

Renaissance Leadership Academy

“Learn, Live, Lead”

A Community-Centered, Alternative Education

For the Leaders of a Better Tomorrow

1. DESCRIPTION OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

A. Targeted School Population

Renaissance Leadership Academy serves students in grades Kindergarten through eighth in a small, alternative, learning community. Renaissance Leadership Academy is a school of choice, open to any student in the state of California. Our recruitment base will primarily be the city of Alameda. However, we welcome students from nearby Oakland and/or other nearby cities as well. It is not likely that we will have students from outside Alameda County.

There are no more than twenty (20) students in each class for grades Kindergarten through three, and twenty-five (25) students in grades four through eight. We anticipate growing over several years to serve an estimated 205 students.

Our students’ needs may include financial, academic/learning, and/or social challenges. A percentage of our students will be from low-income families and qualify for Title I. Our students represent the cultural makeup of Alameda. A percentage of our students will have learning needs ranging from delayed development, dyslexia, ADD, ADHD, verbal/non-verbal processing, and other diagnosable concerns.

Additionally, some of our students may demonstrate social or behavioral issues that are related to, or products of, learning needs not being met. Other social needs, such as how to make friends, picking up on social cues and self-control, will be addressed directly through school-wide curriculum as well as supported with counseling staff and volunteers.

Each student will have an individualized Student Success Plan that identifies the student’s strengths and challenges in all areas of student development including targets for growth. With the individualized SSP, the school faculty, staff and family can carefully benchmark and monitor each and every student’s progress both academically and socially.

B. Mission and Vision, an Educated Person in the 21st Century, How Learning Best Occurs, and Goals

I. Mission

The Renaissance Leadership Academy community educates students who embrace learning, hunger for academic scholarship, practice wholesome living, and serve the complex needs of a diverse society.

II. Vision

The Renaissance Leadership Academy students of today are the leaders of tomorrow.

III. Core Values

Balance, Empathy, Accommodation, and Respect (BEAR).

IV. Philosophy

Renaissance Leadership Academy is committed to the total education of each child: intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and aesthetic in an environment that is child-centered, proactive, safe and structured at all times.

The Renaissance Leadership Academy community believes that its program engages elementary students with a wide variety of backgrounds and learning styles. Renaissance Leadership Academy's stakeholders work collaboratively for the best interest of each student and support each student's pursuit of his/her personal best in all areas of student development.

Through our community-wide commitment to grow in knowledge and understanding, demonstrate respect for self and others, and provide care and service to others and the environment, Renaissance Leadership Academy prepares our students as the leaders of a better tomorrow.

V. What it Means to be an Educated Person in the 21st Century

An educated person in the 21st century must possess academic skills, technological expertise, and social awareness to be successful. An educated person in the 21st century must be self-directed and self-motivated. S/he is

an effective communicator in speaking, writing, and active listening. S/he recognizes that learning is a lifelong endeavor in an ever-evolving world, and that each day provides new opportunities to grow in knowledge and understanding. S/he understands the importance of collaboration and the power of synergy to solve many of the concerns, issues and problems s/he faces.

An educated person in the 21st century possesses the strength of character to lead by example. S/he protects the earth's resources, recognizes the needs of others, and is active in serving those in need. S/he acts courageously on his/her beliefs. S/he respects the dignity of self and others, accepts responsibility and accountability for his/her own actions, empathizes and demonstrates compassion for others.

VI. Description of How Learning Best Occurs

Renaissance Leadership Academy recognizes that all children possess diverse gifts and challenges; therefore, we provide all children with a rigorous educational experience that guides and supports their academic, social, physical, and emotional development to their personal best.

Each student at Renaissance Leadership Academy has an individualized Student Success Plan (SSP) that identifies the student's strengths and challenges in all areas of student development, with targets for growth. The SSP serves as a tool so that the school faculty, staff and family can monitor and modify each and every student's progress, academically and socially, to ensure that every student reaches his/her personal best.

Renaissance Leadership Academy has created an instructional design that supports all students in their academic, social, physical, and emotional development. Our design is centered on the student and his/her phase of personal development.

Renaissance Leadership Academy's approach to learning bears resemblance to the pedagogy of Dewey, Bloom, Piaget, Bruner, Vigotsky and others, which stresses the following key components:

- **Learning requires engagement.** Our students are actively engaged in their educational process. Through individual and group inquiries and explorations, the student develops his/her critical thinking skills to construct and integrate new concepts into his/her existing schema of knowledge. (Lindquist, 1989; Gardner, 1993)

- **Learning is developmental.** Our teachers learn from their students' questions/responses how to structure their instruction to meet their students' needs. This may involve scaffolding within the classroom to allowing students to move, without compromise, to a classroom that is more developmentally appropriate for core subjects - language arts/reading and/or mathematics.
- **Learning is real.** Our teachers create learning experiences that engage our students in authentic, dynamic and real experiences as they explore new concepts.
- **Learning is rigorous.** Our high standards coupled with our teaching strategies provide our students with a learning experience that is rigorous. Our students are challenged and at the same time nurtured in their learning experience.
- **Learning occurs everywhere.** Our classrooms are only one setting to engage students in learning. Our gardens and playground provide other areas to actively engage students in the learning process.
- **Learning involves the 'big idea.'** Every class is involved in 'big idea' projects that meet the state content standards. All projects are interdisciplinary in nature, allowing students to work collectively and individually in a variety of class settings, with multiple teachers. (Piaget)
- **Learning involves reflection.** To construct knowledge into their schema, students must be given time to reflect on their work. (Dewey) Journal writing, class discussions, and group discussions are integral parts of each student's daily learning experience, allowing students to express concepts in their own words, give examples and explore further application.
- **Learning involves articulation.** Language is an integral part of the learning process. (Vigotsky)
 - Through collaborative dialogue, students demonstrate/refine their understanding of concepts.
 - Through journal entries, our students articulate concepts in meaningful, understandable terms.
 - Through oral presentations, our students share with their classmates their newfound knowledge on broad topics.
- **Learning is recursive.** Students require multiple opportunities over multiple years to develop and build on

concepts. Prior knowledge serves as the foundation to broaden the breadth and depth upon which new knowledge is built. (Bruner and Piaget)

- Additionally, our instructional design includes application, social and character development as our students learn to:
 - Apply themselves and produce their best effort in everything that they do.
 - Develop the appropriate social skills to interact positively and proactively with all members of our community.
 - Develop the appropriate character traits to act courageously on their beliefs, and make ethical and moral choices.
- Finally, Renaissance Leadership Academy recognizes that our instructional design will not succeed without the active participation of all stakeholders. Our design invites and encourages our parent community to be active partners in our educational endeavors through volunteerism at the school during the school day and helping to create and sustain a positive study environment at home. This instructional design will allow us to provide our students with the best possible learning experience and our students will rise to their highest potential.

VII. Renaissance Leadership Academy Student Goals and Expectations

To prepare our students to be educated people in the 21st century, Renaissance Leadership Academy has established the following goals and expectations of all students:

- 1. Academic Preparedness**
- 2. Leadership**
- 3. Character Development**
- 4. Wholesome Life Choices**

1. Academic Preparedness

Through academic preparedness, our students will:

- Commit themselves to be active participants in their educational experience.
- Think critically, take risks, and solve problems.

- Accept that mistakes are part of the learning process.
- Develop self-motivation, self-direction, and autonomy to guide them in their journey as lifelong learners.
- Reflect on their work as an opportunity to grow.
- Demonstrate time management and organizational skills.
- Read with comprehension.
- Write proficiently for a variety of purposes.
- Communicate effectively as skillful speakers and active listeners using a variety of tools.
- Use technology to enhance communication and research.
- Master basic computational facts, utilize mathematical procedures, and understand mathematical concepts.
- Possess an understanding of basic scientific laws and theories, and use the scientific method.
- Participate in the workings of a democratic society.
- Embrace their heritage.
- Understand local, state, and U.S. history and geography.
- Participate actively in the fine arts: music and visual.

2. Leadership

Through leadership, our students will:

- Lead by example.
- Protect the earth's resources.
- Recognize the needs of others.
- Serve those in need through school-wide service projects.
- Support the Student Leadership Council through service and active participation.
- Coach and mentor others to enhance one another's learning experience.
- Share their ideas/concerns for the betterment of the community.
- Serve others as well as self.

3. Character Development

Through character development, our students will:

- Act courageously on their beliefs.
- Produce honest effort in all that they do.
- Actively participate in their community.
- Make ethical choices.
- Accept responsibility and accountability for their own actions—socially and academically.
- Respect the dignity of self and others.
- Empathize with others.
- Demonstrate compassion for others.

4. Wholesome Life Choices

Through wholesome life choices, our students will:

- Develop wise decision-making skills to apply to everything they do.
- Nourish the body with wholesome foods.
- Exercise for a healthy body.
- Create balance among academic, physical, and social activities.

C. Instructional Design

Renaissance Leadership Academy, with the cooperation of our parent community, is committed to the development of a strong educational foundation. Our curriculum is aligned with the state standards in each discipline. Additionally, we have specific school benchmarks that all students are expected to meet each year.

We teach for understanding. Assessment drives our curriculum to evaluate student progress so that modifications can be made to student SSPs on a timely basis. This allows us to ensure that our students receive the support that they need to reach their personal best.

I. Mathematics

Renaissance Leadership Academy's Mathematics program is designed to stimulate discovery in all students. Our learning environment is challenging

and nurturing. Our goal is to prepare our students to be major contributors to the complex society in which they live. To achieve this goal, we present our students with multiple, varied opportunities to experience Mathematics as a discrete discipline and across the curriculum.

