

# Academy of Arts & Sciences

Del Mar K-12  
Charter Renewal  
2017-2023

Submitted September 30, 2016

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## i. Changes to Charter Petition

Since 2012, Academy of Arts & Sciences Del Mar K-12 has grown and changed as both a school and an organization. What started as a concept has now developed into an educational model, serving hundreds of kids throughout San Diego County and its contiguous counties. The table below will provide a brief overview and comparison of the changes that have been made between the original Charter Petition and this Charter Renewal Petition:

	2012-2017 Original Charter	2017-2023 Charter Renewal
Curriculum	K12 and its affiliates	Subject to change depending on Standard Content and scholar need
		Research and committee review for all curriculum changes
Mission & Vision	Founders' Mission & Vision	Current Mission & Vision developed by entire staff and stakeholders in 2016
Intervention Program	Limited in explanation and resources	Detailed Response to Intervention Program
Scholar Support & Resources	None mentioned	Creation and implementation of Counseling Department
	Third party vendor	In-house Special Education Manager and teachers
	None mentioned	Intervention Coordinator
	None mentioned	Scholar Engagement Coordinator
Education Program	Online only	Independent Study
Measurable Goals		LCAP oriented
Course Placement	High School only	Middle and High School
ELL Reclassification	None	Board-approved Reclassification Policy
Independent Study expectations	None	Signatory on Excellence Pledge for Independent Study
SST Referral Process	Very broad	Detailed and user-friendly

## ii. Legal Assurances

Academy of Arts & Sciences Del Mar K-12 will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to AAS, including but not limited to:

1. AAS shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to EC Sections 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. EC Section 47605(c)(1)
2. AAS shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of AAS for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. EC Section 47605(b)(5)(O)
3. AAS shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations. EC Section 47605(d)(1)
4. AAS shall not charge tuition. EC Section 47605(d)(1)
5. AAS shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics. EC Section 47605(d)(1)
6. AAS shall admit all pupils who wish to attend AAS.
7. Determine admission by a public random drawing, if the number of pupils who wish to attend AAS exceeds AAS's capacity, and preference shall be extended to pupils who currently attend AAS and pupils who reside in Mountain Empire. EC Section 47605(d)(2)(A)-(B)
8. AAS shall not enroll pupils over nineteen (19) years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school (until the age of 22 years) and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements. EC Section 47605(d)(2)(A)
9. AAS shall not require any child to attend AAS or any employee to work at AAS.
10. In accordance with EC Section 47605(d)(3), if a pupil is expelled or leaves AAS without graduation or completing the school year for any reason, AAS shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information. EC Section 47605(d)(3)
11. AAS shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.
12. AAS shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)
13. AAS shall ensure that teachers in AAS hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools



are required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to noncore, non-college preparatory teachers. EC Section 47605(l)

14. AAS shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
15. AAS shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by EC Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D).
16. AAS shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. EC Section 47612.5(a)
17. AAS shall, on a regular basis, consult with its parents and teachers regarding AAS's education programs. EC Section 47605(c)
18. AAS shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities. EC Section 47605-47605.1
19. AAS shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. EC Section 47612(b), 47610
20. AAS shall comply with the Public Records Act.
21. AAS shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
22. AAS shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
23. AAS shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum of school days. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. J.J. Lewis, President & CEO

### iii. Impact on District

*Governing Law: Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and upon Mountain Empire. EC Section 47605(g)*

#### Potential Civil Liability Effects

This statement is intended to fulfill the terms of Education Code Section 47605(g) and provides information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the Academy of Arts and Sciences Del Mar K-12 (AAS) on Mountain Empire Unified School District (Mountain Empire).

AAS shall be operated as the Academy of Arts and Sciences, a California non-profit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701d. The specific purposes for which the corporation is organized are for the operation of a California public charter school for educational services in accordance with the EC Section 47600, et seq.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c), an entity that grants a charter to a charter school operated by or as a non-profit public benefit corporation shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors or omissions by the charter school if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. As stated in the Governance Section, the Academy of Arts and Sciences Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws are enclosed as an appendix. AAS shall work diligently to assist Mountain Empire in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other requested protocol to ensure Cotati-Rohnert Park shall not be liable for the operation of AAS.

Further, AAS has indemnified Mountain Empire for the actions of AAS under this charter. Any indemnification or additionally insured "assurance" made by an AAS contractor on behalf of AAS shall also extend to Mountain Empire.

The By-Laws of Academy of Arts and Sciences shall provide for indemnification of AAS's Board of Directors, officers, agents, and employees, and AAS will purchase general liability insurance, Directors and Officers insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks. Mountain Empire shall be named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of AAS.

As stated above, insurance amounts will be determined by recommendation of AAS' insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and scholar population.

The Board of Directors of Academy of Arts and Sciences will institute appropriate risk management practices, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for scholars, and dispute resolution.

#### Facilities

As an independent study program, we do not require facilities. All administrative services are conducted at our Central Office which is located at 850 Hampshire, Suite P, Thousand Oaks, California 91361. AAS may request facilities from Mountain Empire Unified School District.

## Introduction

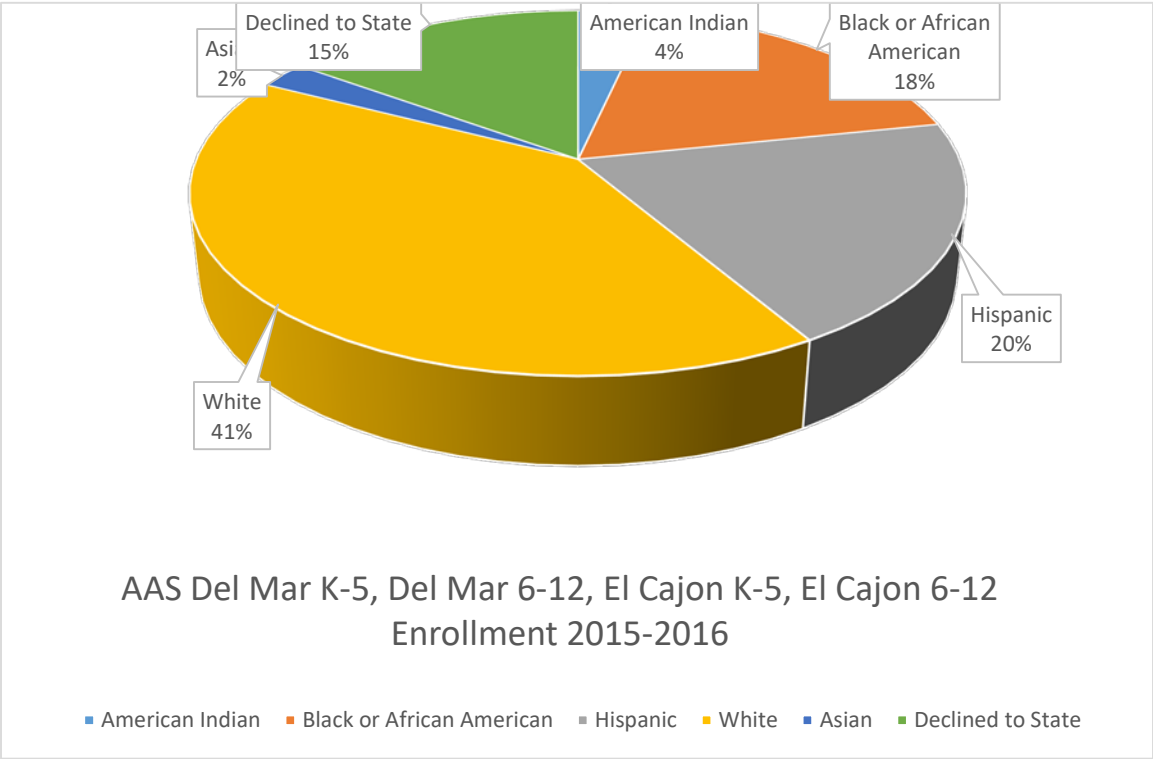
Academy of Arts & Sciences Del Mar K-12 (AAS) was founded and received its first charter in 2012. With a handful of scholars and teachers, AAS was determined to offer the community an educational program that was different than those more commonly available. By offering a rigorous curriculum and dedicated staff, AAS was able to reach scholars that might otherwise fall through the cracks. Scholars with extracurricular activities sports, dance, and acting, were able to continue with training schedules and commitments without jeopardizing their education. Scholars that were home bound, or those with negative experiences in large, comprehensive traditional schools now had a safe place to learn. Some of our scholars believed that AAS was their last option before dropping out, finding traditional schools incompatible with work schedules and family obligations. AAS was also able to offer scholars an opportunity to learn at a pace conducive to various learning styles. Regardless of personal situations or experiences, activities, or learning styles, AAS has been able to offer all scholars a place to learn and express themselves.

Originally opened as four separate schools, AAS El Cajon K-5, El Cajon 6-12, Del Mar K-5, and Del Mar 5-12, in 2016, it was decided by our Board of Directors, and then approved by Mountain Empire's Board of Directors, to condense the schools into one. After reviewing resources, finances, and manpower, the prudent choice was to utilize the Del Mar K-12 charter to meet our scholars' educational needs. To illustrate the impact this decision had on AAS, rather than having to take attendance for four scopes, which takes an average of 16 FTE hours, it now takes an average of 4 FTE hours to take attendance for one school. The combining of schools affected the state reporting obligations, not our scholars.

Five years and hundreds of scholars later, AAS has continuously reflected upon and improved our educational program, opportunities for scholar and family engagement, and scholar/teacher interactions. We have refined best practices and contributed to the evolution of virtual learning through our participation in organizations such as the California Charter School Association and the International Association for TK-12 Online Learning (iNACOL).

According to the National Survey of Scholar Engagement, online learners experienced "better use of higher order thinking skills, integrative thinking, and reflective learning" (NSSE, 2008). Through our program offerings, we promote higher level thinking, provide tools for better time management and organizational skills, and encourage reflective practice.

Our diverse population of both scholars and staff allows for the sharing of varied backgrounds and experiences. As Independent Study becomes more popular and mainstream, we expect our population to be reflective of changing enrollment patterns.



## I. Education Program

*Cal. Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(i): “A description of the educational program of the school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an “educated person” in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.*

*(ii) A description, for AAS, of annual goals, for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by AAS, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals. A charter petition may identify additional school priorities, the goals for the school priorities, and the specific annual actions to achieve those goals.*

*CHARTER SCHOOL will comply with all requirements pursuant to California EC § 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii) including developing annual goals, for all pupils (i.e. school wide) and for each subgroup of pupils as identified in California EC § 52052, for each of the applicable eight (8) state priorities identified in California EC § 52060(d). Please refer to the table in Element 2: Measurable Pupil Outcomes for the school wide goals for relevant sub-groups and corresponding assessments. Beginning in fiscal year 2014-15, CHARTER SCHOOL will comply with all elements of the Local Control Accountability Plan pursuant to regulations and templates adopted by the State Board of Education and reserves the right to establish additional, school-specific goals and corresponding assessments throughout the duration of the charter.*

### Description of Program

Academy of Arts & Sciences (AAS) Del Mar K-12 is a growing and innovative California independent study public charter school, open to scholars in grades Transitional Kindergarten through 12th grade. AAS attracts scholars seeking an alternative educational program where parents have the role of “Learning Coach” and play an important role of partnering with AAS teachers to educate their children at home.

AAS offers two virtual educational program options for families: online and traditional home study. We recognize that in education one size does not fit all. AAS is designed and organized to serve scholars and families who have chosen an independent study program that can meet an individual scholar’s unique needs. AAS educates scholars with a wide range of learning styles that allow for flexibility in pacing and that are aligned with Common Core standards. Enrollment in AAS is contingent on parent and scholar signing the Master Agreement in acknowledgement of the responsibilities as outlined in the Master Agreement. *See Appendix B for a copy of our Master Agreement.*

Our Mission and Vision describe our purpose and philosophy that guides our educational program. Through collaboration with all stakeholders, AAS developed a Mission, Vision and set of Core Values that aligns with our practice and beliefs.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to inspire and develop innovative, creative, self-directed learners,  
one scholar at a time.

## VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to create a collaborative virtual learning community, inspiring scholars to appreciate the ways in which arts and sciences nurture a curiosity for life-long learning, and prepare scholars to take responsibility for their future success.

## CORE VALUES

Achievement  
Communication  
Integrity  
Respect  
Teamwork

We will meet our scholars' needs by:

- Implementing an academically rigorous, 21st century, inquiry-based college preparatory curriculum which will meet Common Core standards
- Combining cutting edge curriculum with a dynamic and innovative educational practices to meet the needs of our diverse scholars.

Our School Wide Learning Outcomes (SLO's) were developed with input from all stakeholders. Closely aligned with our Mission, Vision, Core Values, and LCAP goals, our SLOs are representative of the characteristics and skills that we strive to teach, inspire, and instill in our scholars.

Effective Communicators  
Academically Proficient  
Collaboratively Minded  
College and Career Ready

We will meet our families' needs by allowing them to:

- Create a compelling learning environment
- Provide challenging lessons on a daily basis
- Be a responsible and available learning coach.

### A Day in the Life of an AAS Scholar

We encourage scholars to set a schedule for their day, one that works with their individual commitments and responsibilities. Some scholars receive and execute assignments early in the morning, much like the rhythm of a traditional brick and mortar school. Others find their

productivity is best in the afternoon or evenings. At AAS, scholars learn at the times convenient to their schedules. Though scholars have the flexibility to choose the time frame in which they study, our courses are on a semester system. Scholars finish their courses within the semester by following the teacher-created pacing plan for each of course. This generally means scholars need to make daily progress in their courses to finish by the end of the semester.

Scholars may seek support and answers to questions either through email, telephone, or by attending their teacher's weekly synchronous "Q and A" sessions. Every teacher holds "Q & A" sessions, using real time web conferencing software, two to three hours every week. Scholars may also schedule appointments with teachers to obtain help on coursework. Scholars can also communicate with their teachers by logging in to their account on our Learning Management System (LMS).

Regardless of when a scholar starts his or her daily learning, those utilizing our online program typically start by logging on to get assignments, networking with teachers and classmates, and checking for subject matter lesson sessions for their courses. Scholars turn in assignments daily or as appropriate, take tests and quizzes, and submit papers and projects through our secure LMS. Scholars' progress and grades can be viewed 24/7 so that both scholar and Learning Coach are always aware of their progress.

Every AAS teacher conducts two, one-hour virtual classroom sessions of direct instruction for their class every week, known as "Learning Labs." Scholars are required to attend these either synchronously or asynchronously. The combination of our Learning Labs and Q&A sessions allow our scholars to interact live with their teachers, up to five hours a week, and more if they schedule appointments with their teachers. Through their virtual interactions, scholars develop and pursue friendships, both during official virtual sessions and their participation in scholar-led clubs, monthly field trips, and school sponsored activities. Extracurricular school-sponsored events allow scholars to meet and build friendships based on mutual interests. In addition, many scholars pursue sports, music, and other activities in coordination with local organizations and local schools.

Scholars work collaboratively with their teachers and Learning Coach in creating a work flow plan that will allow them to complete all classes by semester's end. Some scholars may spend an entire week concentrating on math or history; others work on all their courses throughout the week.

