, human resources, facilities, budget and finance, technology, and compliance.
- PLAS will work collaboratively with LAUSD and other stakeholders to help redesign LAUSD’s operations to better support schools and to scale successful strategies to other LAUSD schools.
- PLAS schools will operate seamlessly without any interruption in service following the transition from the Local District to the iDesign Division.

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Strategy 1: Improved Leadership Development

“It behooves us to find our voices. Leaders must speak to followers; we must let them know where and how we stand on important issues. We must constantly make decisions and evaluate results in light of what we believe.” -Max Dupree

PLAS schools, as they are presently organized and operated, are not yet prepared to respond to the increasing demands and accountability they face under standards-based reform. Instructional improvement will require dramatic change in the way PLAS schools define and practice leadership. PLAS believes that leadership development is a priority in order to ensure that each school community meets its highest potential. Issues of student achievement and teacher practice cannot be separated from issues of school leadership. Therefore, PLAS has designed a set of strategies that will support leadership development and growth throughout the school year.

Expected Outcomes

- Provide principals and assistant principals with high quality leadership development that models how to shape a learning community that places student achievement and teacher development at the center, enabling them to transform their schools into high performing communities.
- Model a results-oriented, service focused leadership approach to leading that principals and assistant principals will then emulate and use to drive excellence in their schools.
- Create structures that allow for effective shared decision-making so that critical decisions for schools are informed by the voices of teachers, parents, school site staff and students.

Strategy Overview

Strategy	Description
Principal Conferences	Monthly principal conferences provide the primary vehicle for developing and building instructional leadership capacity.
Individual Coaching	Principals refine their practice through intensive individualized coaching by the Family of School Leaders. Coaching is embedded in the regular processes of running the school.
Support Groups	New principals, who are leading schools with particularly heavy demands for program implementation and teacher development, participate in additional leadership opportunities for intensive work on issues of practice and leadership. These support groups provide a place to learn, problem-solve and gain new perspectives and strategies.
Professional Learning Communities/ Study Groups	Principal study groups are formed around common issues of practice. Principals and Family of Schools select readings, invite outside experts, visit schools together and discuss implementation issues.
Inter-visitation	Principals participate in school inter-visitations. Visits by one principal to

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Strategy	Description
	another principal’s school may be initiated by the individuals involved or may be initiated by the Family of School Leader. Inter-visitations are built around a specific practice that the visiting principal wants to learn by observing and analyzing in another school.
Communities of Practice	Principals have the opportunity to participate in an intensive process of inquiry with the PLAS instructional team. Specific adaptive challenges will surface and will be brought before the instructional team.
Shared decision making	PLAS schools will practice shared decision-making and administrators, teachers, classified staff and parents will be trained to effectively make student-centered decisions in a shared decision-making environment.

School Level Implementation

Key Strategies	What School Leaders Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
Principal Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals and Assistant Principals will learn and discuss a variety of high impact issues that will inform and develop their leadership capacity • Schools leaders will consistently and systematically engage in professional learning with colleagues • Principals will write an Annual Work Plan that contains an analysis of current teacher practice and lays out a year-long comprehensive plan for professional development and scaffolding support for staff and students • Principals and Assistant Principals will engage in an instructional course of study that will support them to provide professional development, observe practice, and support teacher development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family of School Leaders will plan and deliver Principal and AP professional development conferences. Topics will be highly relevant to the day-to-day work of school leaders, such as developing a work plan, how to conduct classroom observations and provide constructive feedback, managing instructional support staff to provide outstanding professional development, etc.
Individual Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals and Assistant Principals will visit classrooms two to three hours a day to observe instruction • School Leaders will utilize the expertise of the Family of School Leaders to help problem-solve and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family of School Leaders will routinely visit schools and observe classroom environments and teacher instruction alongside Principals • Family of School Leader will

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Key Strategies	What School Leaders Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
	implement proven practices and innovative programs that develop teachers and improve student achievement	observe or lead professional development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS will analyze data on student performance
Support Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Principals and Assistant Principals will participate in their designated support group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS will facilitate the development of support groups so Principals and Assistant Principals who are new to their job (3 years or less) will have specialized supports to help them effectively manage and problem solve particular issues at their school site
Professional Learning Communities / Study Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals and APs will participate in self-selected Professional Learning Communities and/or Study Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family of School Leaders work with principals to select readings, invite outside experts, visit schools and discuss implementation issues
Inter-visitiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During a typical inter-visitiation, the two principals will walk through classrooms together, sit in a staff development meeting, and discuss and analyze the specific issues of practice and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS will serve as a hub of communication about best practices in our schools, as well as other schools in Los Angeles and outside of Los Angeles • Family of School Leaders will participate in inter-visitiations
Communities of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals and Family of Schools Leaders will call on the expertise of PLAS staff, as needed, to address particular or specific adaptive challenges at their school sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional team will offer suggestions and perspectives on particular challenges through each team member’s particular lens of expertise
Shared decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key school site leaders including administrators, teachers, classified staff and parents will participate in governing structures (SSC, ELAC, etc.) and committees to ensure that all voices participate in making critical school site decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS will provide training for members of the SSCs, leadership teams and other decision-making bodies to ensure that schools operate efficiently and effectively in a shared decision making environment • Family of School Leaders will provide guidance and coaching to school site leaders to help them create thriving shared decision making environments

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Strategy 2: Accelerate Student Performance

PLAS—in collaboration with parents, students, and the school staffs—will develop, implement, and monitor comprehensive, coherent, student-centered school improvement strategies to accelerate performance across all PLAS schools. Improvement strategies will incorporate continuous feedback systems using multiple sources of school data to improve the instructional program.

Study after study reveals that high quality teaching closes the achievement gap and improves learning for all students. High quality instruction—delivered by responsive, personally supportive teachers and staff in a vibrant, clean, safe environment—improves and accelerates student learning. Sustainable school improvement must be systemic, and schools must identify and develop major instructional improvement strategies that:

- Are tied directly to student achievement data, instructional practice, and school-wide policies, practices, and procedures;
- Are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-Oriented, and Time-Bound (SMART);
- Include on-going, high quality professional development focusing on research-based effective practice; and
- Incorporate monitoring and feedback practices that ensure fidelity, frequency, and quality of implementation.

PLAS will improve academic performance through the following five strands:

1. PLAS Core Instructional Values
2. Language-Centered Learning Communities with Particular Year 1 Emphasis on English Language Development (ELD) and Academic Language Development (ALD)
3. Culture of Data-Driven Decision-Making through Professional Learning Communities
4. Targeted Student Intervention
5. Instructional Coaching

Expected Outcomes

- Develop communities of learners at each PLAS school through a collaborative, results-oriented approach with a focus on engagement, English language development, and environment.