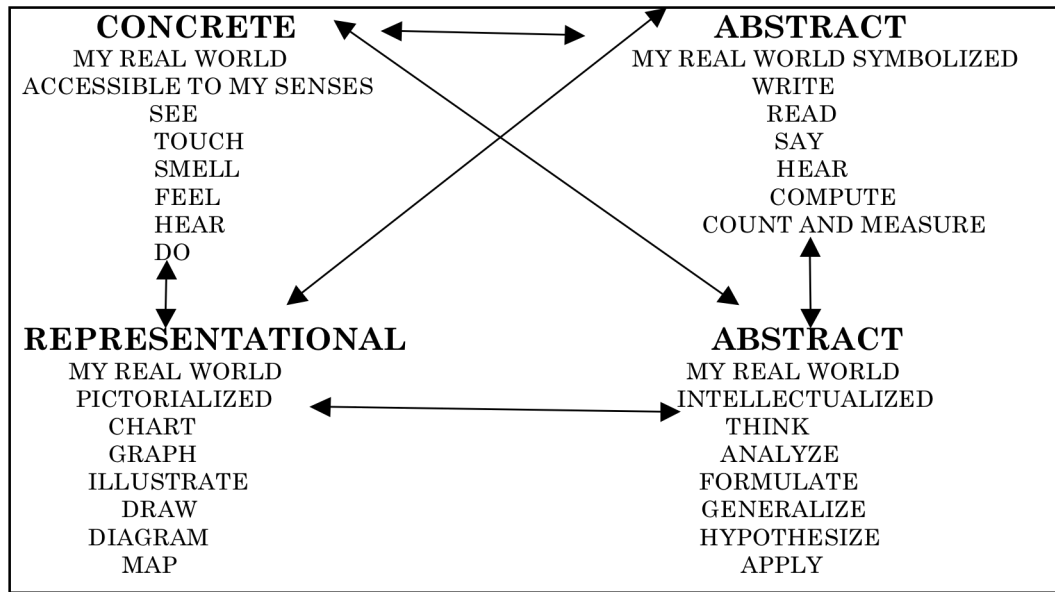
To ensure that we accommodate the various learning styles of our students (Gardner), we provide our students with whole class instruction, partner and group work, as well as using a variety of manipulatives to explore concepts. Our program is built upon the five strands of the California Mathematics Content Standards: Number Sense; Algebra and Functions; Measurement and Geometry; Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability; and Mathematical Reasoning. Our program guides our students in the development of strong Mathematical Reasoning skills that are fundamental in developing the basic skills and conceptual understanding for a solid mathematical foundation. (California Department of Education)

The cornerstone of our Mathematics program is: exploration, discovery, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. (Bloom). We allow extra time in each mathematics period for exploration and discovery. Reflection is an important part of our program. Our students utilize journal writing, class discussions, and group discussions to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts. They also draw models in their journals to reinforce their comprehension. Our program allows our students to understand the why and when to use a procedure, as well as how to use a procedure. Additionally, our students create hypotheses for extensions of concepts and test their hypotheses. Our students use manipulatives, including, but not limited to: unifix cubes, tangrams, geoboards, attribute blocks, base ten blocks, pattern blocks, geometric solids, protractors, compasses, and calculators to explore concepts.

Mathematics is the science of patterns (Thiessen). Through our incorporation of Project AIMS (Activities to Integrate Mathematics and Science) and the AIMS Five-Star Model into our Mathematics program across the grades, our students will not only experience the connection of Mathematics, Science, Language Arts, Social Sciences in the real world and in the classroom, but they will be taught in the four-environment setting in which teaching/learning occur. The model begins with the CONCRETE REAL WORLD. This is where our students will use their five senses for exploration and discovery. Our students will then move to application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, as they use the appropriate symbols to represent their findings. The cycle ends in REAL WORLD as students hypothesize about the general application of their findings, test their hypothesis in the REAL WORLD to ensure its validity, and make

generalizations about their hypothesis.

Teaching and Learning Environment



In kindergarten through third grade, we lay the foundation of recognizing mathematical patterns in each strand. We place strong emphasis on developing the grade-appropriate mastery of arithmetic operations, which will serve as the foundation for further exploration, development, and application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in grades four through eight.

In geometry, we use the van Hiele model of geometric thought of visualization, analysis, and informal deductions to prepare our students for the rigors of formal deduction. Once again, we use explorations, discovery, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to allow our students to build on their understanding of geometric concepts (informally and formally) and apply their preexisting knowledge to new more complex situations.

Applications of newfound knowledge are important for our students to understand how mathematics works in our world. We use projects to achieve this goal. For example, a fifth grade project may be the building and flying of paper airplanes. Through this project, our students have an opportunity to measure angles, draw their model, measure distance, hypothesize about which wing pattern or airplane size will make their plane fly farther, etc. Our students will write a report on their project, with the experience culminating with the actual flight of their airplanes.

Communication is integral to mathematical development throughout the

grades. For this reason, the journal is used extensively in our Mathematics program to allow our students to formalize their understanding of concepts. We firmly believe that if a student cannot explain the concept clearly and concisely, the student does not understand the concept. Additionally, group discussions and partner sharing play a key role in concept development. In another opportunity to further develop their communication skills, students in grades six through eight will create a monthly mathematics newspaper, Math Matter, for the school community, including parents. A representative from each class will contribute an article about important topics that have been covered during the month. Students will also contribute math games and puzzles to each edition.

Mathematics is a dynamic discipline at Renaissance Leadership Academy. It creates an opportunity for students to see its connectedness across the disciplines and in the real world. Our goal is not just to create competent mathematicians, but students who will be the innovators and inventors of tomorrow.

II. English/Language Arts

The Renaissance Leadership Academy's Language Arts program is designed to provide students with the foundational skills necessary to be leaders in the twenty-first century. Our learning environment is challenging and nurturing, and systematically sequenced for student success. The goal is to prepare our students to be major contributors to the complex society in which they live. To achieve this goal, we present our students with opportunities to experience reading and writing as discrete disciplines by which they gain the tools necessary for optimal learning across the curriculum.

As stated in the Reading Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools: *"Although all the skills within the strands are important, no greater responsibility exists for educators of students in kindergarten through grade three than to ensure that each student in their care leaves grade three able to read fluently, effortlessly, independently, and enthusiastically."*

Each grade level at Renaissance Leadership Academy, one through eight, devotes a double class period daily to Reading and Writing instruction and the practice of skills. These class periods focus teachers on strategies and instruction to assist students in mastering the skills for English Language Arts specifically in the four strands outlined in the state's content standards: Reading (including word analysis, fluency, systematic vocabulary development and comprehension), Writing (including the alphabetic principle, strategies and applications, and the writing process), Written and Oral English Language Conventions (including punctuation, grammar,

spelling), and Listening and Speaking (including following one to four step instructions, summarizing, and paraphrasing). In order for our students to fully engage in their learning and reach their own personal best, they must have the necessary tools to do so. The English Language Arts curriculum will provide them with these tools.

The English Language Arts curriculum is utilized and emphasized throughout and across the other disciplines, which constitute the remaining instructional school day. By continuing to keep students accountable for and aware of the reading and writing skills used to study other subjects, *“we help them make connections between the standards and between skills and strategies.”* Renaissance Leadership Academy upholds the state’s curriculum goal for language arts instruction: *“(T)o ensure that component parts (skills, strategies, structures) are identified; are carefully sequenced according to their complexity and used in more advanced writing applications; are developed to mastery; and are progressively and purposefully connected and then incorporated with authentic learning exercises, including those presented in the study of history-social science, mathematics, and science,”* (RLA Framework for California).

“Students who acquire necessary (language arts) skills and knowledge early have a high probability of continued academic success. But students who fail to learn the fundamental skills and knowledge of the alphabetic writing system by the third grade will find themselves in relentless pursuit of the standards and will need extra support to arrive at grade level,” (RLA Framework for California). The same thing can be said for reading skills: unless students master certain skills early, they will “only have a minimal chance of achieving literary competence without specific interventions,” (Felton and Pepper 1995; Juel 1988; Torgensen 2001). Therefore, we systematically connect the reading and writing skills at each grade level with authentic application in other subject areas to promote retention and generalization of learning.

For the primary grades, the focus and emphasis in English Language Arts is on decoding and word recognition, reading and writing fluency, vocabulary development, comprehension with some analysis of text, and composing correct sentences in order to communicate ideas. The strands for grades four through eight are the same as Kindergarten through grade three except for emphasis. For example, in grades four through six students will continue to improve word analysis, fluency and systematic vocabulary development that were begun in the primary grades. Students in grades four through eight will also begin to use the research process and a variety of learning resources and technologies as tools in preparing various types of reports and presentations.

Students in primary grades are learning to read and learning to write whereas in grades four through eight students read and write to learn

(National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators, 1997). Both the quantity and quality of their reading and writing will increase with each grade level and across the curriculum. Students in first grade learn how to write in complete sentences; students in grade two learn how to write a complete paragraph; and students in grades three and four write paragraphs with topic sentences, supporting sentences, and conclusion. Again, their laboratory for learning these Language Arts skills and strategies occurs during their double class period of Reading and Writing each day: they then apply their skills and knowledge accordingly in the other subject areas. For example in Mathematics, students in first grade will write a one or two sentence caption for an illustration they have made in studying number sense; students in grade two will write a paragraph to describe a chart identifying different units of measure; third grade students will write a paragraph response to a word problem involving addition and subtraction; and fourth grade students will write a paragraph to explain the differences and similarities between rectangles and squares.

Similarly, students in grades four through eight will read primary and secondary resources for Social Studies projects or reports, involving not only the comprehension and application of information but also the analysis, synthesis and evaluation of that information as appropriate for their grade level and the assignment directives. Fourth graders may write (and present) a short skit to illustrate the California Gold Rush; fifth graders may write their own Class Constitution based on studying the Constitution of the United States; sixth graders may write an essay to compare and contrast the civilizations of ancient Rome and ancient Greece; seventh graders will study and impersonate a significant figure from world history while answering questions from classmates on an interview panel; and eighth graders will compose an essay to defend their choice of the most significant speech made during the 20th century.

Due to the fundamental skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening presented in the English Language Arts curriculum, our students will learn and practice these skills for mastery as they use them continuously across the curriculum. Our goal is not only to create students who will be literate contributors to society but will also be the leaders for a better tomorrow.

III. History/Social Science

Renaissance Leadership Academy's History/Social Science program is also designed to stimulate discovery in all students. Our goal is to prepare our students to be historically, ethically, culturally, geographically, economically, and socio-politically literate citizens in the complex society in which they live. To achieve this goal, we present our students with varied opportunities to explore and experience History/Social Science.

Our program in Kindergarten through third grade is built upon the California History/Social Science Content Areas: Learning and Working Now and Long Ago, A Child's Place in Time and Space, People Who Make a Difference, and Continuity and Change. Each year's curriculum is built on our students' prior knowledge and experiences and builds on their spatial, time and causal understandings.

Renaissance Leadership Academy places strong emphasis on its students' social development in the primary grades. Students learn how to work together in the school community: as a whole, in the classroom, and in a variety of group settings. As our students progress through the grades, they further develop social skills and a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others in the community.

Additionally, in the primary grades our curriculum focuses on understanding now and long ago. Students begin with very basic opportunities to further develop their understanding of times past. They grow to understand cultural diversity now and long ago. Basic understanding progresses to the next level through a historical study of cultural diversity leading up to the present, including the influence and contributions of diverse, ordinary and extraordinary people.

Literature is used extensively throughout our primary History/Social Science curriculum. Teachers read to students. Students read and discuss biographies and autobiographies of famous and ordinary people, myths, fairy tales and historical tales with emphasis on cause and effect, bravery, leadership, and life in times past.

From fourth through eighth grades, our students further refine social skills, as they become more active members of our school community. They begin to utilize their understanding of community and social responsibility to participate on and more actively support our various councils. They grow in an understanding of the democratic process as they run for specific offices and execute the duties and responsibilities of each office. Experience on councils will translate into a better appreciation and understanding of democratic values and good citizenship.