For those scholars using our home study option of independent study, scholars and Learning Coaches check-in with their Educational Facilitators on a consistent basis. Each day there is the expectation that work will be completed and that meetings with EFs will be kept.

Each and every day is unique for an AAS scholar – the flexibility we offer allows our scholars to, as our mission states, inspire and develop into innovative, creative, and self-directed learners. *See Appendix A for 2016-2017 School Calendar*

## Whom the School is Attempting to Educate

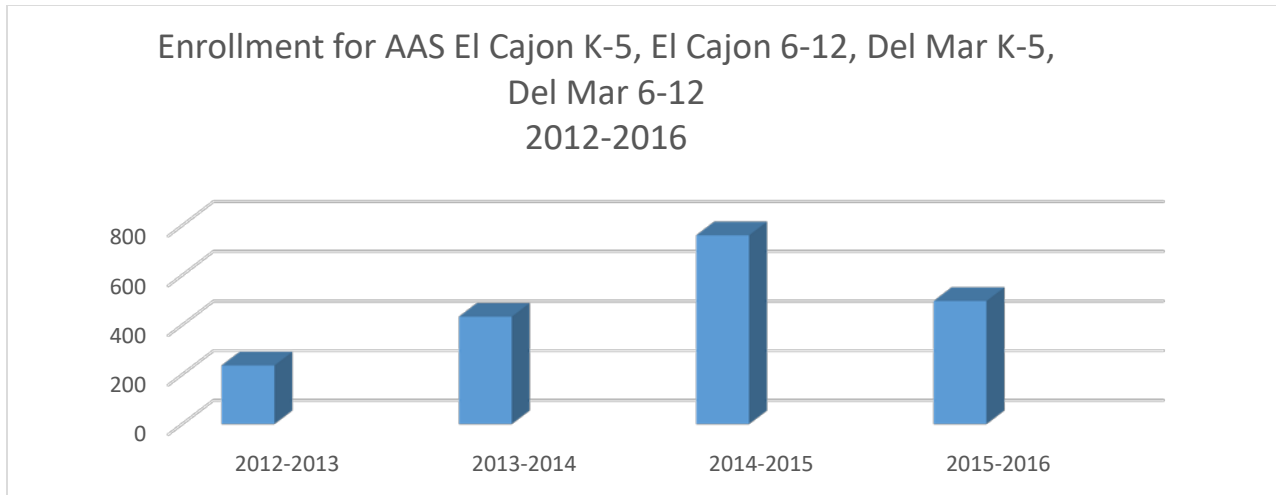
Our educational program is based on the instructional needs of our scholar profile, which is scholars from all backgrounds in grades TK-12. Our target scholar profile is not limited to any particular demographic. Instead, AAS is designed and organized to serve scholars and families who reside in San Diego County and its contiguous counties and have chosen an independent educational setting for any of the following reasons, or other reasons relevant to the individual:

- Individuals who are self-directed and choose a wider range of academic options.
- Family relationships, personal beliefs and values, and families who prefer virtual or home study instruction
- Family Schedules (i.e. sports, actors, military, extracurricular activities).
- High-risk/at-risk for successfully achieving high school graduation or equivalency.
- Health reasons prohibit them from attending normal classroom programs
- Scholars of all ability levels seeking additional academic and learning opportunities.
- Scholars that may have faced challenges such as bullying in traditional settings.
- Scholars with responsibilities such as work schedules that do not fit in an 8am-4pm schedule.
- Scholars from various backgrounds and ethnicities.
- Scholars that might otherwise choose to drop out of school due to scheduling issues.

Over the years, AAS's enrollment has fluctuated due to various circumstances. During 2013-14 and 2014-15, AAS offered multiple program options. We offered an early start date during these years, with the intent that scholars would go to school during summer months to regain missing credits or to progress in their education at an independent rate. We found that many scholars left us once "traditional" school started. This was not the intention of our course offerings. After evaluating this option, it was decided that this was not the best choice for most scholars. Because of this, we chose to eliminate this start option. This had an impact on our enrollment, but we deemed it more important to do what is best for the scholars, then it is to do what is best for the bottom line. Since choosing to focus on an independent study program that we do well, our enrollment initially dropped, but we are steadily growing as our reputation, marketing, and successes increase.

The enrollment charts include data for the combination of the original 4 San Diego charters, since the scholars have been absorbed by the combining of charters.





In education, one size does not fit all and AAS is dedicated to providing scholars and families with an online or home study learning environment that can meet an individual scholar's needs.

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

Information is multiplying as quickly as it is becoming obsolete and ideas are continually revisited, retested and revised. At the same time, the world is becoming increasingly dependent on technology. These challenges mean that scholars must learn in a technological environment in order to participate effectively in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As such, AAS believes an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has a mastery of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills and tools as well as a solid foundation in the state and common core standards, and core academic subjects.

AAS will prepare innovative, creative, self-directed learners for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To do this AAS will employ a blend of independent study curriculum and methods to ensure all scholars gain the knowledge and skills that are valued in the modern world, and necessary for future success. As a result, scholars graduating from AAS will demonstrate the core characteristics of an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:

1. Solid foundations in core academic subjects (Math, English, Science, History, Foreign Language)
2. 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning skills: Scholars will graduate with the following:
  - Research and Communication skills
  - Thinking and problem solving skills
  - Interpersonal and self-directional skills



3. Mastery of 21st Century Tools: According to Elizabeth Rich of EdWeek.org, “*The term ‘21st-century skills’ is generally used to refer to certain core competencies such as collaboration, digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving that advocates believe schools need to teach to help students thrive in today’s world*” (EdWeek, 2010). AAS scholars will graduate with a proficiency in the use digital technology and communication tools to access, manage, integrate, and evaluate information; construct new knowledge; and effectively communicate with others.

### How Learning Best Occurs

AAS believes that effective application of instructional technology in independent study learning best serves to meet the learning needs of our scholars. AAS is structured to support high scholar achievement by creating a rigorous independent study environment in both our online or home study programs for all our scholars. AAS also firmly believes that learning occurs best through the application of INACOL’s five standards for quality online learning: Equity, Stakeholder Involvement, Continuous Improvement, Personalization, Scholar Engagement, and Collaboration.

#### Equity

Scholars enrolled at AAS have access to challenging and equitable opportunities to develop learning skills, thinking skills, and life skills that prepare them for success at the next level. They are exposed to real world, scholar-centered, authentic, and inquiry-based learning experiences by teachers who utilize 21st century teaching practices.

#### Stakeholder Involvement

All stakeholders, not just teachers, are involved in the scholar’s educational experiences.

### *Continuous Improvement*

Continuous improvement practices lead to improved scholar performance. Every staff member at AAS makes performance goals that are tied to their job description, teaching practice, and AAS' LCAP goals. All staff members review progress towards their performance goals quarterly with their immediate supervisors in order to reflect, adjust and evaluate improvement goals. Teachers meet weekly by department, grade level, and/or subject as appropriate in order to analyze scholar work, collaborate on best teaching practices, and plan lessons and curriculum. This allows our scholars to be offered a rigorous core curriculum. Teachers are observed regularly by their Coordinator, Instructional Services Manager, and Scholar Intervention Coordinator in order to continually improve our instructional practices.

### *Personalization*

The scholar experience is personalized both in and out of the classroom. Teachers get to know their scholars learning needs through regular interaction with them. They assist them with those needs through the LMS, Learning Labs, Q&A sessions, phone calls, and emails. Scholars have the opportunity to choose their time, their place, and their pace for studying, thereby empowering scholars to become independent, self-directed learners. Flexibility is offered to families as to how to educate their children.

### *Scholar Engagement*

Research shows that scholar engagement has a positive effect on academic achievement (Heng, 2013; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1990). Because of the impact of scholar engagement on scholar achievement, scholars have additional opportunities to participate in.

Scholars are monitored and required to engage in their education. Teachers utilize a variety of teaching techniques. Scholars are held to high standards and expectations. The instructional techniques AAS utilizes are research based. Quality instructional time is devoted to working with individual scholar needs.

Additionally, we have several scholar-led clubs, including our Scholar Leadership Council and National Honor Society, that have been created based on scholar interests. Our scholar clubs meet and plan activities and while there is a staff member that serves as the advisor, it is the scholars that do the research and planning.

### *Collaboration*

All stakeholders have opportunities to collaborate. This involves hiring highly qualified staff, fostering scholar to teacher relationships, scholar to scholar relationships, teacher to learning coach relationships, and learning coach to learning coach relationships. One example of this is our Learning Coach Lounge. Learning Coach Lounges are held weekly, either virtually through our web-based virtual software, or in-person at our Learning Center. These sessions are hosted by AAS staff and attended by learning coaches. AAS staff will present a topic relating to increasing scholar success in a virtual environment and then give learning coaches time to ask questions or give comments.

## A Challenging Learning Environment

AAS provides scholars with a demanding educational program and effective teachers. AAS is committed to establishing high standards and expectations for all scholars. Our courses are rigorous, requiring significant amounts of writing, and they provide scholars with opportunities to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills and apply concepts they have learned. AAS's courses have been designed to meet today's rigorous academic environment and follow an objective-based learning structure in accordance with State Standards. Scholars may have the opportunity to take AP courses as well as other traditionally rigorous courses.

### Program Features

The following variety of strategies and features provide the best opportunities for all scholars to learn at high levels:

1. Virtual "Learning Labs – uses a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning environments.
2. Highly qualified teachers – subject-matter teachers, who are highly qualified and certified to teach in their content area, provide assignments, feedback and support to scholars on an individualized basis. Teachers have three days to return work with constructive feedback to scholars.
3. Regular and appropriate feedback on progress – Through regularly scheduled meetings for assessment and assignments, scholars receive feedback on their progress. Feedback is given to scholars and to parents frequently in a variety of ways:
  - Scholars receive written feedback from teachers on written assignments and tests.
  - Scholars and parents access this feedback in the grade book of the LMS.
  - Parents receive weekly emailed progress reports giving information on login times, course activity, assignments submitted, and grades.
  - Parents and scholars can get oral feedback virtually any time by calling or emailing the teacher of a course.
  - Teachers hold office hours where parents and scholars can log in to a virtual session and have real-time face-to-face communication with the teacher.
4. Flexible Course Scheduling – AAS scholars complete 10-12 semester long classes throughout the school year. This system allows scholars to progress at their own pace through a course, and to focus on fewer subjects at a time than they would in a traditional school setting. Scholars complete the same amount of credits within a school year as in a traditional classroom setting, thus staying on track for high school graduation.
5. Technology – Technology underpins the pedagogical strategy of AAS. Our online scholars are taught virtually through asynchronous and synchronous interactive lessons.

AAS's programs are designed using an independent, learner-centered model that helps scholars become more self-disciplined, better time managers, and more effective problem solvers. AAS's

courses make use of the latest educational techniques. AAS uses curriculum that integrates graphical enhancements, games, and multimedia activities with academic content.

## Curriculum and Instructional Design

### Overview of Learning Environment

AAS provides scholars with a demanding education program and highly qualified teachers. AAS is committed to establishing high standards and expectations for all scholars. AAS's courses have been designed to meet today's rigorous academic environment and follow an objective-based learning structure in accordance with state and common core standards. AAS Del Mar K-12 has obtained initial WASC accreditation and is currently going through a full WASC self-study. The high school curriculum is A-G accredited.

While some of the components of our program are offline, such as coursework in grades TK-5 and our home study option, most of our curriculum is delivered through an online LMS. AAS Del Mar K-12 utilizes an interactive, scholar centered, e-learning curriculum that builds on prior knowledge and cultivates higher-order thinking skills using instructional methods such as examples, practice, and feedback to promote learning.

Our self-paced virtual curriculum fosters and develops a love of learning by providing an engaging common core, standards-based curriculum with real world connections that is flexible enough to fit all schedules. This rigorous education provides a wide variety of content regardless of ability level, and strives to ready scholars for the next grade level.

AAS curriculum is effective in meeting the individual needs of its scholars because our teachers practice three key principles of effective virtual pedagogy.

1. Let the scholars do the work: First, our scholars work in a self-paced, independent study environment. During Learning Labs or Office Hours, you will rarely see our teachers practice "I talk, you listen". Instead AAS teachers are facilitators of learning. They are guides to helping their scholars learn for themselves and then demonstrate what they have learned. This helps keep the content relevant. Our teachers practice the following types of teaching strategies that model this principle: Scholar led discussions, Peer to Peer learning, Case study analysis, individual and group projects.
2. Interactivity is the heart and soul of asynchronous learning: Our scholars participate in an abundance of writing assignments and activities. Whether, its posting to message boards, microblogging, research papers, essays, or lab write ups. Scholars are asked to interact in a variety of ways with their teacher, their peers, web browsing, and in small group break-out sessions during learning labs. This type of interactivity allows scholars to learn in their own ways.
3. Create a sense of presence: Our teachers connect with their scholars by establishing a sense of community and trust. This is done by allowing scholars to get to know each other assignments or class discussions or projects (*Three Principles of Effective Online Pedagogy, Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks,(2010) Volume 14, Issue 1 Bill Pelz*)

Researchers advocate virtual learning for instructional effectiveness because scholars have 24/7 access to learning, are exposed to a variety of learning modes, and because scholars can control their pace of learning.

All of our unit lessons are followed by assessments, ensuring that each scholar has mastered content before moving on. The assessments are integrated with planning and progress tools, making it easy to find the right pace by subject and to stay on track. This unique, individualized approach allows each scholar to go as fast or slow as needed as long as they follow the pacing guides, keep track of semester end dates, and follow instructions provided by their teachers. Scholars in grades 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> submit their assignments, tests, and quizzes online through our LMS. Both scholar and learning coach are able to see real time updates on progress and grades in all of their courses.

In Transitional Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, in addition to the online delivery of our program, each scholar receives a physical box of materials in the mail, which includes textbooks, hands-on materials and assignments to complete. AAS has found that this combination of interactive online lessons with offline materials fit the developmental needs and cater to a variety of learning styles.

## Instructional Methods

### *Web based Classrooms*

Our teachers host synchronous web-based classroom instruction, or Learning Labs, up to two hours a week for each subject to conduct standards based instruction. These lessons are used to introduce new content, build on the prior knowledge of the self-paced work scholars are completing through the LMS, do test prep, review for tests, and answer scholar questions. Teachers often do breakout sessions during the live sessions which allows scholars to participate in group activities, discussions, or projects. Parents of scholars in grades Transitional kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are encouraged to attend with them. In the elementary grades these synchronous sessions sometimes take the form of teacher and scholar guided reading groups. Teachers also hold up to three office hours a week and are available to meet with scholars and learning coaches by appointment when necessary. This type of individualized assistance is what sets AAS apart from other virtual programs.

### *Learning Management System (LMS)*

The school's LMS is designed to enable scholar learning and teacher support. The LMS is where the scholar and learning coach can log into their individual courses. The LMS includes: web style access and content is organized in courses by unit topics with clear instructions. Each lesson and unit has embedded multimedia, activities, and assignments. Teachers can imbed their own content as well.

### *Technology based skills instruction*

The use of instructional technology underpins the pedagogical strategy of AAS. Scholars participate in Learning Labs either synchronously or asynchronously. Teachers use web based real time software to teach these lessons and record them for later use for scholars as needed. Teachers also imbed content into the LMS using a variety of web 2.0 tools and scholars submit their classwork through the LMS. Every math teacher at AAS uses a bamboo tablet to further enhance their math instruction during these live sessions. Every scholar in grades 6-12<sup>th</sup> are assigned a gmail account and are taught how to use the google web 2.0 apps during their Virtual Learning introduction class. The use of these skills is an important part of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and a part of the common core standards.