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- Build school site capacity through instructional coaching development in the areas of instructional leadership, data analysis, and the coaching cycle in which teachers are supported directly in the classroom and through professional development.
- Foster data-driven, student-focused teaching rooted in lesson study and review with an emphasis on language opportunities through student engagement.
- Create a systematized intervention structure with clear goals outlined through data walls monitored by teachers and instructional leaders.
- Create true professional learning communities, in which teachers and other school site staff are taking responsibility for their continued professional development and are actively engaged in collaboration, sharing of best practices, mentoring and other activities that improve their skills as educators and leaders.
- Establish welcoming learning environments that are clean, safe, and achievement inspiring and promote academic achievement and collaboration.

1. PLAS Core Instructional Values

Principals and Assistant Principals must consistently teach, model, and monitor the Partnership’s Core Instructional Values, which are: Expectations, Rigor, Relevance and Relationship, Engagement and Environment.

Strategy	Description
Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS administrators, parents, students, staff, and teachers are be able to articulate multiple measures of school-wide efficacy and success. • Students know what they are learning and why, as well as the criteria for proficient work from criteria charts/rubrics, and are involved in assessing their own learning. • All students satisfy the A-G coursework requirements and graduate high school prepared to enter college or the work place
Rigor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All PLAS teachers will teach the California Content Standards in a rigorous learning environment that will guarantee student success. • Teachers will utilize differentiated instructional strategies, activities, and techniques to enhance the curriculum and empower students to become critical thinkers, readers, and writers.
Relevance & Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will utilize culturally relevant curriculum, materials, and resources in order to provide classroom educational opportunities that are culturally, cognitively, and linguistically congruent to those of the students. • PLAS will work with it high schools to build the necessary foundations to successfully implement a multiple pathways approach in its schools.

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Strategy	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS schools will build a community in which all stakeholders are valued, respected, and heard.
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS teachers use engagement techniques to assess the level of understanding of students. • PLAS students are active participants in daily instruction. Students interact with each other and teachers to process learning objectives.
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS classrooms will be attractive, comfortable, print-rich environments that support the work of PLAS students. • PLAS classrooms have abundant and accessible learning tools and resources for students.

2. Language-Centered Learning Community

A language-centered learning community is a school community in which all adults commit to continuously modeling and encouraging appropriate, correct use of language by providing a variety of forums for students to actively engage and practice using language in all forms. Regardless of primary language experience and English proficiency level, all students develop the fluency to articulately express their thinking and understanding orally and in writing, both in social and academic settings. Therefore, students must have access to an extensive collection of texts that are engaging, accessible and age appropriate for use in and out of class. Classrooms must be print-rich and designed to promote the use of various grouping configurations, enabling students to discuss and co-create projects independently, in small groups and as a whole group. In order to develop the kind of instructional practice that supports and allows all students to thrive in a language-centered community, it is crucial that all teachers, regardless of level and content specialty, utilize balanced literacy strategies (read aloud, shared reading/writing, guided reading/writing, etc.) and appropriate levels of support (I do, We do, You do) in every lesson and throughout the day.

Although there is specific language work that most logically lives in the language arts curriculum, language development instruction must be embedded into all content areas (Scarcella, 2003; Dutro & Moran, 2003). All teachers must understand their role in supporting language development (Fillmore & Snow, 2000) by attending to English proficiency, grammar, vocabulary and other components of language. Teachers should consistently employ a wide repertoire of structured language practice strategies to ensure that students are applying the language taught in meaningful contexts. Through text analysis and review of the content area standards, teachers can determine language patterns and forms that must be taught to all students at their grade level to reach proficiency. By using the ELD standards and other resources such as the ELD Matrix of Grammatical forms (Dutro, Prestridge & Herrick, 2007), teachers will become proficient in identifying the behaviors that are particular to each language proficiency level and will build their expertise in infusing this knowledge into their teaching during ELD time and across content areas.

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Educators must understand the difference between the teaching of academic language and English language development. Academic language is “the language used in professional books and characterized by the specific linguistic features associated with academic disciplines... It includes a wide range of genres or discourse types... the language shifts to meet changing literacy tasks and purposes. Academic English requires not only the development of advanced reading skills which enable learners to access complex words, but also the advanced skills which enable learners to understand and use these words in spoken and written communication” (Scarcella, 2003). Building one’s use of academic language is a lifelong endeavor and all students, regardless of primary language, must be taught how to use it. English learners, however, face the particular challenge of learning everyday speech in conjunction with academic English (Dutro & Moran, 2003). Just as all students need to be specifically taught academic language, English learners must be taught how English works. For example, in Spanish double negatives are grammatically correct. If an English learner is not taught that this language pattern does not transfer to English, she will fossilize the use of double negatives in her speech and writing. Marzano (2004) and Echevarria and Graves (2007) stress that schools will only close achievement gaps for English Language Learners (ELL) when there is a systemic effort to focus on language development.

School-Level Implementation

Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
Balanced-Literacy Approaches & Gradual Release of Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the course of the school year, begin implementation of certain balanced literacy strategies, such as read-aloud, shared reading and writing • Implement Fisher and Frey’s Gradual Release of Responsibility (2007): I do, We do, You do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the capacity of site-based coaches to lead the implementation of balanced literacy strategies • Provide support to coaches and teachers on the components of Balanced Literacy

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Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
ELD/ALD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and support staff will strategically implement interaction strategies for creating language rich environments • Teachers will offer direct language instruction • Teachers will differentiate lessons for specific proficiency levels • Schools will revise EL student placement guidelines for 6th and 9th grade to allow for individualized placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form an EL Leadership group to identify and design best practices for EL instruction and procedures • Conduct trainings on ELD Continuums/ Rubrics • Host trainings for parent coordinators to build background knowledge and academic language development in the home • Begin implementation of EL Achieve’s Focused Approach

3. Culture of Data-Driven Decision-Making through Professional Learning Communities

PLAS leaders and school leaders understand that having a powerful and flexible tool for data disaggregation is necessary, but not the key component of building a data-driven culture. Most important to building this culture is providing time, space, and intensive support to teachers and other staff members in the strategic use of data. PLAS will assist schools in creating Professional Learning Communities where teachers are provided structured time to plan together, collaborate on data analysis, and teach, learn, and replicate effective instructional practices in grade-level/department meetings.

Professional Learning Communities (DuFour & Eaker, 1999 & 2002) have been identified by researchers and educators as a leading school improvement strategy (Taylor & Teddlie, 1999; Joyce, 2004; Huffman & Jacobson, 2003; Strahan, 2003). In brief, professional learning communities refer to a school organization in which all the stakeholders are involved in joint planning, action, and assessment for student growth and school improvement.

Establishing professional learning communities involves “reculturing” PLAS schools to build collegial, collaborative, learning environments, in which:

- PLAS “shifts from a culture of teacher isolation to a culture of deep and meaningful collaboration” and
- PLAS implements a meeting structure which allows consistent time for teachers to engage in meaningful, goal and data-driven, collaborative discussions and staff development regarding ‘best practice’ instructional strategies. The primary goal for all of professional meetings is to improve teacher expertise.