Our fourth grade students' understanding of history is enhanced through the exploration of California history from Pre-Columbian times to the present. They will investigate the geography of California- coastline, farmland, desert, and mountains- and the role California's geography has played on its settlement and agricultural development. They will explore California's

statehood and the westward migration to California. They will find out, in multiple contexts, how the diversity of California's population has influenced its history, and will continue to influence its future.

Our fifth and eighth grade students will study United States history and geography. The focus of the fifth grade curriculum will be the making of a new nation; while the focus of the eighth grade will be the growth and conflict our nation has experienced from colonial days to the present. Our curricular goal will be duly focused on an understanding of historically significant events, and an "essential understanding of the nation's identity and constitutional heritage; the civic values that form the foundation of the nation's constitutional order and promote cohesion between all groups in a pluralistic society; and the rights and responsibilities of all citizens." (California History-Social Science Framework)

Our sixth and seventh grade students will investigate the ancient world, including: the development of societies, the beginnings of civilization in the Near East and Africa, the foundation of Western ideas, the early civilizations of India and China, and the rise and fall of Rome. They also will examine the growth of Islam, China, Japan, and the Americas. Seventh graders will explore major periods in European history from the Renaissance, through the Reformation and the Scientific Revolution, to its modern age of exploration and enlightenment.

Literature, art, music, science, and mathematics will be integrated extensively throughout our History-Social Science program for our students in grades four through eight. Our students will read from a variety of biographical sources, both primary and secondary, to further their understanding of the role of key individuals in the development of various societies and cultures. They will read a variety of historical novels to gain information about life experiences during various periods of history, in various circumstances, and in various cultures. They will experience major examples of music and art of various periods and their influence to the development of cultures. Finally, they will explore the contributions of various mathematicians and scientists throughout the ages. Our goal is that our students will recognize that these courses of study are only the beginning of a lifelong journey in understanding the culture of all nations, including our own.

Our fourth through eighth grade students will have multiple opportunities to use their burgeoning communication skills to articulate their understanding of history and social science. They will use primary and secondary sources to collectively and individually write and present notable works that focus on

significant people and events that have affected major developments in Western and non-Western civilizations. Through their presentations, they will demonstrate their understanding of chronology, cause and effect (bias, prejudice, etc.), continuity and change, comparative forms of government, economic implications on societies; as well as, diversity.

Great mathematicians and scientists have declared that they *have stood on the shoulders of giants* to achieve their accomplishments. Through our History-Social Science curriculum, our students grow in their understanding of the giants, both defined leaders and ordinary people, who through strength of character and power of conviction have made a difference.

IV. Science

Renaissance Leadership Academy's Science program is also designed to stimulate discovery in all students. Our goal is to prepare our students to make meaningful contributions to the complex society in which they live. To achieve this goal, we present our students with varied opportunities to experience Science.

Our program in grades Kindergarten through five is built upon the four strands of the California Science Content Standards: Physical Science, Life Sciences, Earth Sciences, and Investigation and Experimentation. Grade six focuses on Earth Science, grade seven focuses on Life Science, and grade eight focuses on Physical Science.

The foundation of our Science program is built on: exploration, discovery, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. (Bloom). We follow the Department of Education's mandate that, "Scientific progress is made by asking meaningful questions and conducting careful investigations. As a basis for understanding this concept and addressing the content in the other three strands, students should develop their own questions and perform investigations." (California Science Content Standards)

Our Science curriculum in grades Kindergarten through five focuses on a limited number of topics in each strand. This allows students a more in-depth study of the topics. Topics include, but are not limited to, plants, magnetism, ecosystems, weather, water cycle, motion, energy, rocks and minerals.

Sixth through eighth grades revisit the strands studied in the lower grades in more depth. Students are able to build on their prior knowledge base as well as dispel some of the their previously held assumptions with new information

as they clarify their ever-evolving model of the world. Topics in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades include: topography, tectonics, heat, ecology, resources, cell function, structure and functions of systems in the human body, simple machines, motion and force. Students in the seventh grade will create a simple machine to help them perform a daily task. They will present their machines to the entire school community and explain how the machines help them save time and energy.

All students in sixth through eighth grades will participate in our annual Science Fair in January. They will select a topic with the guidance of their science teacher. Students will then make a characterization from experience and observation: develop a hypothesis to explain their characterization; predict the possible outcome of their hypothesis; perform experiments to confirm or negate their hypothesis; and publish their findings. Students will meet regularly with their Science teacher to discuss their progress and any problems they may be encountering.

Our students' projects will be displayed for the entire community to view. Experts from various fields of Science will be invited to judge the Science Fair entries. Students will make oral presentations to these experts to defend their projects. Students who finish first, second or third in each area of Science may be invited to enter their projects in the area Science Fairs.

Finally, our school organic and outreach gardens will be the showcase of our outdoor hands-on Earth Science labs for students across the grades. Students will be involved in all aspects of the garden. They have the opportunity to select what is to be planted. They will be involved in all phases of growing crops of lettuce, beans, peppers, etc., and in harvesting the crops. They will make observations and recordings throughout the growth cycle of each vegetable. The organic garden produce will serve as part of our healthy foods program, and the outreach garden produce will be distributed to those in need.

FOSS Kits, developed by the Lawrence Hall of Science, will be used extensively throughout our Science program to provide our students with hands-on experiences in Life Science, Physical Science, and Earth Science, as well as to stimulate our students' thinking processes through observing, organizing, comparing, relating, inferring, and communicating. We will begin our acquisition of these kits for the Kindergarten Science program, and add additional kits, by grade, as funding becomes available.

V. Physical Education/Health/Nutrition

The physical well being of our students, currently and in the future, depends on direct instruction and opportunities for them to practice and apply knowledge and skills related to a healthy lifestyle, including physical activity and nutrition. Our P.E. curriculum goes hand in hand with the character and social development of our students as we follow the state's goals of Movement Skills & Knowledge, Self Image & Personal Development, and Social Development. The P.E. curriculum is essential in supporting our students' complete education.

All grade levels have P.E. classes in addition to Health & Nutrition units that are part of our Kindergarten through eighth grade Science Curriculum. The Renaissance Gardens serve the dual purpose of (1) Providing a living-lab experience, and (2) Reinforcing the nutrition and health curriculum by providing fruits and vegetables.

VI. Fine Arts

The value of the fine arts curriculum in the elementary school environment supports students' multiple intelligences, various learning styles, and a well-rounded education of the whole child. As part of our curricular efforts, our fine arts program includes visual and musical arts as independent disciplines, in addition to, theater and performance arts as part of the core curricular areas. The visual and musical arts will also be incorporated into the core classes.

We have incorporated the California Fine Arts Framework's five strands into our music, visual and theater arts curriculum: Artistic Perception; Creative Expression; Historical and Cultural Context; Aesthetic Valuing; and Connections, Relationships, and Applications. Our teachers will address these specific strands and strategies across the curriculum to enhance and support student learning and by creating opportunities for students to express themselves.

VII. Character & Social Development

The elementary school education requires that students learn how to behave and interact appropriately with others while learning the essential academic skills and knowledge. Beginning in Kindergarten and continuing through grade eight, we instruct and guide our students to demonstrate our school's core values of balance, empathy, accommodation and respect in all they do.

Age-appropriate social development benchmarks and goals are part of each student's Student Success Plan, in addition to his/her specific academic goals. For example, our primary grade students practice sharing and taking turns, how to manage personal space and be aware of others, and work in cooperative learning groups. Each successive grade level builds on the skills and practices of the prior grade while increasing skills and opportunities to grow.

To develop leadership skills, practice patience and empathy, older students will have opportunities to become reading/writing buddies for early primary grade students. Additionally, seventh and eighth graders are escorts for kindergarteners and first graders. They stand with them at morning assembly and escort/sit with them at school functions. Junior high students will serve as active leaders in the school community through Student Leadership Council and Outreach Council offices. They will be accountable to all members of the Renaissance Leadership Academy community, which includes teachers, students, and parents.

"It is of little consequence what one thinks or says: the only matter of consequence is what one does." Our Renaissance Leadership Academy Code of Conduct, recited daily at morning assembly by all members of the school community, reminds us of who we are and how we act. There will be public acknowledgment for all students who exhibit our core values consistently.

D. Instructional Setting

Many instructional activities will take place in a traditional classroom setting, including the flexibility to move from grade to grade for more age-appropriate instruction. Additionally, our students will receive instruction in our gardens, on our schoolyard, and on field trips. Our teachers use every opportunity to instill in students the understanding that, at all times, multiple settings abound with opportunities for discovery and growth.

E. Instructional Strategies and Approaches, and Process for Developing Curriculum

I. Instructional Strategies and Approaches

The following instructional strategies will be utilized throughout the school to enable our students to master the content standards in the four core curriculum areas and in all other curricular areas:

1. Project-Based Learning

Renaissance Leadership Academy teachers identify the overarching, unifying ideas that bind the course of study for the year for each discipline.

Assignments are tailored to these overarching ideas. They are cross-curricular in nature, involve the multiple disciplines in their scope, and cater to students' different learning styles.

For each project, students are provided with a broad outline, as well as the scoring rubric. Through conferring with their teachers, students will then decide what, when, and how they are going to fulfill the project requirements. Students have periodic status meetings with their teachers throughout completion of the projects.

2. School-Wide Theme for the Year

In the fourth quarter of each year, the seventh grade class, as a rite of passage into the eighth grade, selects the school-wide theme for the upcoming year. This theme must be broad based. It must have application to the learning experience of the entire school community. Examples of possible themes are the Earth, life in 17th century America, the animal kingdom, and peace.

Each class, from kindergarten through eighth grades, selects monthly activities to explore the theme. These activities cater to the different learning styles of the students, are cross-curricular, and involve the specialty teachers in their scope. At our first assembly of the month, each class presents its monthly findings on the theme in the form of skits, poems, pictures, or other forms of presentation.

3. Group Setting

We believe that learning evolves through discovery. We also believe in synergy - that is: working together creates an opportunity for greater results than working alone. From kindergarten on, our students learn the value of synergy. They grow to understand the value of collective energy, and to understand that together they have the ability to produce a project that will exceed that which they can do on their own. For this reason, a part of each and every lesson is dedicated to group activity.

4. Flexible Group and Setting

Students are evaluated in core curricular areas. Those who over or

underperform their classmates will move from their class to the developmentally appropriate class for instruction in that curricular area.

5. Differentiated Instruction

Renaissance students possess a wide variety of backgrounds and learning styles. Teachers design differentiated curriculum and lessons utilizing a wide variety of teaching strategies that address the multiple intelligences, strengths and challenges of each student.

6. Reading/Writing Buddies

Renaissance Leadership Academy third grade students read to our Kindergarten students. This is an opportunity for our third grade students to demonstrate leadership and improve their reading fluency, while instilling in our Kindergarten students a love of reading.