### *Digital Age Learning Practices*

Our teachers apply both Connectivism and Social Constructivism to their teaching practices. Connectivism explains how all the new technology available through the internet has created new opportunities for how people learn. Social Constructivism is scholar centered learning. At AAS, scholars are allowed to discover meaning for themselves rather than being told what to learn. Scholars build their own knowledge through social experiences using online resources. The application of these two digital age theories increases scholar satisfaction and therefore the effectiveness of online learning at AAS. Furthermore, the application of these learning theories allows for immediate feedback and progress reports, personalized learning, frequent checks for understanding, scholar led discussions during Learning Labs and the use of discussion boards, and the use of project based learning. (*Connectivism for the Digital Age (2005) George Siemens, International Journal of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning*)

### *Regular feedback on progress*

Feedback is given to scholars and parents frequently in a variety of ways. The school has eight Learning Periods and scholars are emailed an update on class progress using the following schedule:

- End of Learning Period 1 and 5: Scholars are emailed a “Snapshot” of current progress
- End of Learning Period 2 and 6: Scholars are emailed Quarterly Progress reports
- End of Learning Period 3 and 7: Scholar “Snapshot and “At Risk” letters are emailed home.
- End of Learning Period 4 and 8: Report cards are provided at the end of each semester.

Additional feedback is provided in the following ways:

- Scholars receive written feedback from teachers on written assignments, tests and quizzes
- Scholars and parents access this feedback in the gradebook of the LMS
- Scholars and parent receive weekly progress reports
- Every teacher has a school provided cell phone. Scholars and parents can get verbal feedback by calling or emailing their teacher directly.
- Flexible Course Scheduling

Using the lesson content and assignments for each unit, each teacher creates an individualized pacing plan for their classes according to when the scholar starts the course. This allows scholars to complete the courses they are placed in by the end of the semester. Scholars are able to work at their own pace, work ahead, etc. as long as they finish their courses by the end of the semester.

*Advantages of Virtual Learning*

There are many benefits to virtual learning. Those professionals that teach in an independent study environment are able to focus less on planning and content development, and more time to be spent on the other value-added tasks undertaken by highly effective teachers. In other words, more quality instructional time is spent working 1:1 with scholars or in small groups and interacting with them in the learning environment than on some of the behavioral and administrative tasks teachers typically assume. This enhances the learning experience for scholars and creates a clearer focus for teachers.

The table below describes six primary tasks executed by highly effective teachers and the differences between the independent study environment and a traditional classroom setting.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Traditional Classroom</b>	<b>Virtual Classroom</b>
Lesson Planning – Content Development	Lesson plan for daily teaching Prepare materials used for lessons Teach lessons Review lessons not learned	Material already planned and content already prepared – minimal planning and preparation required.
Grading	Grading all scholar work Short turnaround on math and daily assignments Longer turnaround times in Language Arts on research papers or essays Other subjects fall in the middle	Much scholar work graded automatically Math work done largely by computer with some answers graded by teachers Language Arts heavy on writing and require grading time equal to Face-to-Face More time available for “value-added” grading
Checks for Understanding	Must respond to scholars in the classroom Have one hour a day to answer questions	Questions come via email or in online chat sessions Can receive questions anytime Can respond to questions within 24 hours Many questions are repeats and teachers develop pre-arranged answers



Monitoring Scholar Achievement	Monitor in classroom Check grade book Respond to parent concerns Alert parents when problems arise Review scholar data and adjust teaching	Monitor online Refer to grade book Respond to parent/scholar concerns Alert parents when problems arise Review student data and coach student progress
Monitoring Behavior	Keep scholars in line with classroom rules	Keep scholars in line on chats

Curriculum

*Virtual Learning/Start Up Course*

All scholars in grades Transitional Kindergarten through 12th who are enrolling in AAS for the first time take Virtual Learning, an introductory course designed to prepare scholars on how to be successful in independent study and online learning. This course helps scholars familiarize themselves with the AAS program, shows them how to submit class work using their accounts in the school’s LMS, and teaches them how to use Google apps such as Docs and Slide Show. The emphasis of this course is 21st century communication skills. This course also assists them in setting up daily routines and schedule to stay on track. Writing is an important communication skill and scholars are asked to complete a variety of types of writing and research throughout their courses. One of the lessons in Virtual Learning is how to prevent plagiarism. Scholars are exposed to plagiarism prevention during their core courses as well and teachers use “Safe-Assign” a plagiarism detection program imbedded into the LMS. Scholars also take the school’s benchmark test for math and reading using i-Ready in order to establish a baseline for where they are academically. Scholars must complete this course successfully before starting their general education curriculum.

*Arts*

The Arts provide the invaluable expressive element that connects and enhances all subject areas at AAS, and is an integral aspect to all learning at every level. Our mission is to inspire and develop innovative and learners. AAS believes that the arts nurture a curiosity for life-long learning. AAS offers art electives at all grade levels. In 2015, our TK-5 program partnered with TEAL “Technology Enhanced Arts Learning Project” ([www.tealarts.org](http://www.tealarts.org)) and sent several elementary teachers to professional development on how to teach art using technology with a grant that our school was awarded. Our elementary teachers now actively incorporate the techniques they learned into their curriculum. We hope to continue with this, or a similar program moving forward.

*Sciences*

Like AAS’s emphasis on the arts, our school also strives to inspire scholars to appreciate the ways in which the sciences nurture a curiosity for life-long learning. Science celebrates the wonder of human inquiry and facilitates seeking and finding deeper meaning in all aspects of

life, often beyond the physical and sensory world. Our web based classrooms take on the feel of “labs” because of the investigative and inquiry based teaching practice that AAS emphasizes throughout its curriculum.

### [Blended Learning Wet Labs](#)

AAS is one of the few independent virtual charter schools to have its biology and chemistry labs A-G accredited. As a result, our biology and chemistry courses offer a blended learning component. Scholars complete their course work for their biology and chemistry courses as they do the rest of their classes. However, for the wet lab portion of the course they attend our real-time hands on labs. These labs are taught at our San Diego Learning Center. The goal of these labs is to provide scholars with the science lab experiences that will prepare them to meet the demands of university laboratory courses. Scholars living outside the local area participate in the lab via a live stream of the lab.

### [Virtual Open House](#)

Each year our scholars participate in a Virtual Open House. The purpose of this is for scholars to showcase their classwork in selected courses. Scholars demonstrate their learning by presenting an assignment or project of their choice, often in the arts or sciences. This is conducted similar to a traditional Open House except that it is done virtually.

### [Scholar Engagement](#)

As one of our LCAP goals, increasing scholar engagement is a priority for AAS. Our first step in this important endeavor was to have a Scholar Engagement Coordinator (SEC) join our leadership team. The Scholar Engagement Coordinator is responsible for overseeing all aspects of Scholar Engagement. From monthly Scholar Awards to our weekly Learning Coach Lounge, the SEC researches, plans, executes, and analyzes the events and activities that we offer our scholars and families.

As outlined in our Board approved 2016-2017 LCAP, our goal is to increase pupil engagement by offering more scholar specific activities, workshops, and live lessons and by tracking attendance and truancy rates. We will do this by offering college and career information sessions with our counselors, monitoring of weekly attendance by advisors, plan field trips and activities early in the year and make sure they are on our online master calendar, and enforce our truancy policy.

Additionally, we have several scholar-led clubs that have been created based on scholar interests as identified in family survey results. These clubs meet and plan activities and while there is a staff member that serves as a club advisor, it is the scholars that do the research and planning.

Some of our scholar led clubs include Scholar Leadership Council, Drama, Poetry, Photography, and Creative Writing. We are especially proud of our National Honor Society program for our High School scholars.

## Independent Study and Attendance

AAS will offer the same number of instructional minutes as set forth in EC 47612.5(a) for the appropriate grade levels and will operate at least for the required minimum of 175 days. AAS expects that scholar will submit work or as appropriate. AAS will maintain written records that contemporaneously document all student attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.

### Master Agreement

Enrollment in AAS is contingent on scholar, parent, and teacher signing a Master Agreement Form (MA) prior to the first day of class each year. This is a legal document and must be signed, dated, and returned to AAS. Parent and scholar will not have access to the curriculum until the MA is signed and returned. Failure to sign and return an MA within the first three (3) days of starting virtual learning will likely result in the withdrawal of the scholar from AAS. The signed MA is the agreement that parent and scholar wish to continue enrollment in AAS. All scholars enrolled in Independent Study must sign a new Master Agreement each year. EC 51747 *See Appendix B for the Master Agreement*

Special education scholars (individuals with exceptional needs as defined in Ed. Code Section 56026) must have an IEP that states Independent Study is an appropriate placement.

### Excellence Pledge for Independent Study

*A group of independent-study charter school leaders ... have signed an "Excellence Pledge," and banded together to dispel what they say are myths about virtual charters they believe have been fueled by recent controversies involving legal battles, charter brokering and turf wars (The San Diego Union-Tribune, 2016).*

The Pledge reads:

Independent study in the state of California is defined as non-classroom based instruction. Non-classroom--based instruction includes, but is not limited to, independent study, home study, work-study, and distance and computer-based education.

We, the undersigned, pledge to the following in the operation and management of our charter schools offering independent study.

1. As operators of high quality public charter schools offering independent study, we stand united behind the elements of integrity, trust, quality, and value in the operation of our schools. We know that offering personalized learning options meets the scholar where they are, aligns with what they individually need, while creating an academic program that is relevant, rigorous, and aligned to 21st Century learning.

2. As operators of high quality public charter schools offering independent study, we stand united in managing schools that are fiscally responsible in the use of public tax dollars in our

care. We value the use of independent auditors that review our financial and operational activities annually and showcase reports that are exception---free. This speaks to the commitment that we hold on financial accountability and operational integrity.

3. As operators of high quality public charter schools offering independent study, we stand united in our efforts to operate schools that model strong integrity, value and utilize solid business practices, and abide by all rules and regulations placed upon us by school districts, regional Offices of Education, and the California Department of Education.

4. As operators of high quality public charter schools offering independent study, we stand united believing that the actions of a few rogue charter school operators do not reflect, align, or mirror anything about our programs. Having individuals or the media draw comparisons speaks to the fact that they are unaware of what we do or are acting on rumor and misinformation.

5. As operators of high quality public charter schools offering independent study, we stand united in stating clearly that we are here for one purpose: educating scholars. Our resource centers, school sites, and classrooms are solely for the purpose of academic programming for the benefit of scholars in our care. Our commitment to scholars does not center on money, influence, or politics.

6. As operators of high quality public charter schools offering independent study, we stand united in offering high quality programs that offer innovative and tested methods of instruction and self-paced learning. We are helping scholars to think, communicate, and achieve.

7. The undersigned represent schools and organizations serving scholars in 26 Counties. Our programs, events, and activities align with personalized and adaptive learning elements to meet scholars where they are educationally to promote and achieve their academic success.

Our commitment to excellence is unwavering and our focus on scholars is what motivates us to create, manage, and grow public charter schools within the space of independent study.

## Attendance

Attendance is important for the success of a scholar. If a scholar does not attend school, then a scholar cannot succeed in their courses. Attendance at an independent study school looks very different than a brick and mortar school.

## Work Samples

Independent study attendance credit is determined using the time value method which is based on assignments (work samples) given and evaluated by the certificated teacher and recorded by the school. EC 11703 (b) (3)

Attendance is determined by amount of work samples submitted rather than time in seat. Recorded attendance in days should not exceed more than five (5) days in one school week, unless on a specific attendance track. Attendance should be counted in days not hours.

## Learning Periods

Learning periods will be less than 60 days or quarterly to minimize the amount of paperwork generated by independent study procedures. Attendance will be generated by the collecting of work samples during each learning period. EC 51747 (a)

## Virtual Classroom Attendance

### Learning Labs

All AAS teachers host live synchronous web-based classes 1 hour a day 5 days a week for their courses. Live teacher led classroom instruction occurs in each of these classes 2-3 hours a week called “Learning Labs.” These sessions allow scholars to interact with their teachers and be taught in real time. All scholars are expected to participate in the sessions for each of their classes. Attendance to class connect sessions is part of the scholar’s participation grade for their classes.

## Truancy Policy

Excessive absences are considered truant. In these cases, AAS may deem that enrollment at AAS is not in the best interest of a scholar. AAS will follow due process to determine if independent study is a good match for a child to succeed.

AAS scholars are considered truant if overall course work load completion is 10% or more below the weekly benchmark set by the school’s progress matrix.

If a scholar reaches the final step of the truancy process without responding to AAS staff, then a certified letter will be sent to the learning coach notifying them that their scholar will be withdrawn.

## Plan for Scholars that are Academically High Achieving

Scholars who are high achieving thrive at AAS. This is because our curriculum is self-paced and highly personalized, allowing scholars to move ahead at their own pace. Teachers differentiate lessons and activities for high achieving scholars just as they do for low achieving scholars. Scholars are encouraged to explore content in greater depth and incorporate scholar interests and strengths. AAS identifies high achieving scholars through the results of their I-Ready diagnostic assessment, progress reports, and SBAC test results. Scholars in high school are able to take advantage of our ACOP program, concurrent enrollment at community colleges, and have opportunities to take honors or other advanced courses.

## Plans for Scholars that are Academically Low Achieving

### *Identification*

We believe that early intervention is critical for all scholars who are in need of support. AAS will seek to quickly identify scholars who may be low-achieving in the first weeks of the academic year, and will implement an early intervention program. All scholars who are achieving substantially below grade level will be identified through multiple measures including diagnostic baseline testing for all scholars and regular performance measures in the classroom. As part of the enrollment process for each scholar, the past academic history will be reviewed and parents will be asked to provide information.

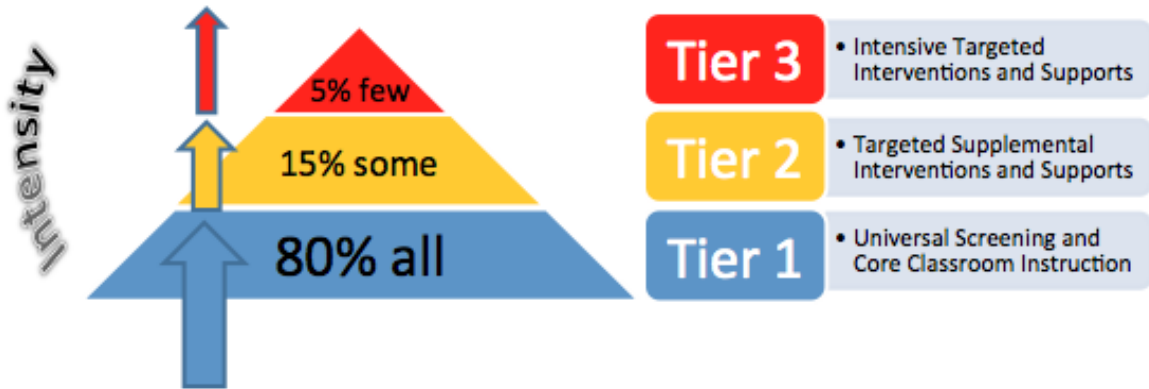
Parents will be asked to provide information on the scholars past academic history for those who are identified as achieving substantially below grade level based on assessments and classroom performance. Written notification will be provided for parents of scholars who are identified as mildly experiencing an achievement gap, while a collaborative meeting will be scheduled with appropriate staff and parents to review the assessment data and develop a plan to support the scholar and close the achievement gap for those experiencing significant achievement gaps. Parents will continue to be actively involved in the process and kept up to date on the progress or lack of progress (which will require additional supports) of their scholars on a continuing basis. AAS believes strongly that a cohesive plan involving the scholar, parents or guardians and the school provides the best process to ensure scholar learning and achievement.