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Data Analysis

PLAS support and accountability will include using technological tools, as well as providing coaching to leaders, teachers, counselors, and other staff members in order to build their capacity to work individually and collectively in the examination of multiple types of student achievement data. PLAS has developed, in conjunction with LAUSD’s iDesign, a set of metrics that will measure a number of areas related to student achievement, stakeholder satisfaction and school performance. We anticipate a continued improvement in performance for these metrics over time due to an increased capacity to make timely instructional decisions using real-time, disaggregated student performance data through a wide variety of assessment tools.

School-level Implementation

Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
Professional Learning Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement school-wide meeting structure which allows teachers to analyze student achievement data, discuss best practice strategies and co-plan lessons and authentic assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family of School Leaders and Instructional Managers will provide training and support Instructional Support team will facilitate coach study groups and inquiries at target grade levels 3rd, 6th, and 9th
Data Analysis Protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop grade-level, department-wide, sub-group, and school-wide instructional goals based on student achievement data, analysis of instructional practice, and analysis of school-wide systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide guidance and facilitation in developing grade-level, department-wide, sub-group, and school-wide instructional goals based on student achievement data, analysis of instructional practice, and analysis of school-wide systems

4. Targeted Student Intervention

PLAS goal is for every student to be provided with the support needed to advance toward proficiency and beyond. Planning for the specific needs of all students, whether by intervention or enrichment, is a primary goal of PLAS and its schools. In collaboration with the schools, PLAS will develop, support, and monitor targeted student intervention programs and data-driven enrichments that meet the specific academic needs of all students, ultimately leading to proficiency in all students.

Meeting the individual needs of each student will be accomplished by regularly monitoring data, providing effective instruction and implementing regular accountability checks by PLAS staff, as well as school leadership.

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School-Level Implementation

Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
Intervention & Enrichment Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify an Intervention and Enrichment Team as well as students needing intervention and enrichment based on specified criteria • Monitor intervention classes for attendance and provide for incentives and rewards • Use data wall to track progress of students • Teachers and support staff collect and monitor pre/post assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Intervention Team by providing professional development and expertise • Ensure intervention curriculum and data system meets the needs of students and intervention teachers • Evaluate effectiveness of intervention curriculum
8 th to 9 th Grade Transition Intervention: Implement Data Dashboard with Early Warning Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use data dashboard and early warning indicator system to support 8th to 9th grade transition. The data dashboard will integrate web-based, real-time student achievement data, including course grades, state and District assessments, attendance reports and A-G tracking and discipline data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch data dashboard with early warning indicator system. The first release of the dashboard will occur on November 1st; there will be two additional releases • Gather teacher input on the dashboard to continue to inform and refine future releases
Develop capabilities of school site staff to identify early warning indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early warning indicators will be given to staff working with 8th and 9th grade students so they can monitor performance of 9th graders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS support team will provide ongoing training and support to school staff regarding the rollout of the data dashboard
Extended Day Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Extended Day Program with classes that have a smaller teacher to student ratio than the classes during the day. Extended Day will be focused initially on the lowest performing students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS will work with school sites to develop extended-day supports for 9th grade students

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Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
Advisory Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and refine Advisory Curriculum to include drop-out prevention measures, CAHSEE, and college bound culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify successful advisory practices from other schools • Provide professional development for advisory teachers • Develop plans to implement a new advisory curriculum for the 2009-2010 school year
Math and English Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop plans to add intervention courses in Math and English to the master schedule in place of electives in the 9th grade curriculum in 2009 – 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research effective math and reading acceleration curricula and practices and develop plans to implement new intervention courses in both of these areas for 9th graders
Strengthen master scheduling capacity to enable A-G courses for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School site staff must have a strong understanding of their master schedules and should use them strategically to enable all students to pass the A-G curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a detailed analysis of current course offerings to ensure that the existing courses are conducive to an A-G curriculum • Collaborate with school staff to identify changes to course offerings to ensure that all students have access to the A-G curriculum and receive enough supports, interventions and credit recovery opportunities to successfully complete the A-G curriculum • Create a comprehensive program for master scheduling that will enable school sites to strategically use the master schedule for student placement
Introduce a student-focused reporting system to monitor A-G completion progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development will be provided to teachers, administrators, and counselors on the use of A-G progress reports • Host parent meetings to explain the reports and how they can be used to account for student progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Transcript Evaluation Services (TES), a project of the University of California system, to introduce A-G progress reports to every student after each semester and develop the necessary software to provide supports to parents in both English and Spanish

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5. Instructional Coaching

Instructional coaches guide teachers in the analysis of student achievement data and instructional practice to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in teacher practice. Ongoing and non-evaluative support is given to assist in instructional improvement to meet the needs of all learners. Habrouck and Denton (2005) note that improving student skills, data-driven decision-making and individualized interventions are the primary benefits of coaching.

PLAS Instructional Coaches will use data inquiry to drive targeted instruction and will provide ongoing student-focused support through collaborative experiences in refining teaching practices. Instructional Coaches assist teachers in implementing strategies with greater skills. Teachers understand teaching methods from a research and practical standpoint, which translates into more supportive lessons and more targeted support for teachers (Fitzharris, Blake Jones, and Crawford 2008). Through instructional coaching, teachers explore theories behind skills and develop knowledge through demonstrations and observations through collaborative experiences with coaches and peers (Joyce and Showers 2002). Teachers are able to refine instructional strategies and best teaching practices as a team by building professional dialogue among colleagues. Students also benefit from coaching, as teachers are more likely to incorporate research-based practices into their daily teaching pedagogy.

School-Level Implementation

Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
Coaching Cycle and Peer Observation Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaches will utilize the PLAS coaching cycle components of data/observations, preliminary discussion, demonstration lesson, debrief, co-planning, and co-teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide model of how to prepare for a demonstration: data, observations, LP review, materials preparation, demonstration tips Provide debrief training that outlines a teacher-driven, student-centered debrief Introduce observation tools and provide training on note-taking during observations

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Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
Lesson Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use PLAS Core Instructional Values as instructional guides while planning lessons • Collaboratively plan lessons based on current formal and informal student data • Link lessons throughout units to continually build and deepen knowledge for students • Incorporate checks for understanding in real-time so lessons are relevant and responsive to student needs • Analyze student work in PLCs and/or other teams to continually refine teaching pedagogy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide necessary implementation supports and mitigate challenges • Share information with the broader group of PLAS coaches • Understand lesson study's impact on teachers and students • Contribute to the design of professional development, instructional change and managing expectations
Group Facilitation and Cooperative Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable teachers to work collaboratively to develop systems for continuous improvement of teaching and learning • Professional learning time is spent analyzing student data and brainstorming the most effective practices needed to move students to high levels of achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS Instructional Managers will develop communities of learners at each PLAS school through a collaborative, result-oriented approach with a focus on engagement, ELD, and environment • PLAS will build school site capacity through instructional coaching development in the areas of instructional leadership, data analysis, and the coaching cycle in which teachers are supported directly in the classroom and through professional development

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Strategy 3: Positive Learning Environments

“Children who grow up in stimulating, emotionally supportive, highly verbal, and protective environments where the caretaker teaches and models skill development are usually ready for school. When the child is able to meet expectations, he or she receives praise or a positive feedback in school. This facilitates learning.” - James Comer

PLAS schools will be positive learning environments where all stakeholders work toward improving relations, building coherence, developing leadership capacity, and creating a shared collaborative spirit to improve student success.