Renaissance Leadership Academy fourth grade students are scribes for our first grade students. This is an opportunity for our fourth grade students to demonstrate leadership and improve their writing fluency, while helping our first graders develop their story-telling capabilities: beginning, middle, and end.

7. Technology

The Renaissance Leadership Academy recognizes technology as a powerful tool to enhance and support learning. All student reports are created on-site, with the assistance of their teachers and/or technology coordinator. Part of each weekly lesson is dedicated to review and reinforcement of key skills in math, reading, and spelling. Additionally, all teachers use technology to improve instruction and increase student understanding.

8. Library

Our librarian works with each class weekly. Part of each lesson is dedicated to storytelling in the primary grades (K-2), finding age-appropriate reading material for DEAR, and finding printed material for research reports.

Our librarian works collaboratively with each classroom teacher to develop long-term goals based on classroom goals and to coordinate the use of our library to conduct research. Additionally, (s)he provides the classroom teacher and the administration with a weekly update about progress being made toward the defined grade-level goals.

9. Community Outreach

Students in the fourth through eighth grades are eligible to serve on the Outreach Council. At the beginning of each year this group works with the entire community to identify the target group for our yearly outreach efforts. Students will identify what constitutes a group that we want to serve, how we will serve this target group, plan activities for each month to support our efforts to serve our defined target group, define the type of support that we will provide, contact the agencies involved with our target group and plan the yearlong schedule of events that we will participate in to serve our target group.

10. Preparation For Life In a Complex and Diverse Society

Renaissance Leadership Academy recognizes the leadership capabilities of all students. Both the Outreach Council and the Leadership Council nurture and develop leadership skills in our students. Students practice giving to others and demonstrate social awareness through the work of these Councils. Students also may be involved in writing campaigns to the media and/or legislative bodies to voice their present concerns or issues that may affect them now or in their future.

Our students experience the complex and diverse society in which they live through project-based learning activities and heterogeneous classes. Our Student Goals focus on knowledge, understanding, leadership, and service. Our School Core Values emphasize balance, empathy, accommodation and respect. These goals and core values address each individual's social responsibility in addition to intellectual development.

11. Development Of Interpersonal And Other Skills Valued In The Workplace

Renaissance Leadership Academy is founded on the principle that our students are leaders. Throughout their educational experience, they have multiple opportunities to demonstrate and further develop their leadership skills by working on group projects in the classroom setting, serving on the various councils, and serving others in the broader community.

12. Character Development And Ethical Judgment

The Renaissance Leadership Academy Mission, Vision, and Philosophy focus on the importance and the development of character and ethical judgment. All decisions at Renaissance Leadership Academy, by all members of the school community, reflect the School's core values: balance, empathy, accommodation, and respect. All students from kindergarten through eighth grade understand that they are leaders, that they are responsible for their actions, and that their actions affect the entire community.

13. Teacher Collaboration

Our faculty and staff work collaboratively as a professional learning community. Professional teams and partnerships are established by grade level and common goals or projects (i.e. curriculum development, clubs, etc.). Professional teams engage in peer observation and evaluation to promote cooperation and shared leadership. Formal mentoring of new teachers led by veterans will take place to build collegial relationship and support.

Early dismissal Wednesdays and half day schedules on the first Wednesday of the month provide teachers with opportunities to meet collaboratively. *In the future, we foresee scheduling student enrichment activities during a mid-day block, allowing teachers the opportunity to meet, collaborate and support one another in their teaching efforts. To accommodate this model, the length of the school day has been extended beyond the state-mandated minutes.*

14. Staff Development

Renaissance Leadership Academy firmly believes that learning, for everyone, is a lifelong endeavor. We also believe that our students will grow as we grow. To that end, we provide our teachers with content-rich professional development opportunities that support and further our highest academic standards. There are significant, on-going, on-site learning opportunities for all faculty and staff. Educational research is widely discussed and shared for practical application and current insights. Articles, journals and books are featured throughout the year during staff development meetings. Workshops and presentations, by school staff as well as outside contractors or organizations, offer new information on best practices for all faculty and staff.

II. Process by which Curriculum, Material, and Instructional Activities Are Selected

The Renaissance Leadership Academy recognizes that textbooks and resource materials are educational tools. An overabundance of these tools in the hands of the uninspired and uncommitted is not a guaranteed formula for student success. However, the right textbooks and resource materials in the hands of inspired, committed visionaries is a guaranteed formula for success. The teaching staff and administration work together in curriculum review and development as well as selecting materials and activities to best support the curriculum. Renaissance Leadership Academy has developed a cyclical schedule for the ongoing evaluation of our curriculum.

Beginning in year three, each year, one curricular area is scheduled for review, in preparation for the adoption of new textbooks. All teachers, specialized in the identified content area, are required to participate weekly in the yearlong process, under the direction of the department chair. During each year's evaluation, teachers identify the key strengths and challenges of the current program in the particular content area. Multiple sources of data are used to determine how our curriculum, as it is being taught, meets the state standards, Renaissance grade level benchmarks, and class performance.

Once the strengths and challenges have been clearly identified, teachers analyze textbooks to identify which publisher offers the most resources to improve and sustain our high standards. The department chair presents the committee's findings to the entire faculty, staff, administration, and School Board member responsible for instructional improvement. The department chair provides a cost analysis associated with the adoption of the new textbook selection, including supplementary resources needed for a seamless transition. After receiving faculty approval, the department chair presents the proposed materials and cost analysis to the School Board for final approval.

F. Identification and Support for Students not Meeting Pupil Outcomes

The Renaissance Leadership Academy community is collectively responsible for the success of each student. Support does not begin and end with the classroom teacher. All teachers work in tandem with support staff and volunteers to contribute to each child's development. All teachers at Renaissance Leadership Academy have the highest expectations for all students. As a result, all teachers develop the highest academic standards. These standards are used to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment to create a learning environment that is challenging and nurturing, while

ensuring that students meet the standards. Our goal is not only to provide the appropriate support and intervention, but also to guide all of our students beyond the threshold of acceptable performance to heights that exceed these thresholds.

In addition to developmentally appropriate grouping, the following services and practices provide for differing student academic needs within the school's goals, priorities, and curriculum:

- **Student Success Plan:** Every student at Renaissance Leadership Academy has a Student Success Plan. This plan is initially created at the time of admission. SSPs have target goals that are monitored on a monthly basis for the first quarter of placement, and adjusted as needed. Subsequently, target goals are reviewed mid-quarter and quarterly, with necessary adjustments made. Throughout the year, each teacher maintains a portfolio on each student that includes the SSP, any modifications, standardized test scores, teacher-made test scores, and artifacts that indicate progress in all subject areas. At year-end, these portfolios are forwarded to the teacher for the next year along with a summative review of each student's progress. These reviews provide the basis for formulating the SSP for the upcoming year.
- **Universal Access:** Universal Access is embedded to every class' daily schedule. During this time, the teacher, classroom assistant and parent volunteers meet with individual students and/or with small groups to help students improve on skills in reading and mathematics.
- **Mentors/Tutors:** Cross-age tutoring is available daily during lunch and after school. Additionally, each student serves as a peer coach for another student in his/her class. Students are carefully paired to ensure that they may each learn something from the other student.
- **Computer-Assisted Instruction:** Students in grades two through eight, who need extra assistance to improve their STAR scores in reading, language arts, and/or math, will use software such as Success Maker. Students who are below the fiftieth percentile are recommended to participate in Computer-Assisted Instruction. Students participate weekly, in Fall and Spring sessions. Classroom teachers monitor all sessions and provide

the individual teachers and parents with updates on student progress.

G. Plan to Meet the Needs of Students with Disabilities, English Learners, Students Achieving Above and Below Grade Expectations

I. Plan for Students with Disabilities

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a new and highly effective approach to help identify students at risk for learning disabilities and to work with all students to ensure their educational success. Renaissance Leadership Academy applies the same principles that RTI recommends as part of our regular curricular program for all students. This involves our individual Student Success Plan (SSP) highlighting the specific levels of achievement and benchmarks for improvement in curricular areas and social behavior and development. Every accommodation possible within the Renaissance Leadership Academy classrooms will be recommended and implemented in order to meet students' learning needs at the earliest and most immediate level. For students who transfer into Renaissance Leadership Academy with an IEP, or those students for whom our assessments and interventions indicate that they are in need of further evaluation, we will rely on the expertise of AUSD to identify specific modifications to ensure a free and appropriate education to all students with exceptional needs.

II. Plan for English Learners

Renaissance Leadership Academy will provide the best possible instruction for the ELL student. At the beginning of each school year, Renaissance Leadership Academy will provide all parents with a Home Language Survey to establish if English is their first language. Within thirty days of the start of the school year, CELDT assessments will be administered to those students for whom English is their second language. Our teachers will possess the specialized certificate or other appropriate training and are trained to use appropriate differentiated instruction to help students reach English language proficiency. We will use the SDAIE method (sheltered instruction) to guide our ELL students in acquisition and development of English language and fluency.

III. Plan for Pupils Who Are Academically Low/High Achieving

The Renaissance Leadership Academy community views each and every student as a leader. Accordingly, all teachers have the highest expectations for each student, and are collectively responsible for the success of each student.

We also recognize that each student has his/her personal strengths and challenges. Support for low/high achievers does not begin and end with the classroom teacher. All teachers work in tandem with support staff and volunteers to contribute to each child's development. As a result, we judiciously monitor each student's SSP so that we may align curriculum, instruction, and assessment to move all students successfully towards achieving the established highest standards in a learning environment that is challenging and nurturing. Our goal is not only to provide the appropriate support and intervention for our low achievers, but also to guide all students beyond the threshold of acceptable performance to heights that exceed these thresholds.

Opportunities for acceleration are embedded within our curriculum for our gifted and talented students. Projects and prompts within their own class allow them to delve deeper or further analyze concepts. Our goal is to provide gifted students with opportunities to examine the breadth of topics and develop their own guidelines for further exploration.

H. Special Education Plan

Renaissance Leadership Academy and AUSD pledge to work in cooperation with all local education agencies (LEAs) and special education local plan areas (SELPAs) to ensure a free and appropriate education to all students with exceptional needs.

Pursuant to Educational Code Section 47641((b)), during its first year of operations, the Renaissance Leadership Academy intends to function as a "public school of the local education agency that granted the charter" for purposes of providing special education and related services. During each school year during which the school operates as an arm of the district for special education purposes, the school shall pay to the district an amount of funding per unit of average daily attendance equal to the district's direct costs of providing special education and related services minus the district's direct revenues from all special education and transportation funding sources. In return, the district shall provide the school with all funding

and/or services reasonably necessary to ensure that all students with exceptional needs who attend the school are provided a free and appropriate education.

Renaissance Leadership Academy and AUSD shall annually and in good faith negotiate and enter into a written agreement to more clearly specify the desired mix of special education funding and services to be provided.