### *Support*

AAS will provide all scholars identified as low achieving with an intervention program that best suits their needs and takes into consideration their individual learning styles.

AAS will implement the Response to Intervention model (RTI), a multi-tier system of supports to create an integrated, comprehensive framework that focuses on CCSS, core instruction, differentiated learning, scholar-centered learning, individualized scholar needs, and the alignment of systems necessary for academic, behavior, and social success. AAS is committed to the success of ALL scholars and to training and maintaining staff that is knowledgeable and effective at achieving this goal.

At AAS, RTI is set up as a three-tier system of support.



### Tier 1: Universal Screening and Core Classroom Instruction

Within Tier 1, all scholars receive high-quality differentiated instruction and are screened to determine an academic baseline and identify struggling learners.

- At all levels TK-12, teachers will provide small group instruction to meet the differentiated needs of scholars.
- Scholars who are not showing adequate progress are moved to Tier 2.

### Tier 2: Targeted Supplemental Interventions and Supports

Tier 2 Interventions will be provided in the areas of Math and Language Arts based on results from the i-Ready Diagnostic assessments, or referral through the SST process.

- Teachers will monitor and adjust the computer assisted instruction as appropriate for scholar needs.
- For scholars in Tier 2, progress monitoring will occur regularly (six weeks maximum) to ensure that progress is being made with these interventions.
- Scholars who are not showing adequate progress are moved to Tier 3.

### Tier 3: Intensive Interventions

We anticipate that a small percentage of scholars will require additional support beyond the Tier 2 intervention. Tier 3 scholars are provided the most intensive instruction, which typically means one-on-one intervention or working in very small groups (2-5 scholars).

- Skill-specific interventions are delivered by teachers to those small groups.
- Progress monitoring occurs more frequently (four weeks maximum) to ensure progress is being made with the intervention.
- Scholars who do not achieve the desired level of progress may be referred for a comprehensive evaluation and may possibly be eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004).

### Scholar Success Team Procedures

The purpose of a Scholar Success Team is to assist scholars who are performing below or above grade level or are academically challenged by developing a plan to address their individual needs.

An SST uses a systematic problem solving approach to assist scholars with concerns that are interfering with success. The SST clarifies problems and concerns; develops strategies and organizes resources; provides a system for school accountability; and serves to assist and counsel the parent, teacher, and scholar.

The function of the Scholar Success Team is to support the referring teacher, caregiver and student by looking at the strengths and concerns from each team member's unique viewpoint. The expectation is that teachers and other referring staff have attempted a variety of evidence-based interventions prior to an SST referral. The goal is to provide the referring parties with new interventions that address the concerns and tap into student strengths.

### English Language Learners

AAS will meet all applicable legal requirements for English Learners ("EL") as it pertains to annual notification to parents, scholar identification, placement, program options, EL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, re-classification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirement. Pursuant to EC Section 47605(d)(1), AAS shall not deny an EL scholar enrollment because of their EL status or national origin. AAS will implement strategies for serving English Learners which are research based and evaluated annually for effectiveness

### Home Language Survey

Every scholar completes a Home Language Survey upon enrollment. The results are reported to our Testing Specialist who arranges and administers the California English Language Development (CELDT) to those scholars that require it. All scholars who indicate that their home language is other than English will be assessed using the CELDT within thirty days of initial enrollment and at least annually thereafter between July 1 and October 31 until re-designated as fluent English proficient.

AAS will notify all parents of its responsibility for CELDT testing and of CELDT results within thirty days of receiving results from publisher.

### English Language Instruction

AAS understands that we have obligations to our EL scholars, to provide a program for ELs designed to overcome language barriers and provide access to the core curriculum (Castañeda v. Pickard 648 F.2d 989, [5th Cir. 1981]).

### Reclassification Procedure

To be reclassified from an English Language Learner to a Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP), scholars must score in the intermediate to high range in all areas on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Additionally, scholars need to be on track in



their English classes with a completion rate/progress grade of at least a 75%. There must also be a recommendation from a teacher, as well as agreement by the parents. We will continue to monitor scholars that have been reclassified for an additional two years after qualifying.

## Mandated State Testing

As members of a public charter school, our scholars participate in the following state standardized tests:

- Grades 5, 8, and 10 CST Science
- Grades 3-8 & 11 SBAC Testing (aka California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress: CAASPP)
- Grades 5, 7, and 9 Physical Fitness Test (PFT)
- English Language Learners: California English Language Development Test: CELDT for English Language Proficiency Assessment

AAS administers all state standardized tests at the Learning Center, as well as at other sites geographically placed among our scholars' locations. A testing schedule will be provided to our Learning Coaches. Individual scholar performance results on statewide assessments will be distributed to both parents and teachers in a timely manner once released from the state.

## Academic Dishonesty

Integrity and honesty are important traits in both 21<sup>st</sup> century learners and online learners. Because of this, AAS has a stringent Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Policy. Upon enrollment, scholars must read the Scholar Handbook and Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Policy. We want our scholars to know what our expectations and beliefs are on this subject. Academic Dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism and any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means. AAS takes academic dishonesty in any form seriously and it will not be tolerated.

- Some examples of this include:
  - Using another person's work and claim as your own
  - Copying from text, web site or other course material
  - Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials or information in any academic exercise
  - Hiring someone to write a paper
  - Buying a paper or project
  - Sharing files
  - Copying from another person's work
  - Turning in another person's work and claiming it as your own
  - Letting a friend or parent do the work for you

### *What is Plagiarism?*

Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines plagiarism as “the act of using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to that person: the act of plagiarizing something”.

To Plagiarize means:

- to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own.
- to use (another's production) without crediting the source.
- to commit literary theft or fraud.
- to present as new and original an idea or product derived from another source.

### *How to Avoid Plagiarism?*

Scholars must give credit to the source for any information that is not either the result of original research or common knowledge. For example, it would be necessary to give credit to an author who provided an argument about the importance of the Emancipation Proclamation in the American Civil War. Conversely, major historical facts, such as the dates of the American Civil War, are considered common knowledge and do not require that credit be given to a particular author. If a scholar borrows the exact words of another author, the scholar must cite the source. If scholars are unsure whether or not they should cite, they should to ask their teachers for guidance. Teachers will dictate which citation format should be used and what the guidelines are for their class.

### *Prevention of Plagiarism*

1. All scholars and Learning Coaches are given a copy of the AAS Parent/Scholar handbook which outlines the school’s policy on plagiarism during Virtual Learning. *See Appendix C for the Parent/Scholar Handbook*
2. Scholars in grades 6-12 complete a lesson in Virtual Learning with the following objectives and outcomes.
  - A. Scholars review AAS policy on plagiarism
  - B. Plagiarism is defined and examples are given
  - C. Scholars complete an assignment demonstrating their understanding of how serious plagiarism is and the consequences of plagiarizing while at AAS
3. Complete a lesson on understanding plagiarism in during one of your core courses. 6-12 scholars complete a lesson on plagiarism during their first unit of a core course.
4. Teachers will use “safe assign”, a program embedded into the Fuel Ed curriculum or other recognized plagiarism detection program, to check for plagiarism as necessary

If a scholar is found to have plagiarized, there is a series of consequences, including parent conferences, Disciplinary Action Committee hearings, and failing of an assignment or class.

## Course Placement and Graduation Requirements

### Elementary School Program (TK-5)

Our elementary school program is a reflection of our school’s mission and vision. Teachers partner with their scholars’ learning coaches by inviting them to attend the Learning Labs together. Teachers individualize learning by getting to know their scholars’ interests and needs and by using the formative and summative assessment data and I-Ready data to inform instruction. The TK-5 teachers incorporate virtual “reading circles” and teacher-directed reading regularly throughout the year. Instruction is self-paced and scholars can work ahead. TK-5 scholars who are ahead of the pacing plan are able to choose from a variety of electives such as art, music, and world languages such as Spanish, French, or Latin. There are varying levels of both Art and Music, depending on the scholar’s grade, ability, and interest level.

### Middle School Course Placement and Course Scheduling

All middle school scholars are required to enroll in four (4) academic courses (English, Math, Science, Social Science), physical education, and one elective course each semester of the academic school year depending on the cohort start date.

Our middle school academic program utilizes semester scheduling for all tracks. This helps prepare them for the high school experience. The number of courses a scholar is eligible to enroll in is dependent upon the scholar start date.

#### Middle School Requirements

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Course Requirements</b>
English	Language Arts 6
	Language Arts 7
	Language Arts 8
Science	Earth Science 6
	Life Science 7
	Physical Science 8
Mathematics	Fundamentals of Algebra & Geometry 6
	Pre-Algebra 7
	Algebra 8
Social Science	Social Studies 6
	Social Studies 7

Social Studies 8

Physical Education

Physical Education 6

Physical Education 7

Physical Education 8

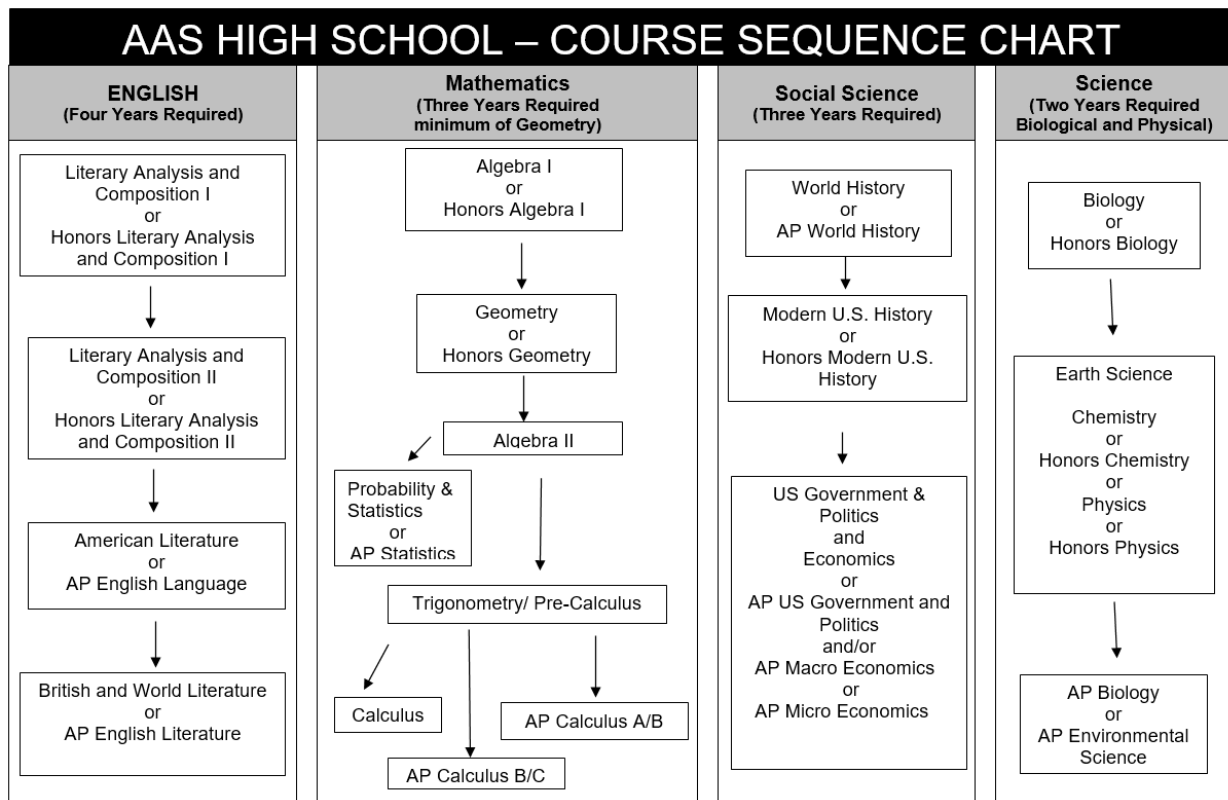
\*Each scholar is required to complete 60 hours of physical activity each semester.

Electives

### High School Course Placements and Graduation Requirements

#### High School Course Scheduling

Course selection is a team process that involves the scholar, learning coach and counselor to ensure proper placement. The number of courses and credits a scholar is eligible to enroll in is dependent upon the scholar start date.



#### ACOP – Accelerated Course Options Program

This program allows scholars to accelerate and advance academically or recover unearned credits in their high school courses by adding up to ten additional credits (two courses) to their schedule per semester.

*High School Graduation Requirements*

<b>Subject Requirements</b>	<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>Course</b>
English (4 years required)	40	Literary Analysis & Composition I, Literary Analysis & Composition II, American Literature, British & World Literature
Science (2 years required: Life Science & Physical Science)	20	Biology (Life) Earth Science or Chemistry (Physical)
Mathematics (3 years required minimum)	30	Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Trig/Pre-Calculus, Consumer Math
History/Social Science (3 years required)	30	World History, Modern US History Government/Economics
Foreign Language (1 year required)	10	Spanish, French, Chinese, German
Visual and Performing Arts (1 year required)	10	3D Art, Digital Arts, Digital Photography, Fine Art, Music Appreciation, Art in World Cultures  *Due to the virtual nature of our program, University of California and California State University does not recognize Visual/Performing Art courses as a-g approved. Scholars may take VPA courses concurrently at a local community college to meet eligibility requirements.
Physical Education (2 years required)	20	Physical Education I, Physical Education II  *Each scholar is required to complete 60 hours of physical activity each semester.
Health (1 semester required)	5	Skills for Health
Electives	55	See Course List and/or Course Catalog for scholar elective options.
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	

AAS's graduation requirements comply with California EC. The school offers two paths to graduation.

1. Post-Secondary Plan (Non A-G approved courses) (220 credits)
2. Four-Year College Preparatory Plan (A-G approved courses) (220 credits)

*See Appendix D for the Counseling Handbook*

### Course Transferability

AAS Del Mar K-12 has obtained initial WASC accreditation. High school scholars receive information on the transferability of courses to other public high schools and how said courses meet college entrance requirements for the University of California and the California State Universities through regular meetings with the scholars assigned counselor. The College and Career counselor presents information to parents and scholars during college workshops to make sure that our students are fully informed of their choices. AAS will inform parents of course transferability through the distribution of a parent/scholar handbook that includes specific information on course transferability to other public schools and that outlines school policies and expectations for all scholars and parents. Counselors provide an A-G course list that meet University of California and California State University entrance requirements. The A-G course list and transferability off classes will be updated on an annual basis. A state-certified high school diploma will be issued to all scholars who meet the AAS graduation requirements.

### Special Education

AAS shall comply with all applicable State and Federal Laws in serving scholars with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (“Section 504”), the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act (“IDEIA”).