There are two areas of focus that will enable PLAS to create positive learning environments. These are: 1) developing a positive school culture in which the shared beliefs, customs and behaviors of the organization are aligned to shared goals for student success, and 2) creating a positive school climate where the operational and instructional support systems work together to support the overall school vision.

PLAS will begin this work by first facilitating the building of common understanding of student success among all members of the school community; then, aligning the core values and beliefs throughout the school community to empower schools to identify the changes that will help children succeed (Deal, 1993). PLAS believes that transforming large secondary schools into groups of small schools greatly accelerates a school’s ability to create a positive school culture and climate. While a small school certainly doesn’t always equate to a great school, PLAS does believe that small schools provide structures that are more likely to enable high quality learning environments than large schools. PLAS will work with each school community to obtain resources to realize key objectives.

Expected Outcomes

- Establish the foundation of a positive school culture by training all school site staff on Capturing Kids Hearts, ensuring PLAS schools adopt and enforce uniform policy and creating more opportunities for staff and student recognition.
- Transform large secondary high schools into groups of smaller schools or if that is unattainable in the current school year, develop a clear implementation plan to carry out the small school transformation the following year.
- Maintain safe, secure and clean campuses for all of its students and staff.

Strategy Overview

Strategy	Description
Capturing Kids Hearts	Professional development program that promotes student investment through relationship building.

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Strategy	Description
Uniform Campaign	Students at PLAS schools will wear uniforms to instill a sense of pride, unity and support on campus. American Apparel has joined with PLAS to provide uniforms at a discounted rate.
Opening Academies	Entering kindergarten, sixth, and ninth grade students participate in a weeklong Opening Academy focused on culture-building and setting behavioral expectations.
College Bound Culture	Initiatives to increase awareness of requirements for college applications and college bound expectations.
Staff and Student Recognition Programs	Staff and Students are recognized for their commitment and achievement to student success, such as incentives connected to attendance and performance.
Small School Transformations	PLAS will work with its high schools to transform them into groups of small schools that share one campus. PLAS will also begin the planning process to transform its middle schools into groups of small schools.

School Level Implementation

Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
Capturing Kids Hearts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All school staff, including administrative, certificated and classified staff, will attend the Capturing Kids Heart three-day professional development seminar Schools will model caring interactions among staff, students, and parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLAS staff will organize and manage the seminars, as well as coordinate follow-up activities related to content PLAS will facilitate the development of social norms and mutual responsibility at school sites
Increase Participation and Offerings of Social Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop student programs that promote leadership, social responsibility and team building Implement student councils, clubs, and after-school opportunities for student engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional Support Managers will share examples of successful social programs Identify teacher leaders and community members interested in providing services
Transition Academies for Kindergarten, 6 th , and 9 th Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kindergarten, 6th, and 9th grade teachers will implement an Opening Academy curriculum to welcome students to the school environment and set the academic and behavioral tone for the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLAS team will write Opening Academy curriculum and distribute materials Facilitate training of content and provide support to coaches in presenting materials to teachers

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Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
Uniform Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a sense of community around school pride • Promote a scholarly environment for learning by clearly sharing “Dress for Success” expectations with students • School staff and leaders model “Dress for Success” expectations • Provide ongoing opportunities for students to purchase school uniforms • Monitor uniform policy and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAS will coordinate uniforms across the ten schools and distribute shirts accordingly
Student Incentive Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate monthly student assemblies and incentive programs to recognize attendance, grades, and behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support through sample agendas, recruit community speakers, and organize activities that promote service-oriented behavior
Staff Incentive Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Leaders select a “Gold Standard of Excellence in Education” for each content area or grade level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage selection of School Site Certified, Classified, Student, and Parent of the Year • Host staff appreciation events
Positive Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools will send out regular communication to staff, students, and families with updates from leadership teams and success checkpoints • Principals will create work plans that clearly outline school wide goals and objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer templates and timelines to encourage consistent communication • Provide Family of School Leaders, Leadership, and Coaching Conference updates

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Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
College Bound Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a College Bound committee at each middle and high school • Promote a college-going culture where school staff provide information, academic support and higher education experiences for students and parents • Provide students with pre-algebra in middle school so that all students successfully complete Algebra 1 by the end of 9th grade • Provide a referral program that targets support for students with social factors that impede their academic achievement • Review academic performance to determine key indicators in student success and drop-out prevention measures • Participate in Gear Up, Tri-C, and Avid activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize quarterly meetings to share best practices and increase visibility of college bound culture on campus • Provide professional development to teachers, counselors and other school staff to support vertical alignment of curriculum, expectations and support • Develop data system to collect and review student data to track A-G completion rates and coordinate prevention and intervention supports for students who are not on track to graduate
Small School Transformations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop plans to transform small learning communities into small schools • Redefine roles of school site staff to best suite a small school environment • Participate in professional development to improve capabilities to thrive in a small school environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the transformation to small schools by helping to generate community support, providing schools with recommended staffing structures for small schools, and providing professional development on small schools • Facilitate the development of detailed implementation plans to small schools for 2009-2010 if small schools transformations are not executed in the 2008-2009 school year • Drive the process for getting new CDS codes for the new small schools

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Strategy 4: Family and Community Engagement Development

“The nation’s schools must improve education for all children, but schools cannot do this alone. More will be accomplished if schools, families, and communities work together to promote successful students.” - Joyce Epstein

As current research suggests, it does “take a village” (i.e., teachers, parents, neighborhood services, youth programs) to equip students with the necessary skills to be life ready and college bound. In order for students to be successful, parents, caregivers, families and community members must be actively involved in school activities and school site-based decision making. PLAS will implement a parent engagement model that trains teachers, administrators, and support personnel to effectively communicate and engage parents; equips parent coordinators with community organizing and parent education development skills; and provides parent centers designed to offer a welcoming environment for parents.

PLAS will also mobilize the resources and capacity of multiple sectors and institutions to create schools that maximize external support services and incorporate them within the academic environment. This includes uniting community based organizations, city services, youth programs and local colleges to create a comprehensive, localized community engagement model that is representative of the schools’ neighborhoods.