Renaissance Leadership Academy shall enjoy reasonable flexibility to decide whether to receive services, funding, or some combination of both pursuant to Education Code Section 47646(b). Renaissance Leadership Academy and AUSD shall work in good faith to document the specific terms of this relationship in an annual contract or memorandum of understanding.

After its first year of operations, Renaissance Leadership Academy shall have the right to pursue independent local education agency (LEA) and/or special education local plan area (SELPA) status pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a) and AUSD shall not hinder or otherwise impede the efforts of Renaissance Leadership Academy to do so. In the event that Renaissance Leadership Academy opts not to establish independent LEA and/or SELPA status, Renaissance Leadership Academy shall remain an arm of AUSD for special education purposes as required by Education Code Section 47641(b), and shall continue to receive funding and services pursuant to the terms of this section and an annual agreement.

2. MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES

At Renaissance Leadership Academy, assessment drives curriculum. This is a cyclical process. All subjects are taught using an accountability matrix that asks:

- What is the desired outcome?
- What evidence will be used to demonstrate that the outcome has been met?
- What activities and experiences will be used as evidence to ensure that the outcome has been met?

This approach to teaching helps both teachers and students understand sustainable knowledge. Teachers use quizzes and tests to evaluate student progress. Teachers use prompts and projects to allow students to delve more deeply into overarching ideas and create sustainable understanding experiences. These projects are scored using a predefined rubric. Students

meet with their teachers on a regular basis to help them stay on task and perform at their highest level.

Renaissance Leadership Academy is committed to growth and excellence. We use multiple instruments to monitor and improve our curriculum to enhance our students' learning experiences.

Each student has an SSP, which is monitored and adjusted mid-quarter and quarterly to address the student's strengths and challenges. The entire community uses our Fall STAR program results to improve our curriculum. (We firmly believe that to optimize on the results of the STAR (CST/CAT-6) tests, the testing must be at the beginning of the year in mathematics and reading/language arts, with the complete STAR program in the Spring. The results of the Fall testing are analyzed and plans are made to improve student scores throughout the remainder of the year. The Spring results reflect how well we have done to meet our goals and to revise our strategies for the upcoming school year.)

School-wide challenge areas are reviewed. All areas that are at or below the 50 percentile on the STAR program are evaluated to assess how we will adapt our curriculum to improve in these areas. The tools that we use in our curriculum from textbooks to resources are carefully scrutinized for optimization. Results of the STAR program are used in evaluating new textbooks for adoption by the school staff and the Board of Directors. Parents are informed of our progress through our Parent Newsletter and Board Meetings, and parental concerns are considered in the Board's final decision for adoption of new textbooks and resources.

Individual courses of action are developed for students performing at or below the fiftieth percentile. SSPs are adjusted to reflect the identified challenges and a prescription for remediation: after-school Computer-Assisted Instruction, Universal Access, Tutoring /Mentoring, and/or skill building during computer time.

We administer periodic teacher-designed tests to evaluate student growth against Renaissance Leadership Academy benchmarks. Students who perform below the eightieth percentile receive extra instruction during Universal Access. Additionally, they may receive extra help during computer time to improve their skills, and/or work with tutors/mentors.

Renaissance Leadership Academy Academic Outcome Goals

Goal	Curriculum	Assessments
Proficiency English/Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading grade-appropriate passages across the disciplines. • Writing for a variety of purposes: creative and expository. • Multi-disciplinary reports and projects. • Cooperative group work. • Daily writing exercises and journal writing. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homework, 2. Journals, 3. Projects- written and oral presentations that are graded according to a school-developed rubric, 4. Portfolios of cumulative student work graded according to a school-developed rubric, 5. Teacher-made quizzes and tests, 6. California state testing (CST, CAT-6, CELDT).
Proficiency in Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade-appropriate concepts, procedures, and skills. • Multi-disciplinary reports and projects. • Cooperative group work. • Daily journal writing • Field trips (e.g. Aims, etc.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homework, 2. Journals, 3. Projects- written and oral presentations that are graded according to a school-developed rubric, 4. Portfolios of cumulative student work graded according to a school-developed rubric, 5. Teacher-made quizzes and tests, 6. California state testing (CST, CAT-6).
Proficiency in Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade-appropriate texts and resources. • Multi-disciplinary reports and projects. • Cooperative group work. • Outdoor Science Lab. • Science Fair projects. • Lab work. • Field trips (e.g. Lawrence Hall of Science, etc.) • Daily journal writing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homework, 2. Journals, 3. Projects- written and oral presentations that are graded according to a school-developed rubric, 4. Portfolios of cumulative student work graded according to a school-developed rubric, 5. Teacher-made quizzes and tests, 6. California state testing (CST, CAT-6).

Goal	Curriculum	Assessments
Proficiency in history/social science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade-appropriate texts and resources. • Multi-disciplinary reports and projects. • Cooperative group work. • Field trips (e.g. Sacramento, Fort Ross, etc.). • Daily journal writing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homework, 2. Journals, 3. Projects- written and oral presentations that are graded according to a school-developed rubric, 4. Portfolios of cumulative student work graded according to a school-developed rubric, 5. Teacher-made quizzes and tests, 6. California state testing (CST, CAT-6).
Proficiency in application, social and character development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual work. • Cooperative group work. • Projects and reports. • Code of Conduct. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homework, 2. Journals, 3. Projects- written and oral presentations that are graded according to a school-developed rubric, 4. Portfolios of cumulative student work graded according to a school-developed rubric, 5. Teacher-made quizzes and tests, 6. Student daily interactions with all members of the school community. 7. Teacher-made observations and narratives on application, social and character development on SSP, Progress Reports, and Report Cards.
Community Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Council. • Outreach Council. • Outreach Garden. • Community service projects. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Service as officers and representatives to the Student Council. 2. Participation in Student Council sponsored activities and services. 3. Outreach Council's identification and implementation of outreach plan. 4. School community participation in outreach efforts. 5. Teacher-made observations and narratives. 6. Recipients' benefit of school-wide efforts.

3. METHODS for MEASURING PUPIL PROGRESS

Renaissance Leadership Academy recognizes that the STAR program is one of multiple instruments used to measure student success. Using both the California curriculum standards and our internal academic benchmarks, we are committed to meeting or exceeding our growth targets on the Academic Performance Index (API) each year. Additionally, we are committed to meeting or exceeding the annual indicators of school-wide academic progress as measured by Annual Yearly Progress (AYP).

A. Internal Method(s) of Assessment

Renaissance Leadership Academy uses multiple instruments of assessment in our continuing effort to ensure that our students are receiving the best possible educational experience.

I. Student Success Plan

From the time of admission, each student has a Student Success Plan, identifying his/her strengths and challenges, and establishing a course of action for individual growth and success that is monitored on both a mid-quarter and quarterly basis for timely modifications.

II. Teacher-Made Tests

At the end of chapters and units, teachers in grades two through eight administer teacher-made written tests. In grades Kindergarten and one, teachers monitor student work products and conference with each student on a pre-defined schedule to ensure mastery of key concepts in mathematics, reading and language arts. All students are expected to perform at the eightieth percentile or higher. Students who consistently perform below the eightieth percentile receive extra help during Universal Access, computer time, and tutoring/mentoring.

III. Portfolios

Personal progress is not only measured against the State standards and school benchmarks, but also against the students' SSP. All students have portfolios containing artifacts and scores to reflect their progress in key areas.

IV. Running Records

Teachers use authentic assessment of children's reading skills in context. Students will read passages containing different levels of difficulty, based on grade, and will be scored on their degree of fluency and accuracy, as well as, ability to respond appropriately to comprehension questions.

V. Journals

Student will use journals as an instrument of reflection on specific topics covered in class.

VI. Projects

Students complete multi-disciplinary projects that demonstrate their understanding of the overarching ideas surrounding specific topics. These projects may be written and/or oral and may include the use of various media.

VII. Teacher Observations & Documentation

Teachers will document student work and work habits in the classroom, noting each student's strengths and weaknesses. His/her SSP will be modified accordingly to ensure that each student exceeds Renaissance Leadership Academy's benchmarks. Documentation will include teacher observations of students' attitudes and social behaviors.

VIII. Progress Reports

In the middle of each report card period, teachers will create a mid-quarter progress report, which will be sent to each parent/guardian. This is an opportunity to celebrate student successes and to address those areas that need greater attention.

IX. Report Cards, Including Narrative

Documentation of student progress towards mastery of skills will be included in report cards, which will be distributed at regularly scheduled intervals during the school year. All report cards will include a narrative component that elaborates on the skills targeted in the reporting period and the student's progress relative to these skills. Fourth through eighth grade report cards include letter grades, in addition to the narrative component. Grades will be based on teacher-prepared assessment instruments, projects, and portfolios.

X. Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences will be held throughout the year at regularly scheduled times. At these conferences, the parents will share their expectations and views of the educational program, the teacher will report the child's academic accomplishments and social achievements, and parents may make recommendations for modifications to the child's SSP. Fourth through eighth grade students will be involved in these conferences to reinforce their participation in the learning process, with student-led conferences held occasionally.

B. STAR Program

On a twice-yearly basis, in the Fall and Spring, students in grades two through eight participate in the STAR program. Each November, as the results become available from the Fall program, the administration presents the results to the Board of Directors for its recommendations for improvement of Renaissance Leadership Academy's educational programs to improve the performance of all students. Additionally, the administration meets with each teacher to discuss plans to address individual needs. These plans are meaningful, measurable, time-bound, and become part of each student's SSP. Students who are performing at or below the fiftieth percentile on the STAR testing are identified to participate in the after-school Computer-Assisted Instruction program. Follow-up meetings between the teachers and the administration are held quarterly thereafter to monitor student progress. As the results of the Spring program are made available, further modifications, as needed, are made to ensure student success. Additionally, school-wide deficiencies are reviewed to evaluate how to improve our curriculum. The faculty and administration make recommendations to the Board of Directors for its creation and approval of a Student Performance Improvement Plan.

C. Collecting, Analyzing, and Reporting Data on Pupil Achievement

Renaissance Leadership Academy's goal is to be completely transparent in communicating the results of assessment data. We maintain that all stakeholders must be informed so that they may participate in solutions. The entire community is involved in our improvement plan to provide each student with the best possible educational experience.

With that in mind, the administration presents the STAR results to our Board of Directors and parent community in the Fall, as they become available. Additionally, the administration will present each class' performance, benchmarking its performance against prior performances and expected performance, with our plans for improvement as needed. The Board will then make its recommendation that will be incorporated into our overall improvement plan. The improvement plan additionally will be communicated to our parents in the Parent Newsletter. Finally, we communicate individual results, for both the Spring and Fall, to each parent in the Fall.