AAS shall comply with all state and federal laws related to the provision of special education instruction and related services and all El Dorado SELPA policies and procedures; and shall utilize appropriate El Dorado SELPA forms. It is understood and agreed that all children will have access AAS and no scholar shall be denied admission nor counseled out of AAS due to the nature, extent, or severity of his/her disability or due to the scholar’s request for, or actual need for, special education services.

AAS shall be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 and the ADA. Any facilities to be utilized by the School shall be accessible for all scholars with disabilities.

#### *Services for Scholars under the “IDEIA”*

AAS is a member of El Dorado County Charter Schools’ Special Education Local Plan (SELPA) in accordance with EC Section 47641(a). As an LEA, AAS is solely responsible for IDEIA and State special education law compliance, including but not limited to child find; identification and referral; assessment, arranging IEP meetings; IEP development, and implementation; interim placement; placement off campus as required by IEP; and defense or prosecution of complaints in accordance with policies and procedures of the SELPA in which the AAS is a member.

All duties and responsibilities under the IDEIA and the EC relating to eligible special education scholars shall be specifically assigned to AAS and shall be handled by the AAS in accordance with applicable law and District and SELPA policy and procedure including but not limited to child find; identification and referral; assessment, arranging IEP meetings; IEP development, and implementation; interim placement; placement off campus as required by IEP; and defense

or prosecution of complaints. Academy of Arts & Sciences shall hold harmless, indemnify, and defend Mountain Empire against any and all complaints, due process claims, suits, requests for reimbursement, compensatory education, damages, whether via judgment or settlement, arising out of or relating to the actions or omissions of AAS, its employees, or contractors in providing special education and/or related services to AAS scholars. To the extent AAS is indemnified by any contractor, the AAS shall ensure that such indemnification equally applies to Mountain Empire. Mountain Empire shall be named an additional insured on any insurance coverage carried by the AAS.

AAS agrees that it shall comply with any notice requirements requested to ensure Mountain Empire that AAS is meeting its obligations under applicable State and Federal law, District and SELPA policy.

#### *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*

AAS recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability may, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program of AAS. Any scholar, who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity including but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodation by the School.

A 504 team will be assembled by the Director of Academic Affairs and shall include parents/guardians, the scholar (where appropriate), and other qualified persons knowledgeable about the scholar, such as the teacher, evaluators, and any other person deemed necessary, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and accommodations. The 504 team will review the scholar's existing records, including academic, social and behavioral records and is responsible for making a determination as to whether an evaluation for 504 services is appropriate. If the scholar has already been evaluated under the IDEA, but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under the IDEIA, those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The scholar evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team who will evaluate the nature of the scholar's disability and the impact upon the scholar's education. This evaluation will include consideration of any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program and/or activities. The 504 team may also consider the following information in its evaluation:

- a. Tests and other evaluation materials that have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel.
- b. Tests and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligent quotient.
- c. Tests are selected and administered so as to ensure that when a test is administered to a scholar with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the scholar's aptitude or achievement level or whatever factor the test purports to measure rather than reflecting the scholar's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills.

The final determination of whether the scholar will or will not be identified as a person with a disability is made by the 504 team in writing and notice is given in writing to the parent or

guardian of the scholar in their primary language along with notice of the procedural safeguards available to them. If during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information indicating possible eligibility of the scholar for special education per the IDEIA, a referral for special education assessment will be made by the 504 team.

If the scholar is found by the 504 team to have a disability under Section 504, the 504 team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations or services are needed to ensure that the scholar receives a free and appropriate public education (“FAPE”) at AAS. The 504 team shall determine which charter school staff member is responsible for providing services and/or accommodations under the plan. In identifying necessary accommodations and services to develop the 504 Plan, the 504 team shall consider all relevant information utilized during the evaluation of the scholar, drawing upon a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, assessments conducted by AAS’s professional staff.

The 504 Plan shall describe the Section 504 disability and any program modification and services that may be necessary to allow the disabled scholar access to AAS. AAS understands it is entire responsible for compliance with Section 504, including by way of implementing 504 Plans.

All 504 team participants, parents, guardians, teachers and any other participants in the scholar’s education, including substitutes and tutors, must have a copy of the scholar’s 504 Plan. A copy of the 504 Plan shall be maintained in the scholar’s file. The scholar’s 504 Plan will be reviewed regularly to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, continued eligibility or readiness to discontinue the 504 Plan.

Parents/guardians shall be notified in writing of all decisions regarding the identification, evaluation or educational placement of scholars with disabilities or suspected disabilities.

Notifications shall include a statement of their rights to: examine relevant records, have an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parents/guardians and their counsel, have the right to file a Uniform Complaint pursuant to school policy, and seek review in federal court if the parents/guardians disagree with the hearing decision.

If a parent/guardian disagrees with the identification, evaluation or educational placement of a scholar with disabilities under Section 504, he/she may request a hearing to initiate due process procedures. The Section 504 Policy and Procedures shall outline the alternative dispute resolution process and the hearing process to deal with any such complaints.



## II. Measurable Scholar Outcomes

*The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by AAS. "Pupil outcomes," for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school's educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both school wide and for all groups of pupils served by AAS, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 47607. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by AAS." Cal. Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(B).*

*CHARTER SCHOOL Has clearly defined school wide outcome goals in compliance with California EC sections 47605(b)(5)(B) and 52060(d). CHARTER SCHOOL will pursue the following school wide and subgroup outcome goals, as measured by multiple and varied benchmark assessments that are aligned to state and federal standards (including the new Common Core) and reflect proficiency measures required by the [selected assessment(s)], as well as applicable state priorities detailed in California EC § 52060(d) that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by AAS. For purposes of measuring achievement of these goals, a numerically significant pupil subgroup will be defined as one that meets both of the following criteria: "(i) The subgroup consists of at least 50 pupils each of whom has a valid test score. (ii) The subgroup constitutes at least 15 percent of the total population of pupils at a school who have valid test scores." Cal. EC § 47607(a)(3)(B).*

*The following chart delineates CHARTER SCHOOL school-wide and subgroup outcome goals and performance targets aligned to the state's priorities that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by AAS, methods for measuring progress and the individual(s) with primary responsibility for each, all aligned with the state's priorities defined in Cal. Ed. Code Section 52060(d). As the State and District finalize new standardized assessment tools (e.g., [assessments]) and new school performance measures (e.g., API), and finalize the format for the new Local Control Accountability Plans as applicable to charter schools, CHARTER SCHOOL will work with Mountain Empire to ensure that it creates and updates its plans and goals accordingly. The LCAP shall not be deemed part of the charter, and therefore, annual amendments to the LCAP shall not be considered a "material revision to the charter" as defined on section 47607. Actions intended to ensure that the school meets these goals and targets are delineated throughout this charter petition Including subheadings that specifically call out your assurances and achievement goal chart can help organize the new petition sections. The italicized "Measurable Goals of the Education Program" section is sample language that is intended to provide assurances that all of your subgroups will meet the performance goals that you have laid out in the chart. This way you can avoid restating goals for each subgroup, for each of the eight priorities. You should include similar language before your performance chart. Element 2 will require the biggest updates. Directly below this comment box is the updated Ed Code that should be used at the header for this section. Starting on page 5, there is a sample table that provides an example of how a petition can address each of the required state priorities, as applicable, without committing to performance goals that might require annual updates, and annual material revisions to your petition. 4 (e.g., Element 1: Educational Program; Element 4: Governance and parental involvement; etc.) See the following chart for specific actions, their corresponding assessments and the school personnel responsible for their implementation.*

### Annual School Goals

All of our school goals have been created via a collaborative effort involving all stakeholders. These goals contribute to our ability to meet of mission which is to inspire and develop innovative, creative self-directed learners, one scholar at a time.

Our annual goals, as stated in our LCAP are:

Goal #1- Increase pupil engagement by offering more scholar specific activities, workshops, and live lessons and by tracking attendance and truancy rates.

Goal #2- Increase academic achievement by offering a variety of classes taught by credentialed teachers.

Goal #3- Increase parent participation and involvement by communicating with greater frequency, offering activities that appeal to a variety of people and collecting feedback in a safe environment

Goal #4 Utilize the Common Core aligned school-wide assessment system to efficiently and effectively evaluate scholar performance data in order to direct instruction, close the achievement gap, and ensure that all scholars are meeting or exceeding standards.

Achievement Goals

The following tables provide the actions, methods of assessment, and points of accountability that will guide AAS in achieving the goals set by California’s Eight State Priorities and our own LCAP goals.

<b><u>ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #1— BASIC SERVICES</u></b>		
<b>95% of our teachers are appropriately assigned (E.C. §44258.9) and fully credentialed, and every pupil has sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials (E.C. § 60119), and school facilities are maintained in good repair (E.C. §17002(d))</b>		
School Action	Method of Assessment	Person(s) Responsible
<b>Credential Review</b>	Credential Audit	Human Resource Generalist
<b>Advertise for open positions in an educationally focused environment</b>	Annually review advertising options	Director of Operations
<b>Observation of Live class Sessions</b>	Written observations	Coordinators

<b><u>ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #2— IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS</u></b>		
<b>100% of our courses will be aligned with Common Core Standards and we will see a 5% in scholars on task with course completion.</b>		
School Action	Method of Assessment	Person(s) Responsible
<b>Tracking of Standard Mastery</b>	Universal Assessments SBAC Interim Assessments	Director of Academic Affairs, Instructional Services Manager
<b>EL Intervention</b>	Unit exams i-Ready assessments	Scholar Intervention Coordinator, Assessment Specialist
<b>Administration of SBAC Interim Assessment</b>	Interim assessment reports	Assessment Specialist, Academic Affairs Coordinators
<b>Monitoring of RFEP Scholars</b>	i-Ready Course completion rates	Assessment Specialist

	Final course grades	
<b>Review of course offerings</b>	Review of course catalogs	Counselors
<b>Teacher observation</b>	Written observations	Coordinators Managers
<b>Train Science teachers on NGSS</b>	Teacher observations	Academic Coordinators
<b>Alignment of Curriculum Maps to CCSS</b>	Completion of Curriculum Maps	Academic Coordinators
<b>CCSS implementation</b>	Teacher observations	Academic Coordinators

**ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #3— PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

**AAS will conduct surveys, conferences, and school sponsored events that will result in an increase in parent involvement.**

School Action	Method of Assessment	Person(s) Responsible
<b>Learning Coach Lounges</b>	Sign in sheets, log in records	Scholar Engagement Coordinator
<b>Open House</b>	Sign In Sheets	Scholar Engagement Coordinator
<b>Bi-annual surveys</b>	Number/percentage of completed surveys	Director of Information Services
<b>Tracking of parent attendance at various events</b>	Sign in sheets	Scholar Engagement Coordinator
<b>Implementation of Parent Square Notification System</b>	Tracking of number of opened/read messages	Scholar Engagement Coordinator
<b>Offering Parent Information sessions</b>	Track attendance via sign in sheets and webinar log ins	Counselors, Scholar Engagement Coordinator, Coordinators
<b>Creation of Parent Advisory Committee</b>	Advisory Committee meeting notes	President & CEO

**ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #4— SCHOLAR ACHIEVEMENT**

**AAS has set a goal of a 5% increase in ELA and Math scores from the 2015-16 SBAC scores.**

School Action	Method of Assessment	Person(s) Responsible
<b>Reclassification of EL scholars</b>	Reclassification Requirement and Tracking Rubric	Assessment Specialist
<b>College and Career Readiness Report</b>	SIS report of Scholars meeting/met A-G requirements	Counseling Department
<b>Offer AP courses</b>	Review of AP scores	Instructional Services Manager, AP teachers
<b>Take part in professional development regarding ESSA</b>	Survey	All teaching staff, coordinators, managers, Director of Information

		Services, Director of Academic Affairs
<b>Meet our goal of improving our overall ELA SBAC score by 5%</b>	SBAC Scores	Director of Academic Affairs
<b>Meet our goal of improving our overall Math SBAC score by 5%</b>	SBAC Scores	Director of Academic Affairs
<b>Increase scholar benchmarking scores by assessing them 2 times a year</b>	i-Ready Assessments	Director of Academic Affairs
<b>Tracking of online synchronous attendance</b>	Review log ins	Teacher
<b>Concurrent enrollment in Community Colleges</b>	Number of scholars concurrently enrolled	Counseling
<b>Participation in EAP test for 11<sup>th</sup> graders</b>	EAP test scores	Assessment Specialist

**ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #5— SCHOLAR ENGAGEMENT**

**AAS will see a decrease in truancy and absenteeism rates from 2015-16 rates and an increase in course completion.**

- A. School attendance rates**
- B. Chronic absenteeism rates**
- C. Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3))**
- D. High school dropout rates**
- E. High School graduation rates**

<b>School Action</b>	<b>Method of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<b>Meeting of attendance goals</b>	Monthly attendance reports	Attendance Specialist
<b>Decrease in dropout rate</b>	Monthly review of dropout rates	Attendance Specialist Counseling Department
<b>Enforce Truancy Policy</b>	Monthly truancy reports	Advisors
<b>Support scholar led clubs</b>	End of year survey	Scholar Engagement Coordinator
<b>Continue with Scholar of the Month awards</b>	Coordinator and staff feedback	Scholar Engagement Coordinator
<b>Hold College and Career Information Events</b>	Sign in sheets	Counseling
<b>Assign every 6-12<sup>th</sup> grade scholar a counselor</b>	Counseling rosters	Counseling Services Manager

**ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #6— SCHOOL CLIMATE**

**AAS will have a positive school climate with active parents and effective communications.**

<b>School Action</b>	<b>Method of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
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<b>Survey families on safety and school connectedness</b>	Annual survey results	Director of Information Services
<b>Maintain our 0% suspension and expulsion rate</b>	Monthly reports	Attendance Specialist
<b>Creation of a Scholar Leadership Council</b>	Meeting minutes	President & CEO
<b>Counsel scholars with chronic behaviors such as truancy</b>	Monitor habitual truancy scholars' work progress	Advisors
<b>Adoption of a Parent Square/Quarterly Newsletter</b>	Number of participants in Parent Square	External Relations Coordinator, Communications Specialist

**ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #7— COURSE ACCESS**

**AAS will meet the same standards district schools are held to regarding the extent to which pupils have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, including programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated scholars (classified as EL, FRPM-eligible, or foster youth; E.C. §42238.02) and scholars with exceptional needs. “Broad course of study” includes the following, as applicable: Grades 1-6: English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and other as prescribed by the governing board. (E.C. §51210) Grades 7-12: English, social sciences, foreign language(s), physical education, science, mathematics, visual and performing arts, applied arts, and career technical education. (E.C. §51220(a)-(i))**

<b>School Action</b>	<b>Method of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<b>Offer Common Core aligned courses</b>	Audit course offerings	Instructional Services Manager
<b>Supply computers when requested</b>	Review of Computer Requests	IT Coordinator
<b>A-G accreditation of coursed</b>	Acceptance by UC Doorways	Counseling
<b>Concurrent Enrollment for VPA courses</b>	Number of scholars enrolled in community college	Counseling

**A.**

<b>School Action</b>	<b>Method of Assessment</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
<b>Universally assess all scholars twice a year</b>	i-Ready	Director of Information Services
<b>Monitor assessment scores to create small group instruction</b>	i-Ready	Scholar Intervention Coordinator
<b>Allow for flexible grouping</b>	i-Ready curriculum completion rates	Scholar Intervention Coordinator

<b>Create individual plans for each scholar outlining courses needed to graduate</b>	Review of plans	Counseling
<b>IEP Present levels of Performance</b>	Annual IEPs	Special Education Manager
<b>Entertainment and Work Permits</b>	Number of entertainment and work permits issued	Counseling

### III. Measuring Scholar Outcomes

*The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school Cal. Ed. Code 47605(b)(5)(C).*

*CHARTER SCHOOL shall adhere to all state testing requirements, including provisions of AB 484/2012 and any revisions of EC that are applicable to charter schools. As established in the previous section CHARTER SCHOOL will be utilizing diverse assessments that are aligned with the curriculum and instructional program, compliant with state expectations. They will be administered according to the assessment cycle below. accountability report card.” Cal. Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(C).*

Measuring scholar outcomes is essential and allows us to reflect, analyze, and direct instruction regarding the skills and knowledge our scholars have gained.