Expected Outcomes

- Increase parent engagement and family involvement at all PLAS schools by including parents in many aspects of school life, from governance to hiring to school strategic plan development.
- Create parent-centered environments that include a parent center designed by parents and for parents, parent coordinators trained to organize parents and community members, and an academic resource liaison staff trained to effectively integrate parents into campus life.
- Increase parent awareness and accountability for student achievement by hosting student achievement workshops and implementing a parent compact.
- Improve communication to parents by providing professional development to teachers and office personnel on how to effectively communicate with parents.
- Foster strong partnerships with community organizations, youth programs and city services in order to increase support to students and their families. Parents will also take part in workshops hosted by partner organizations designed to increase awareness on how to support student achievement. Schools will have extended business hours to allow for enriching activities for students morning through evening.
- Provide students and their families with more educational, social and health services before, during and after-school.

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Strategy Overview

Strategy	Description
Increase Parent Engagement and Participation	Each school will have a fully equipped parent center, a trained parent coordinator, and programs designed to encourage school site participation.
Increase Parent Education on Student Achievement & Accountability	Each school will host mandatory workshops on how student’s can be academically successful and how parents and families can best hold students accountable.
Implementation of a Parent Compact	To increase parent accountability, PLAS will ask all parents and guardians to sign an agreement that outlines their commitment to student success and also describes the school’s commitment to student and parent success.
Increase the Quantity and Quality of Communication to Parents	PLAS will help schools assess the effectiveness of current parent communication practices and will retool them, if necessary. PLAS schools will also create parent newsletters, increase use of e-mail communication by providing e-mail training and e-mail addresses to parents, and update current parent contact data.
Create Effective Processes for Parent and faculty/teacher interaction	PLAS will help school sites host parent/teacher partnership forums, implement professional development for teachers on how to communicate with parents and host workshops that train parents on building positive relationships with teachers and principals.
Implement Community School Model	PLAS will work with each Community Collaborative within a family of school to create a plan for how school sites will utilize community based organizations, city services and other programs serving youth and families.

School Level Implementation

Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
Increase Parent Engagement and Parent Participation at PLAS school sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execute family friendly welcome back events • Implement data tools to monitor parent participation and create surveys to monitor parent satisfaction • Refurbish Parent Centers to create friendly environments • Create and execute professional development workshop(s) for parent personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and fill fulltime parent personnel positions • Identify resources to refurbish parent centers • Train parent personnel on how to effectively organize and work with parents and guardians • Create activities on campus for parents and families to better engage them in the life of the school

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Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a template of programs and workshops geared toward parents that parent personnel can implement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide professional development and on-going support to parent personnel and school leaders
Increase Parent Education on Student Achievement & Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create mandatory workshops on student success and how parents can support student development • Create non mandatory parent education series to support student achievement • Create follow up system to ensure parents participate in education workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train parent personnel and student counselors to conduct workshops • Administer parent surveys
Implementation of a Parent Compact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a parent conference at every school-site to introduce the parent compact to parents • Parent personnel hold workshops and one-on-one parent meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train parent personnel on facilitating discussions on creating parent compact
Increase the Quantity and Quality of Communication to Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a process for parents and teachers to communicate effectively • Assess the success of school communication to parents to date • Create newsletter for parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use focus groups to figure out parent communication effectiveness • Work with communications manager to develop comprehensive communications strategy for parents • Contact communications firm to get consultation of events through the cell phone • Create a template of programs and workshops geared towards parents
Create Effective Processes for Parent and faculty/teacher interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host workshops for parents on how to best interact and engage teachers • Host workshops with teachers on how to best engage and interact with parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide on-going support and guidance to parent support staff and school site leaders to effectively implement strategies

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Strategy 5: Streamlined and Improved School Operations

PLAS school-site operations will be highly effective and customer-focused in order to support student achievement. This aspiration is based on the PLAS core belief that school-site operations is vital to accelerating student achievement because effective operations directly impacts student learning and allows adults to focus on instructional rather than operational issues. It will take several years to fully meet this aspiration but PLAS will make material progress in the 2008-09 academic year.

PLAS has established a school-site “operations team” with a core mission to serve and support school sites to ensure that the expected outcomes listed below are met and to quickly and effectively address schools’ operational priorities. The role of PLAS operations team is to:

- Build new ways of doing business with LAUSD
- Provide facts for schools to make effective decisions
- Help school sites prioritize, always focusing on results and not process
- Streamline processes and ways of doing business with LAUSD
- Build school site capacity to execute operational issues more effectively
- Intervene when needed, always serving communities with speed, accuracy and professionalism

The PLAS operations team has already made significant progress in a number of areas, including signing an MOU with LAUSD, implementing the first phase of per pupil funding, and cleaning up school facilities, among others.

Expected Outcomes

- Develop flexibilities necessary for schools to dramatically accelerate performance, working collaboratively with LAUSD, the State of California, labor unions and Partnership school staff.
- Dramatically improve operational service delivery in targeted areas by working with LAUSD offices and school site staff, with a focus on safety, human resources, facilities, budget and finance, technology and compliance.
- Work collaboratively with LAUSD and other stakeholders to help redesign LAUSD’s operations to better support schools and to scale successful strategies to other LAUSD schools.

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- Ensure that PLAS schools operate seamlessly without any interruption in service following the transition from the Local District to the iDesign Division.

Strategy Overview

Strategy	Description
Flexibilities from LAUSD	Implement Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was signed between LAUSD and the Partnership.
Flexibilities from state policies	Secure a waiver from restrictive state policies that do not conflict with the MOU with LAUSD.
Other flexibilities	Begin to work with labor unions, where appropriate and desired, to secure additional flexibilities from restrictive provisions of collective bargaining agreements.
Funding and Budget	Effectively implement phase 1 of Per Pupil Funding (PPF) in 2008-09, ensure a strong budgeting plan for each school site using public and private resources, and prepare for phase 2 implementation of PPF in 2009-10.
Human Resources	Ensure that all schools are staffed with outstanding talent in all positions (administrator, certificated, non-classroom certificated, classified).
Facilities	Ensure that all schools feel cleaner, more welcoming and more personalized by addressing maintenance and operations, space planning, and capital and modernization projects in targeted areas.
School Safety	Improve safety and security for all school stakeholders so that schools are conducive for learning, students can walk to and from school safely, and schools are adequately prepared for an emergency.
Technology	Ensure that teachers and administrators have the technology they need to analyze data and integrate technology into their instructional strategies.
Compliance	Ensure all PLAS schools improve compliance with local, state, federal and legal mandates.
Build City-wide Capacity	Develop MOUs with select other alternative public school operators in Los Angeles.
Redesign and Scale Targeted Processes	Identify and redesign central office business processes and policies to streamline services, improve service delivery with specific targets, and scale successful practices to other district schools.
Define Service Delivery Model	Clearly define for school sites what entity/individual is providing each service, and help define iDesign’s role to leverage Partnership team on day-to-day issues.