D. Academic Mastery

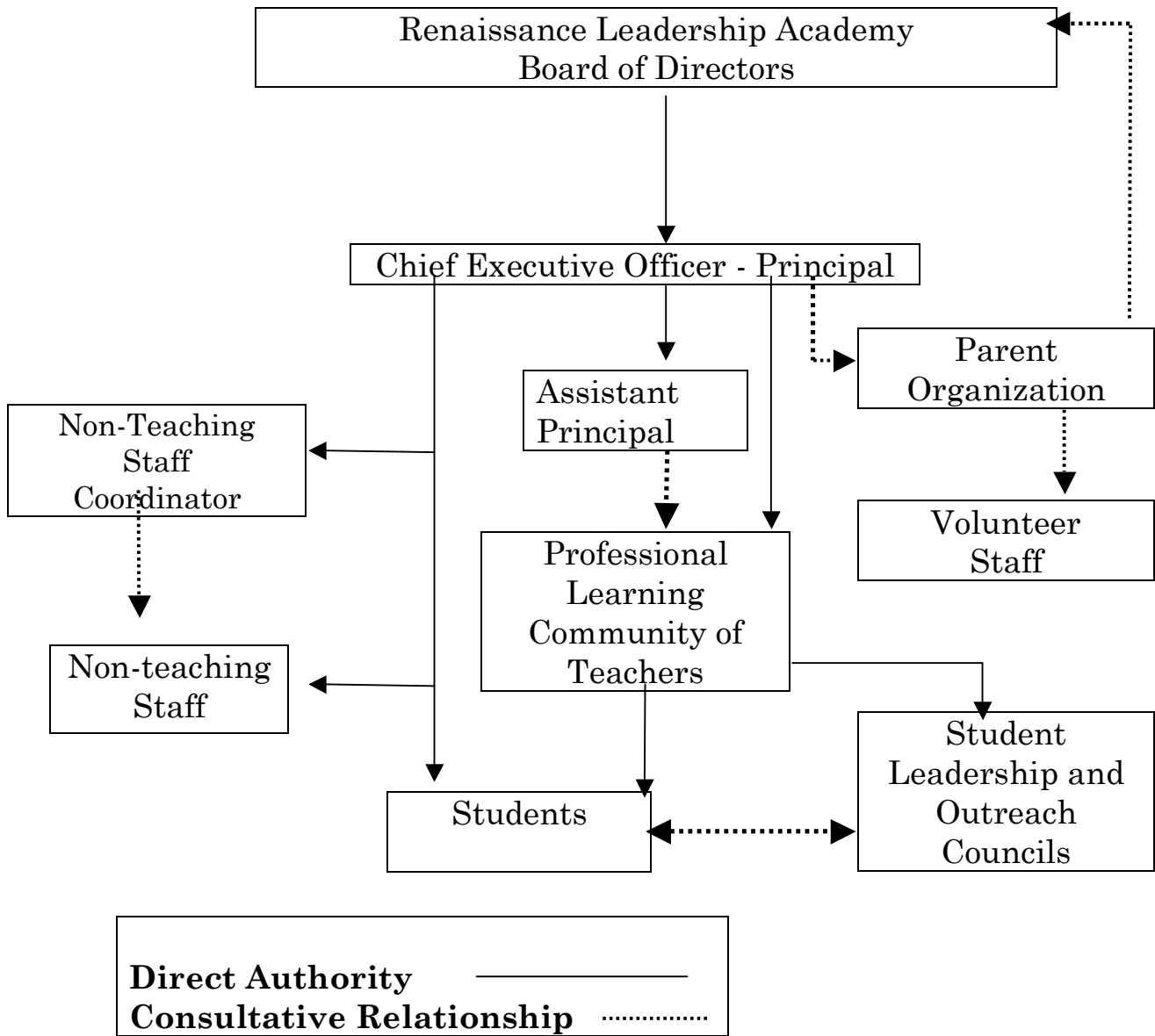
All Renaissance Leadership Academy students will demonstrate "academic mastery" in all of the core academic areas. For non-special needs and non-limited English proficient (LEP) students, "mastery" will be defined as a score of "basic" or above on the California Standards Test and grades of C or better on all year-end academic assessment instruments, including cumulative portfolios and projects. Both portfolios and projects will be assessed according to school-wide rubrics, with input from teachers across all content areas. "Mastery" for special needs and LEP students will be defined appropriately according to their Individualized Education Plans and English proficiency levels.

4. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Renaissance Leadership Academy is a community of stakeholders who are drawn together by a common goal - to work collaboratively for the best interest of each student and to support each student's pursuit of his/her personal best in all areas of student development.

All stakeholders must be actively engaged in achieving this goal. Toward this end, Renaissance Leadership Academy has designed an organization and governance model that optimizes on the specific gifts and talents of each stakeholder.

ORGANIZATION CHART RENAISSANCE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



A. Incorporation

Renaissance Leadership Academy will constitute itself as a California Public Benefit Corporation pursuant to California law. Renaissance Leadership Academy will be governed pursuant to the bylaws adopted by the incorporators, as subsequently amended pursuant to the amendment process specified by the bylaws.

Renaissance Leadership Academy will be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. Renaissance Leadership Academy shall not charge tuition. Renaissance Leadership Academy shall not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of characteristics, whether actual or perceived, as listed in Education Code section 220, including, but not necessarily limited to the following: disability, gender, nationality race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of the above actual or perceived characteristics.

Renaissance Leadership Academy will maintain in effect general liability and board errors and omissions insurance policies.

B. Board of Directors

A Board of Directors will govern Renaissance Leadership Academy. The governing board's major roles and responsibilities will include establishing and approving all major and operational policies, approving all major contracts, approving the school's annual budget and overseeing the school's fiscal affairs, and selecting and evaluating the top administrative staff. The founding Board members are included in Appendix B. The school's governing board will include seven to eleven members with expertise in fiscal policies, instructional program policies, personnel policies, legal policies, risk management, and development. The bylaws will call for three to five parents, depending on its size, to sit on the governing board. The school's bylaws will also permit one representative of the Alameda Unified School District to serve on the school's governing board. To prevent any real or perceived conflict of interest or incompatibility of office, the district representative will not be a district staff or board member and will sit on the board as a non-voting member who facilitates communication and mutual understanding between Renaissance Leadership Academy and AUSD.

I. Composition of the Board of Directors

The Board's composition will include:

- Parent Organization President of Renaissance Leadership Academy-This is a one-year-term with the outgoing Parent Organization President replaced by the incoming Parent Organization President.
- Three to five staff members - from the Professional Learning Community team, including the Principal. Except for the Principal and Vice Principal, other members of the Professional Learning Community team will rotate on a yearly basis.
- Three to five community representatives - elected by all members of the school community at our April general meeting.
- A district representative who will facilitate communication and mutual understanding between the Renaissance Leadership Academy and district.

II. Specific Functions of the Board of Directors

Renaissance Leadership Academy's Board of Directors shall:

- Uphold the mission and vision of the School
- Hold regular meetings.
- Publish the agenda, date, time and place of the meeting at least seventy-two hours in advance of the meeting (Brown Act). Additionally, publish copies of the approved minutes in the Parent Newsletter and keep on file for public review.
- Create and implement the appropriate sub-committees, as needed, to perform their duties and responsibilities as members of the Board of Directors.
- Work with the Principal and Professional Learning Community to implement policies, including but not limited to those listed below:
 - Fiscal policies - Approve and monitor the school budget and how the school's vital fiscal practices are carried out, solicitation and receipt of grants and donations consistent with the mission of Renaissance Leadership Academy.
 - Instructional program policies- Monitor academic assessment tools, and make recommendations for improvement of

Renaissance Leadership Academy's educational programs to improve the performance of all students.

- Personnel policies: Approve all hiring and dismissal of school personnel.
- Student and parent policies - These include recruitment (ensures that the recruitment policy addresses ongoing efforts to achieve racial/ethnic balance), admissions (ensures that the admissions policy is adhered to), discipline/suspension/expulsion (reviews and approves the discipline/suspension/expulsion policies),
- Legal policies - Exercise fiduciary role to ensure that Renaissance Leadership Academy is managed properly.
- Risk-related matters- Approve all major contracts.
- Internal board policies - Regularly assess and clarify any ambiguities in the bylaws.
- Informal policies - Establish understandings regarding the respective roles and responsibilities of the board versus administrative staff and policies to ensure that roles complement each other.

C. C.E.O.

The C.E.O. - Principal of Renaissance Leadership Academy is the school's ultimate leader of Renaissance Leadership Academy's day-to-day operations. S/he works closely with the Board of Directors, the Professional Learning Community of Teachers, support staff, parents and students in order to manage and coordinate the business of education with the practice of education for the benefit of our students.

D. Professional Learning Community Model of Collaborative Administration

The Renaissance Leadership Academy faculty and staff embrace the Professional Learning Community model for collaborative administration of the school and its programs. With our philosophy and mission to foster student achievement above baseline standards and to the highest potential of each individual, we believe that professional learning communities allow administrators and teachers to "... capitalize on a collective effort to move toward shared mission, vision, values, and goals. We (move) away from the 'hammer and hope' approach (where teachers can work very hard but without witnessing student achievement) to one of results—*planned and on purpose*"

(Learning by Doing, DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, and Many, 2006). Our Professional Learning Community is comprised of *all* classroom and specialty teachers and para-educators, who lend their expertise in specific areas so that our school is a successful community. *All* of the professional educators work together in analyzing the achievement and the needs of *all* students in order to design curriculum to meet *all* students' academic needs. This cannot occur in isolation but depends on professional collaboration. This model allows teachers greater autonomy to develop the curriculum and instruction for their classes in accordance with the school's mission and goals. The model also allows teachers to vision and plan for Renaissance Leadership Academy's vibrant future.

The Professional Learning Community is comprised of all classroom and specialty teachers and para-educators. It is accountable to the C.E.O. and the Board of Directors in all areas of the educational program of Renaissance Leadership Academy. These include, but are not limited to, curriculum development, adoption of textbooks and other learning tools and resources, assessment and student achievement, staff and professional development.

E. Parent Community

Renaissance Leadership Academy's mission, vision, and philosophy are built on a strong community involving all stakeholders. Parents are an integral part of our community. We recognize that families provide the primary educational environment for their children. We also recognize that providing for their children's needs at home is not enough. Parents must be actively involved in all areas of their children's education

To this end, Renaissance Leadership Academy parents participate in and support the education of their child(ren) according to our mission, vision, and philosophy. As much as possible, parents are welcome to be part of the learning environment as volunteers in the office, classroom, and yard. Parents hold position(s) on the Board of Directors. All current parents have voting rights in the selection of Board members.

Additionally, Renaissance Leadership Academy will encourage parents to form a Parent Organization to serve as an advisory committee to the school's governing board. The Parent Organization primarily provides fundraising and volunteer services for the students' benefit. The school will also work with the parent community to adopt a set of parent involvement policies and strategies.