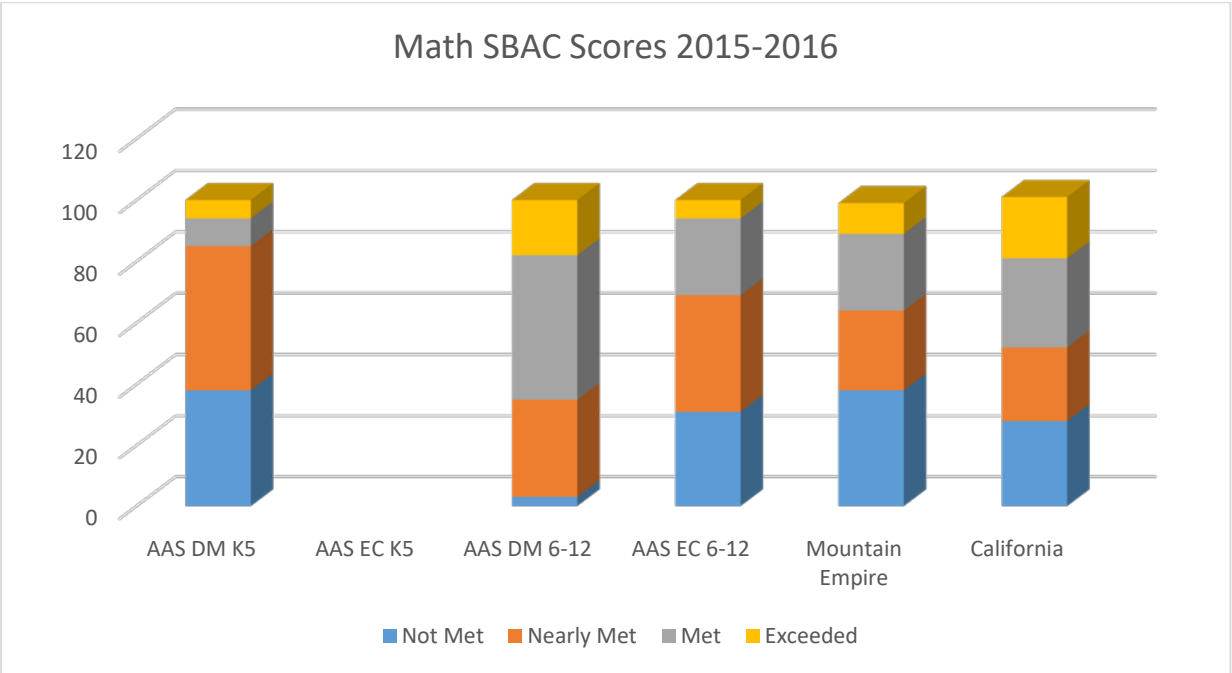
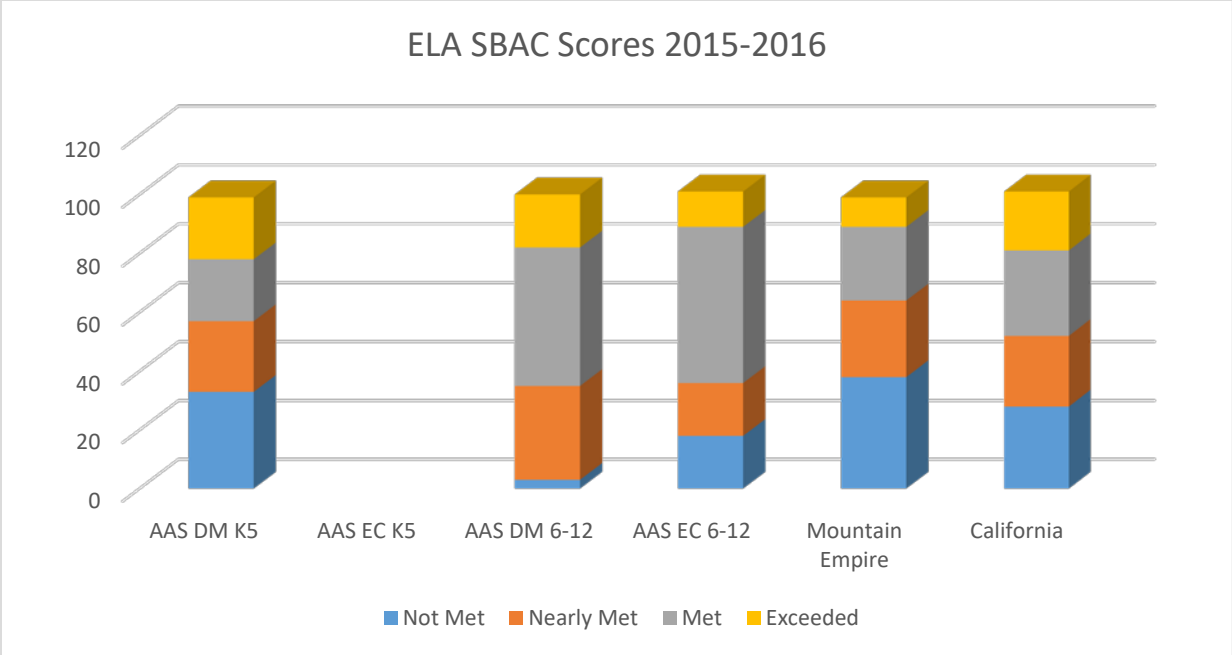
In addition to the unit tests, quizzes, and writing assessment supplied by the curriculum provider, AAS is using i-Ready, an adaptive assessment program that provides instruction and supplemental work based on scholar test results. Through these resources, AAS monitors and adjusts instruction based on scholar, class, and grade level results.

Assessment	Description	Assessment Schedule
<b>State Required Tests</b>	SBAC, PFT, CELDT	Annually, as available
<b>Placement Exams</b>	i-Ready, CELDT, Placement	Annually, semester
<b>School Designed Assessment</b>	Tests, quizzes, Writing Prompts	As determined by Pacing Plans
<b>Local Control Accountability Plan</b>		Annually
<b>Summative Assessments</b>	Common Core aligned	Bi-annually
<b>Teacher observations</b>	Observations	As needed
<b>High School Graduation</b>	Number of scholars graduating	End of School Year
<b>A-G Course Completion</b>	A-G Course completion rates for High School scholars	End of the Year

#### Analyzing Data

Analyzing data is important and allows us to make decisions that can benefit our scholars. Utilizing resources provided by the state and state sponsored organizations help in the collecting and reading of results.

Between the redesigning of standardized tests and our beginning enrollment numbers, AAS did not have reportable scores for the first three years. The following scores are the SBAC scores from 2015-2016. In Math, our Del Mar 6-12 scholars scored consistently better than those in Mountain Empire and the state. Our high school scholars also out-performed the district and the state in Language Arts. Our El Cajon K-5 did not have enough scholars enrolled or tested to produce results.

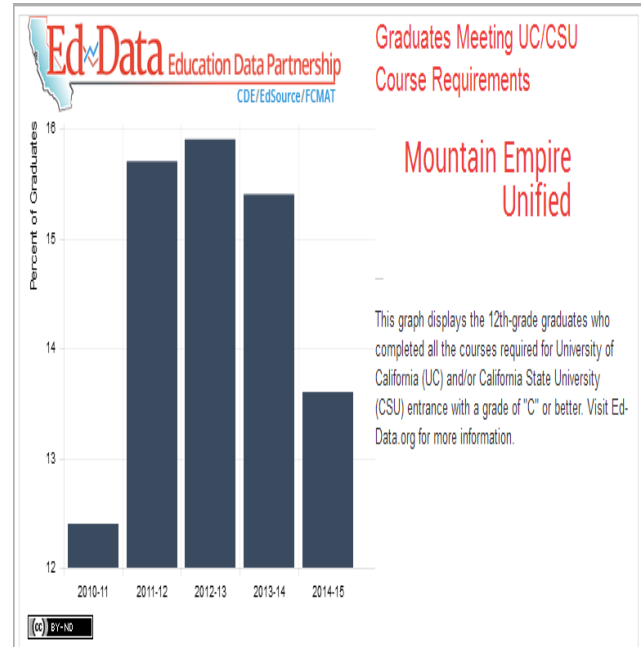
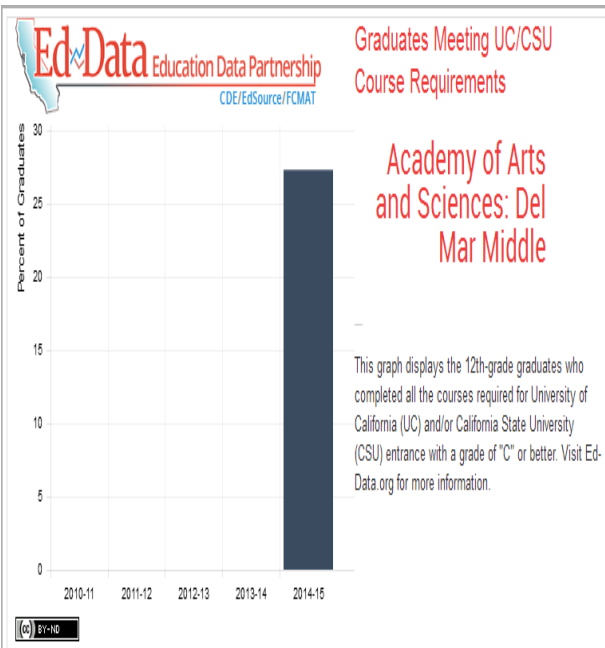


Cohort data follows scholars through four years of high school. Because being college or career ready is important, the number of high school seniors taking and passing courses that are necessary for UC/CSU acceptance are tracked. Below are the results for AAS Del Mar, San Diego County, and California. In 2015, AAS Del Mar had an average of 27.5% of scholars taking and passing UC/CSU course requirements. Over the past four years, Mountain Empire had a range of 12.5%-15.9%. California surpassed both AAS Del Mar and Mountain Empire with rates ranging from 27.5%-43.2%. As a new school, AAS Del Mar did not have cohort information prior to

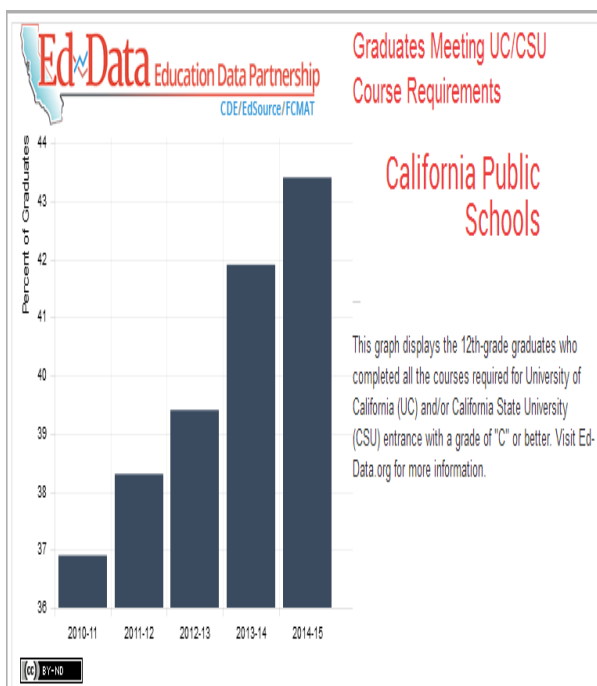


2015. AAS continues to encourage scholars to take UC/CSU courses and expect to see this rate grow.

We attribute the growth to date to the assigning every high school scholar a counselor. Together the scholar and counselor collaborate with planning courses starting in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Scholars and counselors meet to map out classes needed in each year of high school. Through this system of accountability and knowledge, scholars have been successful in taking and passing courses



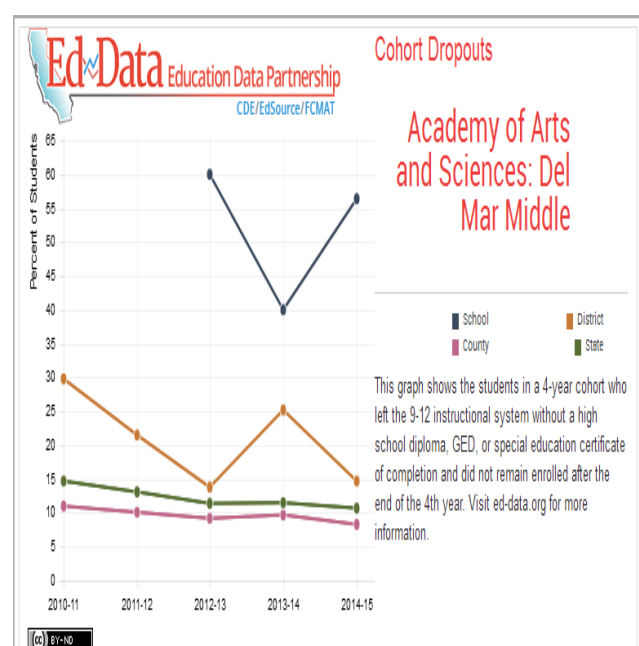
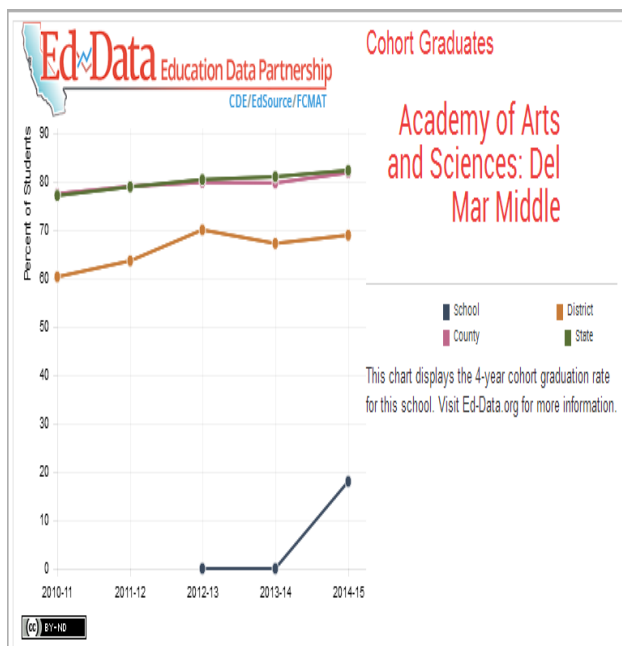
needed for UC/CSU acceptance.