School Level Implementation

Key Strategies	What Schools Will Be Doing	How PLAS Will Support Implementation of the Strategies
Flexibilities from LAUSD policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input into situations where flexibilities are needed • Highlight areas where additional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate and implement MOU with LAUSD, describing flexibilities PLAS schools enjoy

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	definition is required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully implement flexibilities over the year, as situations arise
Flexibilities from state policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input into waiver content and process • Identify highest priorities for implementation of waivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively with labor unions and LAUSD to pass state waivers • Work with LAUSD and school sites to implement key changes following the passage of waivers
Other flexibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input into areas where constraints exist, such as the collective bargaining agreements • Work with labor leadership and PLAS to determine ways that constraints can be lifted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help school sites identify areas where there are constraints that they would like addressed • Facilitate conversations between labor leaders and school sites about ways to reduce or eliminate constraints
Funding and Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement plan to use financial resources in strategic ways to improve student achievement • Evaluate the effectiveness of resource-allocation decisions • Establish effective budget decision-making mechanisms at the school site • Engage in annual budget planning cycle and timelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train schools on their budgets, particularly the new funding in 2008-09 • Understand restrictions on new funding • Develop a year-long budget strategy at each school • Develop plan and roll out next phase of per pupil funding in 2009-10, in collaboration with LAUSD and other stakeholders
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize hiring committees and rigorous process for hiring for all new positions • Develop strategic staffing plan, in conjunction with PLAS • Develop and manage organizational chart with key responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In collaboration with schools, manage recruitment for new administrators, teachers, classified personnel, and non-classroom certificated staff • Work with LAUSD and labor to manage employee evaluation process • Manage organizational charts at school sites and set up process for updating them
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire, train and deploy school site facilities staff using best practices developed nationally to maintain a clean and safe campus • Utilize Partnership and LAUSD resources to maintain and upkeep 	<p><u>Maintenance and Operations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish new “standard of excellence” expectations for school plant management staff • Conduct professional development and best practices

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	<p>campuses that facilitate teaching and learning in the classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate and help manage projects for space planning 	<p>for plant management staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and manage school-generated service calls • Ensure that all school-site staff have the tools they need to be successful <p><u>Space planning (traditional calendar, contiguous space plans)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage process to determine fastest path to be on the traditional calendar for Santee and Roosevelt • Manage space planning process as part of transition to small schools • Integrate QEIA program in campus space planning to ensure class size reduction targets are met <p><u>Capital/Modernization</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catalogue all planned capital modernization projects • Establish new capital modernization improvement plans for PLAS schools and determine priorities with school-site stakeholders • Identify external partners to develop joint use facilities and programs
<p>School Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive School Safety Plan, with an Emergency Preparedness component • Implement School Uniform Policy and School Graffiti Removal Policy and related procedures • Develop a comprehensive and coherent school wide discipline plan • Engage in community safety improvement strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical assistance and support the development of the various school safety components, including discipline, supervision, etc. • Train school safety team at every campus • Assess condition of emergency equipment and materials • Issue PLAS student uniforms • Utilize and coordinate services from the City and local community partners where applicable

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish protocols for removing graffiti from school and surrounding school neighborhoods
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in campus-wide technology needs assessment Manage inventory and service for technology Participate in trainings to become proficient in new data tools Use e-mail as the primary form of communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct campus-wide technology needs assessment to determine hardware needs Launch initiative to provide every teacher with a laptop computer Establish professional development for teachers to ensure effective instructional implementation and to effectively access data tools
Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet all Williams Case Compliance requirements Meet the Modified Consent Decree requirements Improve on other compliance requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a master compliance calendar identifying dates for various compliance mandates Identify all requirements to ensure compliance Develop protocols, procedures and communication strategy with school site personnel and LAUSD to improve compliance Develop plan to improve compliance in targeted areas
Build City-wide Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help identify needs that could be addressed by other partners Support strategic planning sessions with other partners, as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify partners to work closely with, including iDesign network partners and others Identify resources that could be deployed to support city-wide capacity, including other LA/national resources that could be jointly leveraged Negotiate ways to work together with other partners Develop sub-granting process, where appropriate
Redesign and Scale Targeted Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help identify key areas where processes need to be redesigned and streamlined Help identify key areas that have been successful and should be scaled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop plan with LAUSD to redesign targeted central office processes and policies Develop targets for operational improvements in redesigned areas

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in focus groups and other mechanisms to provide input into possible solutions to be scaled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify areas to scale • Help LAUSD document best practices and how the scaling will work effectively • Help LAUSD develop an accountability plan to implement best practices
Define Service Delivery Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input into approach and design of operational model • Highlight areas where service delivery is at risk due to miscommunication • Identify areas where the local district or central office is the preferred service provider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate with local districts, central office and other functional areas what services will/will not be provided to PLAS schools • Clearly articulate what entity will provide the service delivery, and what individuals are the key interface with school sites • Work with LAUSD central and LD offices to redefine important business processes relevant to the new operational model • Articulate for iDesign clear areas where the PLAS needs iDesign and LAUSD support and work with iDesign to secure these resources • Develop clear mechanisms for on-going feedback and adjustment

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Acronyms / Definitions

A

alternative assessment: An assessment in which students originate a response to a task or question. Such responses could include demonstrations, exhibits, portfolios, oral presentations, or essays. (Compare to traditional assessment.)

API: Academic Performance Index is the cornerstone of California’s Public Schools Accountability Act. It measures the academic performance and growth of schools on a variety of academic measures.

at risk: A term applied to students who have not been adequately served by social service or educational systems and who are at risk of educational failure due to lack of services, negative life events, or physical or mental challenges, among others.

authentic assessment: An assessment presenting tasks that reflect the kind of mastery demonstrated by experts. Authentic assessment of a student's ability to solve problems, for example, would assess how effectively a student solves a real problem.

authentic task: School assignment that has a real-world application. Such tasks bear a strong resemblance to tasks performed in nonschool settings (such as the home, an organization, or the workplace) and require students to apply a broad range of knowledge and skills. Often, they fill a genuine need for the students and result in a tangible end product.

AYP: Adequate Yearly Progress is a statewide accountability system mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 which requires each state to ensure all schools and districts make adequate yearly progress.

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID): An in-school academic support program for grades 4-12 that prepares students for college eligibility and success.

B

balanced literacy: Balanced Literacy incorporates all reading approaches realizing students need to use multiple strategies to become proficient readers.

benchmark: Statement that provides a description of student knowledge expected at specific grades, ages, or developmental levels. Benchmarks often are used in conjunction with standards. (See standards.)

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benchmark performances: Performance examples against which other performances may be judged.