F. Relationship between Renaissance Leadership Academy and AUSD regarding Special Education

Renaissance Leadership Academy and AUSD pledge to work in cooperation with all local education agencies (LEAs) and special education local plan areas (SELPAs) to ensure a free and appropriate education to all students with exceptional needs.

Pursuant to Educational Code Section 47641((b), during its first year of operations, the Renaissance Leadership Academy intends to function as a “public school of the local education agency that granted the charter” for purposes of providing special education and related services. During each school year during which the school operates as an arm of the district for special education purposes, the school shall pay to the district an amount of funding per unit of average daily attendance equal to the district’s direct costs of providing special education and related services minus the district’s direct revenues from all special education and transportation funding sources. In return, the district shall provide the school with all funding and/or services reasonably necessary to ensure that all students with exceptional needs who attend the school are provided a free and appropriate education.

Renaissance Leadership Academy and AUSD shall annually and in good faith negotiate and enter into a written agreement to more clearly specify the desired mix of special education funding and services to be provided. Renaissance Leadership Academy shall enjoy reasonable flexibility to decide whether to receive services, funding, or some combination of both pursuant to Education Code Section 47646(b). Renaissance Leadership Academy and AUSD shall work in good faith to document the specific terms of this relationship in an annual contract or memorandum of understanding.

After its first year of operations, Renaissance Leadership Academy shall have the right to pursue independent local education agency (LEA) and/or special education local plan area (SELPA) status pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a) and AUSD shall not hinder or otherwise impede the efforts of Renaissance Leadership Academy to do so. In the event that Renaissance Leadership Academy opts not to establish independent LEA and/or SELPA status, Renaissance Leadership Academy shall remain an arm of AUSD for special education purposes as required by Education Code Section 47641(b), and shall continue to receive funding and services pursuant to the terms of this section and an annual agreement.

5. EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS

A. General Qualifications of Renaissance Leadership Academy Employees

Renaissance Leadership Academy is committed to recruiting staff with a wide range of skills and qualities: teaching and administrative experience, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and to have a staff as reflective of the Alameda community as possible. Other desired qualities and qualifications include: a commitment to the mission and vision of our school, an ability to work effectively on a team with colleagues, students, families and community members, experience with a variety of instructional approaches including project-based learning, interest or expertise in technology, experience working with a diverse student population, and a commitment to their personal professional growth. All members of Renaissance Leadership Academy's staff will meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law. All members of Renaissance Leadership Academy's staff will sign a Commitment to Excellence as a term of their continued employment.

B. Teacher Qualifications

Renaissance Leadership Academy will employ a teaching staff that holds appropriate California teaching certificates, permits, or other documents issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. These teachers will teach the core academic classes of mathematics, language arts, science, and history/social studies. These teachers will be responsible for overseeing each student's academic progress, adjusting individual SSPs as needed, and for monitoring grading and matriculation decisions as specified in Renaissance Leadership Academy's operational policies.

C. Other Employee Qualifications

Renaissance Leadership Academy may also employ non-certificated instructional support staff in any case where a prospective staff member has an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and the demonstrated capacity to work successfully in an instructional support capacity. Instructional support staff will not assign grades or approve student work assignments without the approval of a teacher, except in non-core courses and activities.

Renaissance Leadership Academy will seek administrative and operational staff that has demonstrated experience or expertise in the issues and work

tasks required of them and will be provided professional development opportunities to ensure that they remain abreast of all relevant changes in laws or other operational requirements. All non-instructional staff will possess experience and expertise appropriate for their position within Renaissance Leadership Academy as outlined in Renaissance Leadership Academy's staffing plan and Renaissance Leadership Academy's adopted personnel policies.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

Prior to commencing instruction, Renaissance Leadership Academy will adopt and implement a comprehensive set of health, safety and risk management policies. These policies will be developed in consultation with the Renaissance Leadership Academy's insurance carriers and, at a minimum, will include the following procedures:

- A requirement that all enrolling students and staff provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment in non-charter public schools.
- Policies and procedures providing for school-wide training in response to natural disasters and other emergencies, including civil unrest, fires, and earthquakes.
- Training for staff and students relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens.
- Requiring that instructional and administrative staff receive training in emergency response, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent.
- Identification of specific staff who will be trained in the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines.
- A policy that Renaissance Leadership Academy will be housed in facilities that have received state Fire Marshal approval and that have been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer who has determined that the facilities present no substantial seismic safety hazard.
- A policy establishing that Renaissance Leadership Academy functions as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.
- A requirement that each employee of Renaissance Leadership Academy submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary, as required by Education Code Section 44237.

These policies will be incorporated into the Renaissance Leadership Academy's student and staff handbooks and reviewed on an ongoing basis to reflect Renaissance Leadership Academy's goals for staff development and governing board policies.

7. MEANS TO ACHIEVE RACIAL/ETHNIC BALANCE REFLECTIVE OF DISTRICT

To ensure a racial and ethnic balance among students that is reflective of the district, Renaissance Leadership Academy will implement a student recruitment strategy that includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following elements or strategies:

- 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 the district.
- The appropriate development of promotional and informational material in languages other than English to appeal to limited English proficient populations.
- The distribution of promotional and informational material to a broad variety of community groups and agencies that serve the various racial, ethnic, and interest groups represented in the district.
- Outreach meetings in several areas of the district to reach prospective students and parents.

8. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Renaissance Leadership Academy will actively recruit a diverse student population from the district of Alameda and surrounding areas who understand and value Renaissance Leadership Academy's mission and are committed to Renaissance Leadership Academy's instructional and operational policy. While admission to Renaissance Leadership Academy shall be open to any resident of the State of California, the governing board of Renaissance Leadership Academy shall not require any pupil to attend our school. All prospective students and their parents or guardians shall attend an orientation meeting detailing the school's instructional and operational philosophy and will be informed of Renaissance Leadership Academy's

student-related policies.

Renaissance Leadership Academy will establish an annual recruiting and admission cycle, which shall include reasonable time for all of the following:

- Outreach and marketing, beginning in October;
- Orientations sessions for parents and students, beginning in December;
- Admission application period, beginning in January;
- Admission lottery if necessary, beginning in April; and
- Enrollment.

In the event that the number of students seeking admission to any grade or class exceeds capacity, Renaissance Leadership Academy shall have the right to grant priority in admissions to siblings of current students, children of founders and staff, and residents of the AUSD. Children of staff and founders shall not constitute more than ten percent of Renaissance Leadership Academy 's enrollment. After giving preference to the aforementioned, the school may fill vacancies or openings that become available using either a waiting list or any other non-discriminatory process.

9. FINANCIAL AND PROGRAMMATIC AUDIT

A. Responsibility for Contracting and Overseeing Audit

The Renaissance Leadership Academy's Board of Directors will form an audit committee each fiscal year to oversee selection of an independent auditor and the completion of an annual audit of the School's financial affairs. The audit will verify the accuracy of the School's financial statements, attendance/enrollment accounting practices, other key compliance matters, and review the School's internal controls.

B. Experience in Educational Finance

The audit will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to Renaissance Leadership Academy and pursuant to applicable sections of the Standards and Procedures for Audits of California K-12 Local Educational Agencies. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will include items and processes specified in any applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars.

C. Providing Audit Reports to SBE, CDE, and Other Agencies

It is anticipated that the annual audit will be completed by December 15 each year and that a copy of the auditor's findings will be forwarded to the chief financial officer of the Alameda Unified School District, the State Controller, the county superintendent of schools, and the California Department of Education.

D. Addressing Audit Findings and Resolving Audit Exceptions

Renaissance Leadership Academy's audit committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Renaissance Leadership Academy's Board of Directors with recommendations for resolution. The Board of Directors will report to the Alameda Unified School District the means to resolve exceptions and deficiencies. Any disputes regarding the resolution of audit exceptions and deficiencies will be referred to the dispute resolution process contained in Element 14 of this charter.

E. Programmatic Audit

Renaissance Leadership Academy and AUSD will jointly develop the content, evaluation criteria, and processes for the annual performance audit. Renaissance Leadership Academy and AUSD will also jointly develop an annual site visitation process and protocol to enable AUSD to gather information needed to confirm Renaissance Leadership Academy's performance and compliance with the terms of this charter.

10. PUPIL SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Renaissance Leadership Academy will develop and maintain a comprehensive set of student discipline policies. These policies are included as part of our Student-Family Handbook. Our Handbook defines the policies and procedures of our school including attendance, mutual respect, substance abuse, violence, safety, and work habits. Prior to enrollment, each student and his/her parent or guardian will be required to verify that they have reviewed and understand the policies.

Our handbook will clearly define the expectations and consequences for behavior that make up our Code of Conduct, including pupil suspension, and expulsion policies. These policies and procedures will be established to promote learning and protect the safety and well being of all students. Staff

shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently amongst all students and accord all students due process. Disciplinary procedures include but are not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, the use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion. Our handbook is reviewed and updated on a yearly basis by Renaissance Leadership Academy and the Board of Directors.

A copy of our Student-Family Handbook will be forwarded to the District.

For minor incidents that disrupt the student's learning or the learning experience of others, Renaissance Leadership Academy will institute a Code of Conduct Plan based on the five-step guidelines established by Ryan (2000):

- Isolate (meet one-on-one with the student),
- Ask and Listen (listen to the child's side of the story,
- Speak and Specify (a strong, calm, well-reasoned, focused message),
- Offer (offer positive reinforcement),
- Decide and Act (support the child in a responsible plan that is mutually agreeable).

A. Preliminary List of Discretionary and Non-Discretionary Offenses Leading to Suspension and Possible Expulsion

Students who violate certain policies and procedures, who are a serious disruption to the educational process, and/or who present a health or safety threat may be suspended for up to ten school days. Renaissance Leadership Academy will follow its Code of Conduct definition of limits of acceptable behavior and behavior that may/will constitute student suspension.

Repeated violations of Renaissance Leadership Academy's Code of Conduct may result in suspension. Suspension may be conducted in-school or outside of school at the Principal's discretion. These violations include, but are not limited to:

- Lying to any person in authority,
- Forgery,
- Plagiarism,

- Blatant disrespect,
- Vulgarity by word or gesture,
- Throwing objects,
- Verbal altercations,
- Leaving the school grounds without written authorization,
- Willful refusal to follow directions from any person in authority,
- Damaging or destroying school property or the property of others.
- Repeated refusal to comply with the student expectations as defined in the Student Commitment to Excellence.