These charts display the percentages of scholars that have completed the courses with a "C" or better as required by UC/CSU schools for acceptance.

The graduation rate for this cohort has been increasing for the state, county, and for AAS Del Mar K-12. Our scores are much lower than the state's and county's, however we have made great progress over the past 3 years. Graduation rates increased by 20% over two years and drop-out rates fluctuated over the same period of time, first dropping, then rising again. Over all, the drop-out rate still ended up over 5% less than the starting rate.

Graduation rates are important and are embedded in our LCAP plan. We have increased the tools and resources available to our scholars. In addition to the content teachers and counselors that all 6-12<sup>th</sup> grade scholars are assigned, our scholars also have advisors. Advisors have the important role of making sure that our independent study scholars are turning in work consistently, and progressing at a rate that will allow them to graduate. We understand that while graduation happens in twelfth grade, preparation must start in 6<sup>th</sup> grade.



Carly Fiorina once said, “The goal is to turn data into information, and information into insight.” At first look, our Cohort data appears to reflect a failure to keep up with state and county rates of graduation and drop outs. Upon further inspection, and with the intent to turn information into insight, our data tells a story greater than our failures. Our information tells of our successes and triumphs in educating our scholars.

To begin with, it is important to remember that many of our scholars come to us credit deficient and discouraged with their educational experiences. AAS encourages and supports our scholars to complete their degree, even when outside pressures such as work and family obligations put their education in jeopardy. AAS has seen our drop-out rate fluctuate, ending lower than when the school started. AAS Del Mar has also seen the cohort graduate rate rise steadily.

Keeping in mind that AAS is only in its fourth year, we have seen larger decreases in drop-out rates and greater increases in graduation rates than the county and state that have been operating for decades.

Another factor in this data is the affect that our early July start date had on our 2012-2014 data. Many scholars left when “traditional” school started without providing important information such as to what school they would be transferring. Without this information, these scholars showed up as drop-outs in CalPads. If scholar records were not requested by the next school attended, we did not have information to choose a different exit code.

The value in this data is that it helped us focus and refine our program to better benefit our scholars. Data, whether positive or negative, is important when making choices and decision that benefit our educational program, as well as our scholars. Data, if not utilized, is useless.

## IV. Governance

*Governing Law: The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement. EC Section 47605 (b)(5)(D)*

### Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation

AAS Del Mar K-12 will be operated by Academy of Arts and Sciences, a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation. *See Appendix E for the Board of Directors' Bios, Appendix F for the Articles of Incorporation, Appendix G for the By-Laws and Appendix H for the Board Policy Manual.*

AAS will operate autonomously from Mountain Empire, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services as negotiated between Mountain Empire and AAS. Pursuant to EC Section 47604(c), Mountain Empire shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of AAS, operated by a California non-profit benefit corporation, or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by AAS as long as Mountain Empire has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

### Board of Directors

Academy of Arts and Sciences is governed by a Board of Directors who shall be selected, serve, and govern AAS in accordance with their adopted bylaws, which shall be maintained to align with the terms of this charter and applicable law.

In accordance with EC Section 47604(b), Mountain Empire may appoint a representative to serve on the Board of Directors.

The Academy of Arts and Sciences Board of Directors will have three (3) – seven (7) members, for a three-year term, with no term limitations.

The Board of Directors meetings will be headed by a Board Chair, who will be elected annually by the Board at its Annual Meeting.

As long as quorum exists as defined by the bylaws, measures voted on by the Board of Directors may be passed with a simple majority of present members.

### Board Duties

The Board of Directors will be responsible for the operation and fiscal affairs of AAS, including but not limited to:

- Approval of the annual school budget
- Approval of discipline, dismissal and expulsions
- Approval of bylaws, resolutions, and policies of school operation
- Approval of all changes to the charter to be submitted to Mountain Empire as necessary in accordance with applicable law
- Long-term strategic planning for AAS
- Participation as necessary in dispute resolution

- Monitoring overall scholar performance
- Monitoring the performance of AAS and taking necessary action to ensure that AAS remains true to its mission and charter
- Monitoring the fiscal solvency of AAS
- Participation in the AAS' independent fiscal audit
- Increasing public awareness of AAS

AAS will update Mountain Empire of changes to the Board of Directors. *See Appendix E for the current composition of the Board of Directors.*

The Board of Directors may initiate and carry out any program or activity that is not in conflict with or inconsistent with any law and which is not in conflict with the purposes for which charter schools are established.

### Board Meetings

The Academy of Arts and Sciences Board of Directors will meet at least four (4) times yearly pursuant to the approved master calendar and shall set additional special board meetings as necessary and in accordance with the Brown Act.

AAS shall adopt a conflicts code which shall comply with the Political Reform Act, Government Code Section 87100, applicable conflict restrictions required by the Corporations Code, and Government Code Section 1090, and any statutory or regulatory conflicts restrictions that may be adopted in the future as applicable to AAS.

### Board Training

The Board of Directors shall participate annually in training regarding board governance, the Brown Act, and conflicts of interest rules.

### Board Delegation of Duties

The Board may execute any powers delegated by law to it and shall discharge any duty imposed by law upon it and may delegate to an employee or contractor of AAS any of those duties. The Board, however, retains ultimate responsibility over the performance of those powers or duties so delegated. Such delegation will:

- Be in writing
- Specify the entity designated
- Describe in specific terms the authority of the Board being delegated, any conditions on the delegated authority or its exercise and the beginning and ending dates of the delegation
- Require an affirmative vote of a majority of present Board members

## Charter School Chief Executive

The President & CEO will be the leader of AAS. The President & CEO will report directly to the Academy of Arts and Sciences Board of Directors, and s/he is responsible for the orderly operation and fiscal affairs of AAS, including but not limited to:

- Provide leadership to AAS
- Attend meetings at Mountain Empire as requested by Mountain Empire and stay in direct contact with Mountain Empire to assist Mountain Empire in its oversight duties
- Supervise all employees of AAS
- Prepare proposals of policies for adoption by the Board of Directors
- Advise the Board of Directors and make written recommendations to the Board on programs, policies, budget and other school matters
- Communicate with AAS' legal counsel
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and the complaint procedure when necessary
- Provide all legally required financial reports to Mountain Empire
- Compliance with the budget as approved by the Board in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles
- Provide assistance and coordination in the implementation of curriculum
- Oversee parent/scholar/teacher relations
- Oversee scholar disciplinary matters
- Attend all AAS Board of Director meetings and attend as necessary Mountain Empire Board meetings
- Foster an amicable relationship between Mountain Empire and AAS and facilitate a sharing of resources between both entities
- Present Annual Report to the AAS Board and, upon review by the AAS Board, present report to the Mountain Empire Board and the Mountain Empire Superintendent

The above duties may be delegated or contracted as approved by the Board to another employee of AAS or to an appropriate third party provider as allowed by applicable law.

## Parent Involvement

AAS will ensure parents have an opportunity to participate in governance of AAS through involvement in the Parent Advisory Council. The Parent Advisory Council shall be composed of parents who have children currently enrolled in AAS. The Parent Advisory Council shall meet regularly and shall make recommendations to the Board of Directors for all aspects of operation. The President & CEO or their designee shall attend all Parent Advisory Council meetings and shall report Parent Advisory Council recommendations to the Board of Directors. *See Appendix I for Board-approved committee charge.*

## V. Employee Qualifications

*Governing Law: The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school. EC Section 47605.6(b)(5)(F)*

Chief Executive Officer:

The primary responsibility of the President & CEO is to carry out the strategic plans and policies as established by the Board of Directors, including the academic performance and operations of the existing school and fiscal oversight. The President & CEO reports to the Board of Directors. The President & CEO is responsible for developing the vision, adhering to policies, achieving goals, and assisting the Board of Directors in fulfilling its responsibilities.

Teacher:

A teacher is responsible for providing an educational atmosphere where students have the opportunity to fulfill their potential for intellectual, emotional, physical, and psychological growth. This person is responsible for organizing and implementing an instructional program that will result in students achieving academic success and are in alignment with the policies, goals, objectives and philosophies of Academy of Arts & Sciences, the County Board of Education and the State of California.

### Teacher Recruitment

AAS will develop a comprehensive teacher recruitment policy to attract highly-qualified, credentialed teachers. AAS' recruitment strategies for employing highly qualified teachers include using established teacher recruiting services, such as Ed Join, and other generally acceptable strategies.

Candidates are evaluated using these standards:

- Committed to scholars and learning
- Experience teaching in an online environment
- Highly Qualified under applicable requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act
- Technologically knowledgeable
- Skilled in management of learning
- Reflective in their practice
- Community-oriented

Required educational level / credentialing:

AAS meets applicable Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESEA") requirements with respect to teachers and paraprofessional employees, and teachers meet the requirements for employment as per California EC section 47605(1).

All AAS teachers are "highly qualified" as that term is defined under the ESEA and further defined by California state regulations implementing the ESEA requirements, as applicable to

charter schools. AAS, as an Independent Study program, is an “alternative instructional” setting (EC Section 44865(k)) and therefore can have its teachers demonstrate ESEA subject matter competency for ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies through the VPSS (California Subject Matter Verification Process). In accordance with EC Section 47605(l), teachers of core, college preparatory subjects (i.e., English/language arts, math, science, history/social science) hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in a noncharter public school would be required to hold. These teachers are responsible for overseeing the scholars’ academic progress and for monitoring grading and matriculation decisions. As specified in EC Section 47605(l), AAS has flexibility regarding the qualifications needed for teachers in non-core, non-college preparatory subject areas. As required by the ESEA, AAS notifies parents/guardians of students at the school if any teachers teaching a core subject will not meet these requirements.

A teacher is responsible for providing an educational atmosphere where students have the opportunity to fulfill their potential for intellectual, emotional, physical, and psychological growth. This person is responsible for organizing and implementing an instructional program that will result in students achieving academic success and are in alignment with the policies, goals, objectives and philosophies of AAS, the San Diego County Board of Education and the State of California.



## VI. Health and Safety Procedures

*Governing Law: The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237. EC Section 47605.6(b)(5)(G)*

In order to provide safety for all scholars and staff, AAS has adopted full health and safety policies and procedures and risk management policies at its Central Office site in consultation with its insurance carriers and risk management experts. These policies are incorporated into the AAS Injury and Illness Prevention Program (I.I.P.P.) and are reviewed on an ongoing basis by the Director of Operation and President & CEO.

All non-certificated and certificated staff receive online compliance training annually on Child Abuse Reporting, Blood Borne Pathogens and Anti-Harassment through The Law Room. AAS shall ensure that staff is trained annually on its health and safety policies. A complete copy of the school's health and safety policies and procedures are available upon request.

The following is a summary of the health and safety policies of AAS: Procedures for Background Checks Employees and contractors of AAS are required to submit to a criminal background check and to furnish a criminal record summary as required by EC Sections 44237 and 45125.1. Applicants for employment must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Director of Operations of AAS shall monitor compliance with this policy. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

### Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters

All non-certificated and certificated staff are mandated child abuse reporters and shall follow all applicable reporting laws. Tuberculosis Testing Faculty and staff shall be tested for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment and working with scholars as required by EC Section 49406.

### Drug Free/Alcohol Free/Smoke Free Environment

Any facilities operated by AAS shall function as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.

## VII. Racial and Ethnic Balance

*Governing Law: The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted. EC Section 47605.6(b)(5)(H)*

AAS is public charter school, open to all children with in grades TK-12<sup>th</sup> that live within the authoring or neighboring county, regardless of race or ethnicity. Achieving racial and ethnic balance is important in public education. To achieve this, AAS will market and recruit in areas that can assist in achieving a racially and ethnically diverse scholar body. Participating in community events and activities is useful in reaching multiple cultures and ethnicities. We will continue to work towards creating community partnerships that will allow us to reach scholars in the areas that we serve. Additionally, our enrollment team consists of a bilingual staff which allows for the answering of questions from perspective families in multiple languages.

## VIII. Admission Requirements

*Governing Law: Admissions requirements, if applicable. EC Section 47605(b) (5) (H)*

Academy of Arts & Sciences will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations, and will not charge tuition nor discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). AAS shall comply with all applicable legally required minimum and maximum age requirements. To enroll in AAS, a scholar must be five (5) on or before September 1st in order to be admitted to Transitional kindergarten at any time during the school year. A scholar's age cannot exceed 19 years; if a scholar was not attending school at any time after his/her 19th birthday he/she may not enroll with AA. Scholars must have a completed AAS Enrollment Packet, Master Agreement and applicable compliance documents. Scholars must reside within a county, or contiguous county, AAS serves and provide proof of residency. If while attending AAS, a scholar moves, a new proof of residency must be submitted within 10 school days (EC 51748). Independent Study shall not be available to TK-12 scholars whose residence status is based solely on their parent/guardian/caregiver's employment within district boundaries. EC 48204(f) 51747.3 (c) Scholars may only be enrolled in AAS and not concurrently enrolled in another school, public or private (unless prior permission is given for a community college). All Scholars and learning coaches must complete a virtual learning course prior to beginning their academic courses. At any time throughout the enrollment period with AAS parents/guardians may be requested to provide updated information. All scholars must have an email address to enroll with AAS. Upon enrollment the school will provide each scholar in grades 6-12 with a school email address.

The Enrollment Packet includes the following forms:

- Completion of a Scholar Registration Form
- Proof of Immunization
- Proof of Residency
- Home Language Survey
- Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form
- Proof of minimum and maximum age requirements, e.g. birth certificate
- Execution of a Master Agreement as required by Ed Code
- Completion of Technology Use and Parent Permission Forms

All scholars who wish to attend AAS shall be admitted, subject only to capacity. Admission to AAS shall not be determined by the place of residence of the scholar or his or her parent in the State, except as provided in EC Section 47605(d) (2).

While we do not currently have an enrollment cap, we do have a procedure in place if a cap were ever imposed. If the number of scholars who wish to attend the school exceeds the school's capacity, admission, except for existing scholars of AAS, shall be determined by a public random drawing. In the case of a public random drawing, the following will be given preference for admission to the school:

1. Existing scholars enrolled in AAS

2. Siblings of existing scholars enrolled in AAS
3. Children of school staff
4. Scholars who reside in the Mountain Empire District

All applications drawn after reaching capacity will be placed on a wait-list, in order in which they are drawn.

#### Non-Discrimination

*Governing Law: The means by which the school will achieve racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted. EC Section 47605 (b)(5)(G)*

AAS will implement a scholar recruiting strategy that includes but is not necessarily limited to the following elements or strategies to ensure a racial and ethnic balance among scholars that is reflective of the territorial jurisdiction of Mountain Empire Elementary School District:

- An enrollment process that is scheduled and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based recruiting and application process.
- The development of promotional and informational material that appeals to all of the various racial and ethnic groups represented in Mountain Empire.
- Scholar recruitment efforts may include, but are not limited to, direct mail, print advertising, and informational meetings directed toward targeted scholar populations to recruit scholars from the various racial and ethnic groups represented in Mountain Empire.

## IX. Financials

### Financial Reporting

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

The AAS Board of Directors has a Finance Committee to oversee selection of an independent auditor and the completion of an annual audit of the school's financial affairs. Each audit is made by a certified public accountant selected from the directory of certified public accountants designated by the State Controller's Office as active to conduct audits of local education agencies.