C

Capturing Kids Hearts (CKH): Capturing Kids’ Hearts is a 3-day off-site training that provides tools for administrators, faculty and staff to build positive, productive, trusting relationships — among themselves and with their students. These processes can transform the classroom and campus environment, paving the way for high performance.

CAHSEE: California High School Exit Exam is an exam all school students are required to pass to earn a high school diploma.

CDE: California Department of Education

CELDT: California English Language Development Test is a required state test for English language proficiency that must be given to students whose primary language is other than English

coaching: An instructional method in which a teacher supports students as they perfect old skills and acquire new skills.

cognitive science: A science investigating how people learn rather than what they learn. Prior knowledge and out-of-classroom experience help form the foundation on which teachers build effective instruction. Also referred to as the study of the mind.

cognitively guided instruction: An instructional strategy in which a teacher assesses what students already know about a subject and then builds on students' prior knowledge. Students typically are asked to suggest a way to represent a real problem posed by the teacher. Guided questions, encouragement and suggestions further encourage students to devise solutions and share the outcome with the class.

collaborative learning or cooperative learning: An instructional approach in which students of varying abilities and interests work together in small groups to solve a problem, complete a project, or achieve a common goal.

Communities of Practice (CoP): A community of practice is a group of individuals participating in communal activity, and experiencing/continuously creating their shared identity through engaging in and contributing to the practices of their communities. The concept of the community of practice comes from the understanding that learning can be conceptualized as

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social participation – the individual as an active participant in the practices of social communities and in the construction of his/her identity through these communities.

constructivism: Theory suggesting that students learn by constructing their own knowledge, especially through hands-on exploration. It emphasizes that the context in which an idea is presented, as well as student attitude and behavior, affects learning. Students learn by incorporating new information into what they already know.

criterion-referenced assessment: An assessment that measures what a student understands, knows, or can accomplish in relation to specific performance objectives. It is used to identify a student's specific strengths and weaknesses in relation to skills defined as the goals of the instruction, but it does not compare students to other students. (Compare to norm-referenced assessment.)

critical thinking: Logical thinking that draws conclusions from facts and evidence.

CST: California Standards Test measures students' progress toward achieving California's state-adopted academic content standards, which describe what students should know and be able to do in each grade and subject tested.

Culturally & Linguistically Responsive: A culturally and linguistically responsive classroom is one that recognizes the impact students' home language and culture has on their education and, thus, provides a culturally and linguistically supported learning environment to enable all students to succeed. Culturally and linguistically responsive teaching is student-centered: the strengths students bring to school are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student achievement. Culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy comprises three dimensions: (a) institutional, (b) personal, and (c) instructional. The institutional dimension reflects the administration and its policies and values. The personal dimension refers to the cognitive and emotional processes teachers must engage in to become culturally and linguistically responsive. The instructional dimension includes materials, strategies, and activities that form the basis of instruction. All three dimensions significantly interact in the teaching and learning process and are critical to understanding the effectiveness of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy.

curriculum (plural curricula): A plan of instruction that details what students are to know, how they are to learn it, what the teacher's role is, and the context in which learning and teaching will take place.

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D

data dashboard: A web-based data system for teachers, principals, and coaches that integrates real-time student achievement data, including course grades, state and District assessments, attendance reports, discipline data, and A-G tracking.

data-driven decision making: A process of making decisions about curriculum and instruction based on the analysis of classroom data and standardized test data. Data-driven decision making uses data on function, quantity and quality of inputs, and how students learn to suggest educational solutions. It is based on the assumption that scientific methods used to solve complex problems in industry can effectively evaluate educational policy, programs, and methods.

direct instruction: The direct instruction strategy is highly teacher-directed and is among the most commonly used. This strategy is effective for providing information or developing step-by-step skills. It also works well for introducing other teaching methods, or actively involving students in knowledge construction.

E

English Learners: English Learners are students who are speakers of another language and are in the process of learning English.

equity: The state of educational impartiality and fairness in which all children—minorities and nonminorities, males and females, successful students and those who fall behind, students with special needs and students who have been denied access in the past—receive a high-quality education and have equal access to the services they need in order to benefit from that education.

exhibition of mastery: A type of assessment in which students display their grasp of knowledge and skills using methods such as skits, video presentations, posters, oral presentations, or portfolios.

F

facilitator: A role for classroom teachers that allows students to take a more active role in learning. Teachers assist students in making connections between classroom instruction and students' own knowledge and experiences by encouraging students to create new solutions, challenging their assumptions, and asking probing questions.

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G

guided reading: A strategy that helps students become good readers. The teacher provides support for small groups of readers as they learn to use various reading strategies (context clues, letter and sound relationships, word structure, among others).

H

heterogeneous grouping: Grouping together students of varying abilities, interests, or ages.

higher-order questions: Questions that require thinking and reflection rather than single-solution responses.

higher-order thinking skills: Understanding complex concepts and applying sometimes conflicting information to solve a problem, which may have more than one correct answer.

I

informal knowledge: Knowledge about a topic that children learn through experience outside of the classroom.

inquiry: A process in which students investigate a problem, devise and work through a plan to solve the problem, and propose a solution to the problem.

interdisciplinary curriculum: A curriculum that consciously applies the methodology and language from more than one discipline to examine a central theme, issue, problem, topic, or experience.

L

LAUSD: Los Angeles Unified School District

learner-centered classroom: Classroom in which students are encouraged to choose their own learning goals and projects. This approach is based on the belief that students have a natural inclination to learn, learn better when they work on real or authentic tasks, benefit from interacting with diverse groups of people, and learn best when teachers understand and value the difference in how each student learns.

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“less is more”: A principle built on the idea that quality is of higher importance than quantity. It is reflected in instruction that guides students to focus on fewer topics investigated in greater depth, with teachers performing the task of prioritizing subjects, as well as specific skills within those subjects.

M

manipulative: Any physical object (e.g., blocks, toothpicks, coins) that can be used to represent or model a problem situation or develop a mathematical concept.

metacognition: The process of considering and regulating one's own learning. Activities include assessing or reviewing one's current and previous knowledge, identifying gaps in that knowledge, planning gap-filling strategies, determining the relevance of new information, and potentially revising beliefs on the subject.

modeling: Demonstrating to the learner how to do a task, with the expectation that the learner can copy the model. Modeling often involves thinking aloud or talking about how to work through a task.

N

NAEP: National Assessment of Educational Progress is often called the "Nation's Report Card." It is the only measure of student achievement in the United States where you can compare the performance of students in your state with the performance of students across the nation or in other states.

NCLB: No Child Left Behind Act

NCTM: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics is the world's largest organization dedicated to improving the teaching and learning of mathematics from prekindergarten through high school. NCTM serves math teachers, math educators, and administrators by providing *math* resources and professional development opportunities.

norm-referenced assessment: An assessment designed to discover how an individual student's performance or test result compares to that of an appropriate peer group. (Compare to criterion-referenced assessment.)

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O

outcome-based education: An integrated system of educational programs that aligns specific student outcomes, instructional methods, and assessment.

P

parent engagement: Parent engagement requires two-way communication between school and parents. Specifically, schools can clearly articulate their expectations of parents and regularly communicate with parents about what children are learning, suggesting what parents can do to help. School-home compacts, reading school home links, and explicit homework policies are examples of communication about expectations and support for children’s learning. Schools can also provide opportunities for parents to talk with school personnel about parents’ role in their children’s education through home visits, family nights, and well planned parent-teacher conferences and open houses. Schools can provide parent education based on the role of parents in helping their children meet state learning standards. An ongoing conversation between parents and teachers about the role of each in children’s learning is key to building the relationship and understanding that enhances school performance. Finally, schools can engage parents and families in decision-making and leadership development, helping them develop the skills they need to be powerful advocates their children.

performance assessment: Systematic and direct observation of a student performance or examples of student performances and ranking according to preestablished performance criteria. Students are assessed on the result as well as the process engaged in a complex task or creation of a product.

performance criteria: A description of the characteristics to be assessed for a given task. Performance criteria may be general, specific, analytical trait, or holistic. They may be expressed as a scoring rubric or scoring guide. (See rubrics and scoring guide.)

Performance Management System: Performance management is a systematic process by which an agency involves its employees in improving organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of the agency's mission and strategic goals. The performance management process is used to communicate organizational goals and objectives, reinforce individual accountability for meeting those goals, and track and evaluate individual and organizational performance results. It reflects a partnership in which managers share responsibility for developing their employees in such a way that enables employees to make contributions to the organization. It is a clearly defined process for managing people that will result in success for both the individual and the organization.

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performance task: An assessment exercise that is goal directed. The exercise is developed to elicit students' application of a wide range of skills and knowledge to solve a complex problem.

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prior knowledge: The total of an individual's knowledge at any given time.

problem solving: A method of learning in which students evaluate their thinking and progress while solving problems. The process includes strategy discussion – determining solution strategies to similar problems and pinpointing additional problems within the context of their investigation.

Professional Learning Communities: Professional learning communities are composed of collaborative teams whose members work together interdependently in order to impact their classroom practice in ways that will lead to better results for their students, their team, and their school.

Proficient: Referring to an achievement level on the California Standards Tests, PROFICIENT is the second highest level, above BASIC and below ADVANCED.

Program Improvement (PI): All schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) that do not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) are identified for PI under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The NCLB Act requires all states to implement statewide accountability systems based on challenging state standards in reading and mathematics, annual testing for all students in grades 3-8, and annual statewide progress objectives ensuring that all groups of students reach proficiency within 12 years. Assessment results are disaggregated by socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, disability, and limited English proficiency to ensure that no group is left behind. Local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward statewide proficiency goals are subject to improvement and corrective action measures. In California, Program Improvement (PI) is the formal designation for Title I-funded schools and LEAs that fail to make AYP for two consecutive years.

PTA: Parent Teacher Association is voluntary organization bringing together parents, teachers, and sometimes students within a particular school or school district, usually for building parent involvement and community at school, fundraising, and other activities relating to the welfare of the school.

PTO Parent Teacher Organization

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R

R&D: research and development

RD&D: research, development, and dissemination

reliability: An indicator of score consistency over time or across multiple evaluators. Reliable assessment is one in which the same answers receive the same score regardless of who performs the scoring or how or where the scoring takes place. The same person is likely to get approximately the same score across multiple test administrations.

restructuring: See systemic reform.

rubrics: Specific criteria or guidelines used to evaluate student work.

S

scaffolding: An instructional technique in which the teacher breaks a complex task into smaller tasks, models the desired learning strategy or task, provides support as students learn to do the task, and then gradually shifts responsibility to the students. In this manner, a teacher enables students to accomplish as much of a task as possible without adult assistance.

scoring guide: A set of guidelines for rating student work. A scoring guide describes what is being assessed, provides a scoring scale, and helps the teacher or rater correctly place work on the scale. (See rubrics.)

SEA: state education agency (e.g., state department of education)

standardized tests: Assessments that are administered and scored in exactly the same way for all students. Traditional standardized tests are typically mass-produced and machine-scored; they are designed to measure skills and knowledge that are thought to be taught to all students in a fairly standardized way. Performance assessments also can be standardized if they are administered and scored in the same way for all students.

standards: Statements of what students should know and be able to demonstrate. Various standards have been developed by national organizations, state departments of education, districts, and schools.

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systemic reform: Change that occurs in all aspects and levels of the educational process and that impacts all stakeholders within the process—students, teachers, parents, administrators, and community members—with implications for all components, including curriculum, assessment, professional development, instruction, and compensation.

subgroup: Disaggregating academic achievement data by school level, grade, gender, ethnicity, programs is referred to as dividing the group into its subgroups. For example, the subgroups for school level are elementary school level, middle school level, high school level and K-8 school level, and all academic achievement data can be further reported by specific school levels.

T

teaching for understanding: A teaching method that focuses on the process of understanding as the goal of learning rather than simply the development of specific skills. It focuses on forming connections and seeing relationships among facts, procedures, concepts, and principles, and between prior and new knowledge.

technology: In education, a branch of knowledge based on the development and implementation of computers, software, and other technical tools, and the assessment and evaluation of students' educational outcomes resulting from their use of technology tools.

Think-Pair-Share: A strategy designed to provide students with "food for thought" on a given topics enabling them to formulate individual ideas and share these ideas with another student.

traditional assessment: An assessment in which students select responses from a multiple-choice list, a true/false list, or a matching list. (Compare to alternative assessment.)

U

Understanding by Design: Understanding by Design (UbD) is a framework for improving student achievement. Emphasizing the teacher's critical role as a designer of student learning, UbD works within the standards-driven curriculum to help teachers clarify learning goals, devise revealing assessments of student understanding, and craft effective and engaging learning activities.

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V

validity: An indication that an assessment instrument consistently measures what it is designed to measure, excluding extraneous features from such measurement.

W

WestEd: The Regional Educational Laboratory serving Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah.

X, Y, & Z

zone of proximal development: A level or range in which a student can perform a task with help.

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Strategic Plan 2008-2009 Purpose: The purpose of this document is to provide a description of the key 2008-2009 strategic initiatives that the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools (PLAS) is working on with its schools. This is a living document and a continual work in progress as PLAS will work consistently with its schools to customize, update and refine these initiatives so that they meet the unique needs of individual schools. This document does not address the PLAS core beliefs, system-wide strategies for transforming LAUSD, or organizational structures. To learn more about these areas, visit the PLAS website at www.partnershipla.org and review other documents available on the website.