Currently, we use Christy White and Associates as our auditors. This auditor has experience with audits of educational entities and education finance, preferably with charter schools. The scope of the audit includes all applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller's K-12 Audit Guide and any other elements as required by applicable law. The audit is conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to the school and verifies the accuracy of the school's financial statements, average daily attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and review the school's internal controls.

By December 15th of each year, the annual audit will be completed and a copy of the auditor's findings is forwarded to the San Diego County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and the California Department of Education.

The Finance Committee reviews any audit exceptions or deficiencies with senior staff and reports to the AAS Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board reports to the County regarding how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the County, along with an anticipated timeframe for the same. In addition, the County's primary factor when deciding whether an audit exception or deficiency is resolved is whether the auditor considers the item resolved; however, the County may reserve the right to only consider an item resolved once the County believes the item is resolved to its satisfaction. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel ("EAAP") in accordance with applicable law. The independent financial audit of AAS is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.

### *Budget and Financial Reporting Schedule*

AAS will annually prepare and submit to the County the following reports in accordance with EC Section 47604.33, and shall provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the County:

- On or before July 1st, a preliminary budget.
- On or before July 1st, an annual update (LCAP) required pursuant to EC Section 47606.5
- On or before December 15th, an interim financial report which reflects changes to the final budget through October 31st. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the AAS' annual, independent

financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the State Controller, California Department of Education, and County Superintendent of Schools.

- On or before March 15th, a second interim financial report which reflects changes to the final budget through January 31<sup>st</sup>
- On or before September 15th, a final unaudited financial report for the prior full fiscal year.

## Insurance

AAS shall acquire and finance general liability, workers' compensation, and other necessary insurance of the types and in the amounts required for an enterprise of similar purpose and circumstance using recommendations from Mountain Empire insurers. The Mountain Empire Board of Trustees shall be named as an additional insured on all policies of AAS and to the extent AAS is named as an additional insured pursuant to a contract between AAS and a service provider, AAS shall ensure the extension of the "additionally insured" to Mountain Empire as well. Prior to opening, AAS shall provide evidence of the above insurance coverage to Mountain Empire. AAS shall hold harmless, defend, and indemnify Mountain Empire, its Board members, officers and employees, from and against any and all actions, claims, damages, demands, and liabilities, regardless of forum, which relate to or arise out of any acts, debts, obligations, errors, or omissions of the School, its Board members, officers, employees, vendors, affiliates or agents. To the extent AAS is indemnified in a contract between a service provider and AAS, AAS shall ensure the extension of the indemnification to Mountain Empire as well.

## Transportation

No transportation to and from school will be provided for scholars by AAS except as required by law for scholars with disabilities.

## Independent Fiscal Audit

*Governing Law: The manner in which an annual, independent financial audit shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority—EC Section 47605 (b)(5)(I)*

An annual independent fiscal audit of the books and records of AAS will be conducted as required under Charter School Act, section 47605(b)(5)(I) and 47605(m). The books and records of AAS will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controllers TK-12 Audit Guide.

The auditor will have, at a minimum, a CPA and educational institution audit experience and shall be included by the State Controller's Office on its published list as an educational audit provider. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars.

It is anticipated that the annual audit will be completed within four months of the close of the fiscal year and that a copy of the auditor's findings will be forwarded to Mountain Empire, the

County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The CEO, along with the audit committee, will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to AAS Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board will submit a report to Mountain Empire describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of Mountain Empire along with an anticipated timeline for the same.

The independent fiscal audit of AAS is public record to be provided to the public upon request.

## X. Suspension and Expulsion Policies

*Governing Law: The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled. EC Section 47605.6(b)(5)(J)*

The Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all scholars at AAS. When the policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a scholar from AAS. This policy shall serve as AAS' policy and procedures for scholar suspension and expulsion, and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comply with legal requirements and as required by Mountain Empire, approved as material revisions to the charter in accordance with EC Section 47607. Although AAS scholars work from home, this policy is written broadly to apply as needed to AAS scholars at school-sponsored activities or at school facilities.

Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all scholars. This policy and its procedures will clearly describe discipline expectations.

Discipline includes but is not limited to advising and counseling scholars. Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any scholar. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a scholar. For purposes of the policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, scholars, staff or other persons or otherwise comply with legal requirements regarding restraints.

AAS administration shall ensure that scholars and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures.

Suspended or expelled scholars shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A scholar identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom AAS has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEIA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education scholars except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. AAS will follow all applicable federal and state laws, including the IDEIA, Section 504, implementing regulations and implementing state law and regulations, when imposing any form of discipline on a scholar identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom AAS has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such scholars.

### A. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Scholars

A scholar may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to

- 1) a school activity, 2) school attendance, and/or 3) an AAS sponsored event.

A. Pupil may be suspended or expelled for acts that are enumerated below and related to school activity or attendance that occur at any time, including, but not limited to, and of the following:

- a) while on school grounds



- b) while going to or coming from school
- c) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity

B. Enumerated Offenses

(a) Scholars shall be immediately suspended pursuant to this policy and shall be recommended for expulsion if the President & CEO or designee determines that a scholar has committed any of the following acts at school or at a school activity off campus grounds:

1. If it is determined by the Board that a scholar has brought a fire arm or destructive device, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, on to an AAS property/AAS sponsored event or to have possessed a firearm or dangerous device on campus, the scholar shall be expelled for one year, pursuant to the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994.

(b) Scholars may be suspended or expelled for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
2. Willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
3. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the scholars had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the President & CEO's concurrence.
4. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
5. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
6. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
7. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
8. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
9. Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
10. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.

11. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5.
12. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
13. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
14. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
15. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal code 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code 243.4.
16. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a scholar who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that scholar from being a witness and/or retaliating against that scholar for being a witness.
17. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
18. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
19. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school district property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
20. Committed sexual harassment, as defined in EC Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or

pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.

21. Caused, attempted to cause, threaten to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the EC. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
22. Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a scholar or group of scholars to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading scholar rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
23. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivisions (f) and (g) of Section 32261 of the EC, directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel.

Alternatives to suspension or expulsion will first be attempted with scholars who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from assigned school activities.

#### C. Suspension Procedure

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

1. Conference- Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the President & CEO or designee with the scholar and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the scholar to the President & CEO. The conference may be omitted if the President & CEO or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of scholars or school personnel. If a scholar is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and scholar shall be notified of the scholar's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense.

This conference shall be held within two school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization.

No penalties may be imposed on a pupil for failure of the pupil's parent or guardian to attend a conference with school officials. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil's parent or guardian at the conference.

2. Notice to Parents/Guardians - At the time of suspension, the President & CEO or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a scholar is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following

suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the scholar. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the scholar may return to school. If school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Placement/Expulsion- Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension.

Upon a recommendation of Placement/Expulsion by the President & CEO or designee, the pupil and the pupil's guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the President & CEO or designee upon either of the following determinations: 1) the pupil's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

#### B. Authority to Expel

A scholar may be expelled either by the Governing Board following a hearing before it or by the Governing Board upon the recommendation of an Administrative Panel to be assigned by the Governing Board as needed. The Administrative Panel should consist of at least three members who are certificated and neither a teacher of the pupil or a Board member of the Governing Board. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any scholar found to have committed an expellable offense.

#### E. Expulsion Procedures

Scholars recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the scholar should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the President & CEO or designee determines that the pupil has committed an expellable offense.

In the event an administrative panel hears the case, it will make a recommendation to the Governing Board for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session unless the pupil makes a written request for a public hearing three (3) days prior to the hearing.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the scholar and the scholar's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil. The notice shall include:

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing
2. A statement of specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based
3. A copy of AAS' disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation

4. Notification of the scholar's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the scholar's status at the school to any other school district or school to which the scholar seeks enrollment
5. The opportunity for the scholar or the scholar's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor
6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the scholar's behalf including witnesses

F. Special procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses

AAS may, upon finding a good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations which shall be examined only by the Governing Board, administrative panel, or the hearing officer. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.

1. The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days' notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
2. AAS must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the person or panel conducting the hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.
4. The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.
5. The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.
6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The person conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.
7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, AAS must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to AAS. The person

presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.

8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.

9. Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in the public at the request of the pupil being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are not alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing by means of closed-circuit television.

10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstances can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

#### G. Record of Hearing

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

#### H. Presentation of Evidence

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the scholar committed an expellable offense.

Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay and sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Governing Board, Panel or designee determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

If, due to a written request by the accused pupil, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in EC Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact and a written recommendation to the Governing Board who will make a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the Governing Board shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing. The decision of the Governing Board is final.

If the expulsion hearing panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the pupil shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

## XI. Retirement Benefits

*Governing Law: The manner by which staff members of AASs will be covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System, the Public Employees' Retirement System, or federal social security. EC Section 47605.6(b)(5)(K).*

AAS's certificated staff participate in the California's State Teacher Retirement System (STRS), and non-certificated staff participate in the Social Security and/or the school sponsored 403(b) plan, a U.S. tax-advantaged retirement savings plan available for public education organizations according to the employee's position and eligibility. AAS participates in Social Security as required by law. At the County's request, AAS pays the County a reasonable percentage for the provision of such services, as per the MOU. The Board of Directors has adopted the attached teacher/administrator salary schedule (see Appendix). The Board of Directors revises the salary schedule from time to time. AAS does not use a formal salary schedule. AAS recognizes that many of our teachers and staff members might also be considering positions in surrounding school districts. AAS will therefore meet or exceed salary levels offered by these surrounding districts. Additional salary increases and bonus compensation are provided to employees. AAS is prepared to attract the most desirable candidates to the school by offering some individuals higher compensation than they would receive from local districts, if this is necessary to attract them to our program. The CEO, with approval from the AAS Board, has the authority to determine salaries, benefit levels and work year characteristics (e.g., length of year and day, vacation policies, etc.) for all employees.

*See Appendix J for Staff Handbook*



## XII. Attendance Alternatives

*Governing Law: The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the county who choose not to attend AAS. EC Section 47605.6(b)(5)(O)*

Enrollment and attendance at AAS is by choice and voluntary. Scholars that reside in Mountain Empire are able to attend the neighborhood public school, or choose to attend other charter schools.

### XIII. Return Rights

*Governing Law: A description of the rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school. EC Section 47605 (b)(5)(M)*

Persons employed by AAS are not considered employees of Mountain Empire for any purpose whatsoever. Employees of Mountain Empire who resign from Mountain Empire employment to work at AAS and who later wish to return to Mountain Empire shall be treated the same as any other former Mountain Empire employee seeking reemployment. AAS shall not have any authority to confer any rights to return on Mountain Empire employees. Sick or vacation leave or years of service credit at the Mountain Empire or any other school district will not be transferred to AAS. Employment by AAS provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of AAS.

## XIV. Dispute Resolution

*Governing Law: The procedures to be followed by AAS and the county board of education to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter. EC Section 47605.6(b)(5)(L)*

1. AAS and Mountain Empire will be encouraged to attempt to resolve disputes between them amicably and reasonably without resorting to formal procedures.
2. In the event of a dispute between AAS and Mountain Empire, the employees of AAS agree to first frame the issue in written format and refer the issue to the Superintendent of Mountain Empire and President & CEO of AAS. In the event that the Mountain Empire Board of Trustees believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter in accordance with EC 47607, the matter shall be handled in accordance with EC Section 47607 and shall not be subject to this dispute resolution process.
3. The AAS President & CEO and Mountain Empire Superintendent shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute, not later than five (5) business days from receipt of the statement.
4. If this meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent and the President & CEO shall meet to jointly identify and agree upon a neutral third party mediator. The format of the mediation session shall be developed jointly by the Superintendent and President & CEO. Mediation shall be held within sixty (60) business days of receipt of the dispute statement. The costs of the mediator shall be split between Mountain Empire and AAS. All timelines and procedures in this dispute resolution procedure may be revised if mutually agreed upon by Mountain Empire and AAS. The President & CEO and Superintendent may assign a designee(s) for participation herein.
5. If the dispute remains unresolved after mediation, both AAS and Mountain Empire shall be deemed to have exhausted their administrative remedies, thus, allowing either party to pursue any further available legal remedy under the law.

## XV. Closing Procedures

*Governing Law: A description of the procedures to be used if AAS closes, The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the School, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records. EC Section 47605(b) (5) (P)*

Closure of AAS will be documented by official action of the Board of Directors. The action will identify the reason for closure. The official action will also identify an entity and person or persons responsible for closure-related activities.

The Board of Directors will promptly notify parents and scholars of AAS, Mountain Empire, the San Diego County Office of Education, the School's SELPA, the retirement systems in which AAS' employees participate (e.g., State Teachers' Retirement System, and federal social security), and the California Department of Education of the closure as well as the effective date of the closure. This notice will also include the name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure; the pupils' school districts of residence; and the manner in which parents/guardians may obtain copies of pupil records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements.

The Board will ensure that the notification to the parents and scholars of AAS of the closure provides information to assist parents and scholars in locating suitable alternative programs. This notice will be provided promptly following the Board's decision to close AAS.

The Board will also develop a list of pupils in each grade level and the classes they have completed, together with information on the pupils' districts of residence, which they will provide to the entity responsible for closure-related activities.

As applicable, the School will provide parents, scholars and Mountain Empire with copies of all appropriate scholar records and will otherwise assist scholars in transferring to their next school. All transfers of scholar records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") 20 U.S.C. § 1232g. AAS will ask Mountain Empire to store original records of AAS scholars. All records of AAS shall be transferred to Mountain Empire upon school closure. If Mountain Empire will not or cannot store the records, AAS shall work with the San Diego County Office of Education to determine a suitable alternative location for storage.

All state assessment results, special education records, and personnel records will be transferred to and maintained by the entity responsible for closure-related activities in accordance with applicable law.

As soon as reasonably practical, AAS will prepare final financial records. AAS will also have an independent audit completed within six months after closure. AAS will pay for the final audit. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by AAS and will be provided to Mountain Empire promptly upon its completion. The final audit will include an accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value, an accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable and any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid staff compensation, and an assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to AAS.

AAS will complete and file any annual reports required pursuant to EC section 47604.33.

On closure of AAS, all assets of AAS, including but not limited to all leaseholds, personal property, intellectual property and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by scholars attending AAS, remain the sole property of the non-profit public benefit corporation and shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation upon the dissolution of the non-profit public benefit corporation to another California public educational entity which has established its tax exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public educational purpose. Any assets acquired from Mountain Empire or Mountain Empire property will be promptly returned upon school closure to the Mountain Empire. The distribution shall include return of any grant funds and restricted categorical funds to their source in accordance with the terms of the grant or state and federal law, as appropriate, which may include submission of final expenditure reports for entitlement grants and the filing of any required Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as well as the return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any conditions established when the donation of such materials or property was accepted.

On closure, AAS shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of the school.

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

As specified by the Budget in the appendices, AAS will utilize the reserve fund to undertake any expenses associated with the closure procedures identified above.

## Appendices

Appendix A 2016-2017 School Calendar

Appendix B Master Agreement

Appendix C Scholar Handbook

Appendix D Counseling Handbook

Appendix E Board of Directors

Appendix F Articles of Incorporation

Appendix G Board By-Laws

Appendix H Board Policies

Appendix I Parent Involvement Policy

Appendix J Staff Handbook

Appendix K Middle School Course Catalogs

Appendix L High School Course Catalogs