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

Moreover, to ensure the health and safety of the Renaissance Leadership Academy community, a student may be suspended or expelled for any of the enumerated acts listed below if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at Renaissance Leadership Academy or at any other school: (a) while on school grounds; (b) while going to or coming from school; (c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; (d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

Administrator Recommendation of Expulsion Matrix Defined by the California Department of Education

Must Recommend Expulsion (Mandatory)	Shall Recommend Expulsion Unless Particular Circumstances Render Inappropriate (Expulsion Expected)	May Recommend Expulsion (Discretionary)
<p>Education Code (EC) 48915(c) Act must be committed at school or school activity.</p> <p>(1) Firearm</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. Possessing firearm when a district employee verified firearm possession and when student did not have prior written permission from a certified employee, which is concurred by the principal or designee.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b. Selling or otherwise furnishing a firearm.</p> <p>(2) Brandishing a knife at another person.</p> <p>(3) Unlawfully selling a controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code Section 11053 et. seq.</p> <p>(4) Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in subdivision (n) of EC 48900 or committing sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of 48900.</p> <p>(5) Possession of an explosive.</p>	<p>Act must be committed at school or school activity.</p> <p>EC Section 48915 (a) states that an administrator shall recommend expulsion for the following violations [except for subsections (c) and (e)] unless the administrator finds that expulsion is inappropriate due to a particular circumstance.</p> <p>(1) Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense. EC Section 48915 (a)(1).</p> <p>(2) Possession of any knife, explosive, or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to a pupil EC 48915 (a)(2).</p> <p>(3) Possession and/or use of any substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, except for the first offense for the possession of not more than one avoirdupois ounce of marijuana other than concentrated cannabis.</p> <p>(4) Robbery or extortion. EC Section 48915 (a)(4)</p> <p>(5) Assault or battery, or threat of, on a school employee.</p> <p>The recommendation for expulsion shall be based on one or both of the following:</p> <p>(1) Other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct.</p> <p>(2) Due to the nature of the act, the presence of the pupil causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others [see Section 48915 (b)].</p>	<p>Acts committed at school or school activity or on the way to and from school or school activity.</p> <p>(a) Inflicts physical injury. †</p> <p>(b) Possessed dangerous objects</p> <p>(c) Possessed drugs or alcohol</p> <p>(d) Sold look alike substances representing drugs or alcohol</p> <p>(e) Committed robbery/extortion</p> <p>(f) Caused damage to property†</p> <p>(g) Committed theft</p> <p>(h) Used tobacco (policy determines which offense)</p> <p>(i) Committed obscenity / profanity / vulgarity</p> <p>(j) Possessed or sold drug paraphernalia</p> <p>(k) Disrupted or defied school staff</p> <p>(l) Received stolen property</p> <p>(m) Possessed imitation firearm</p> <p>(n) Committed sexual harassment</p> <p>(o) Harassed, threatened or intimidated a student witness</p> <p>(p) Sold Prescription drug SOMA</p> <p>(q) Committed hazing</p> <p>The recommendation for expulsion shall be based on one or both of the following:</p> <p>(1) Other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct.</p> <p>(2) Due to the nature of the act, the presence of the pupil causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the pupil or others [see Section 48915 (b)].</p> <p>† Section 48900 (s) (Statutes of 2001) states a pupil who aids or abets in infliction of physical injury of another, as defined in Penal Code 31, may suffer suspension, but not expulsion. However, if a student is adjudged by the court to have caused, attempted to cause, or threatened personal injury, the student may be expelled.</p> <p>† Section 48900 (t) “school property” includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.</p>

Additionally, the Principal may suspend or recommend for expulsion a pupil who has engaged in any of the following:

- Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subsection e of Section 233 of the California Education Code 48900.3 (grades 4-12 only).
- Committed sexual harassment as defined in Section 212.5 of the California Education Code 48900.2. The conduct 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 (grades 4-12 only).
- Intentional harassment, threat or intimidation of a student, or group of students, in a way that materially disrupts class work, creates substantial disorder, and invades the rights of that student or group of students by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. [Ed. Code § 48900.4]
- Making a terrorist threat against school officials or school property, or both. Terrorist threats 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 \$1000, 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. The threat must be so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate and specific as to convey to the person threatened a gravity of purpose and 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 District property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family. [Ed. Code § 48900.7]

B. Procedure to Suspend or Expel Pupils

Prior to suspending a student, if circumstances permit, the student and his/her parents shall be given a written statement of the reasons for

suspension or expulsion and will be provided with a copy of their due process rights. The student and his/her parents shall also be given an opportunity to meet with the school Principal to present any evidence as to why a suspension should not be imposed. If circumstances require an immediate suspension, written notice and an opportunity to meet shall be provided to the student and his/her parents within three days of the suspension.

C. Due Process

If a student is to be suspended for more than five consecutive days to twenty total days within the year, or if an expulsion is recommended, the following procedures apply. The student must be given written notice of the proposed long-term suspension or expulsion and of the reasons. If the student or his/her parents contest the proposed disciplinary action, they will have ten business days from the date of delivery of the written notice of suspension or expulsion to declare in writing their request for an appeal that is to be submitted to the Principal.

The Expulsion Committee will convene and respond to the appeal within fifteen business days. The Expulsion Committee will be made up of the Principal and two teachers—the student’s current teacher and one other full-time classroom teacher of the student’s choice. The Expulsion Committee will consider evidence and/or testimony, as it deems appropriate and will provide a written recommendation that shall be in the best interest of the student and the School. The Expulsion Committee recommendation will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for action. The decision of the Board shall be final.

The student shall have the right to be represented by counsel at the hearing before the Expulsion Committee and before the Board of Directors, to present evidence on his/her own behalf, and to confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses and School representatives.

The written notice to the student of the proposed disciplinary action must advise the student of the above-listed rights, and must specify the date, time, and place of the disciplinary hearing. The disciplinary hearing shall be held within thirty days from the date the student was originally suspended.

In cases where the student is recommended for expulsion after suspension, the student will remain in suspension status until the expulsion hearing, and will participate in a home study or another alternative program.

Once a charter student is expelled, rules of district residency apply. A

charter-expelled district student must be treated the same as district expelled students and must comply with Education Code section 48915.1. The School will notify the District of any expulsions and will forward the student's residence and records.

D. Rights of Students with Disabilities

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act ("IDEA") 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 students except to the extent where federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. Renaissance Leadership Academy will follow Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and all federal and state laws when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the School 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 students.

11. STAFF RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Employees of Renaissance Leadership Academy will participate in the federal social security system and will access other school-sponsored retirement plans according to policies developed by its Board of Directors and adopted as Renaissance Leadership Academy's employee policies. Renaissance Leadership Academy retains the option for its Board of Directors to elect to participate in the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS) and to coordinate such participation, as appropriate, with the social security system or other reciprocal systems in the future, should it find that participation enables Renaissance Leadership Academy to attract and retain higher quality staff. If Renaissance Leadership Academy should opt to participate in STRS, the AUSD shall cooperate as necessary to forward any required payroll deductions and related data. Renaissance Leadership Academy shall pay AUSD a reasonable fee for the provision of such services.

12. ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVE

Students who opt not to attend Renaissance Leadership Academy may attend other district schools or pursue an inter-district transfer in accordance with

existing enrollment and transfer policies of their district or county of residence.

13. POST-EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS OF EMPLOYEES

Permanent employees of AUSD who leave their positions to work for Renaissance Leadership Academy shall retain any rights that the District specifies. Any right to return to employment in the District shall be specified by the District.

14. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

Intent

The intent of this dispute resolution process is to (1) resolve disputes within the school pursuant to the school's policies, (2) minimize the oversight burden on the district, (3) ensure a fair and timely resolution of disputes, and (4) frame a charter oversight and renewal process and timeline so as to avoid disputes regarding oversight and renewal matters.

Public Comments

The staff and governing board members of the school and the district agree to attempt to resolve all disputes regarding this charter pursuant to the terms of this section. Both shall refrain from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute resolution process.

Disputes Arising from within the School

Disputes arising from within the school, including all disputes among and between students, staff, parents, volunteers, advisors, partner organizations, and governing board members of the school, shall be resolved pursuant to the policies and processes developed by the school.

The district shall not intervene in any such internal disputes without the consent of the governing board of the school and shall refer any complaints or reports regarding such disputes to the governing board or its designee for resolution pursuant to the school's policies. The district agrees not to intervene or become involved in the dispute unless the dispute has given the district reasonable cause to believe that a violation of this charter or related

laws or agreements has occurred, or unless the governing board of the school has requested the district to intervene in the dispute.

Disputes between the School and the Charter-Granting Agency

In the event that the school or granting agency have disputes regarding the terms of this charter or any other issue regarding the school and grantor's relationship, both parties agree to follow the process outlined below.

In the event of a dispute between the school and the grantor, the staff and the governing board members of the school and the district agree to first frame the issue in written format and refer the issue to the Superintendent of the district and the Principal of the school. In the event that the grantor believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter, this shall be specifically noted in the written dispute statement.

The Principal and the Superintendent shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, both parties shall identify two governing board members from their respective boards who shall jointly meet with the Superintendent of the district and the Principal of the school and attempt to resolve the dispute. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent and the Principal shall meet to jointly identify a neutral, third party mediator. The format of the mediation session shall be developed jointly by the Superintendent and the Principal, and shall incorporate informal rules of evidence and procedures unless both parties agree otherwise. The findings or recommendations of the mediator shall be non-binding, unless the governing boards of the school and grantor jointly agree to bind them. All mediator fees and administrative services costs shall be borne equally between Renaissance Leadership Academy and AUSD.

Oversight, Reporting, Revocation, and Renewal

The Alameda Unified School District may inspect or observe any part of the school at any time, but shall provide reasonable notice to the Principal of the charter school prior to any observation or inspection unless such notice would prevent the performance of reasonable oversight functions. The Alameda Unified School District shall endeavor to provide such notice at least three working days prior to the inspection or observation unless the school's board or Principal agree otherwise. Inspection, observation, monitoring, and oversight activities may not be assigned or subcontracted to a third party by

the Alameda Unified School District without the mutual consent of the governing board of the school.

If the governing board of the district believes it has cause to revoke this charter, the board agrees to notify the governing board of the school in writing, noting the specific reasons for which the charter may be revoked, and grant the school reasonable time to respond to the notice and take appropriate corrective action, unless the alleged violation presents an immediate threat to health and safety.

The charter school will submit quarterly fiscal reports in accordance with the timelines stated in charter school law. The charter school and the charter-granting agency will jointly develop a timeline of other required ongoing monitoring documents, including deadlines of when the documents will be submitted, when reviewed, when feedback will be given to the charter school, and by when corrective action will occur. The charter school will be given reasonable time to take appropriate corrective action, unless the alleged violation presents an immediate threat to health and safety.

The Alameda Unified School District agrees to receive and review the annual fiscal and programmatic audit and annual performance report and to perform the annual site visit as specified in Element I (9 in this charter petition) and other accountability policies and procedures mutually agreed upon by the charter school and the charter-granting agency. Within two months of this annual review, the charter-granting agency must notify the governing board of the school as to whether it considers the school to be making satisfactory progress relative to the goals specified in this charter. This annual notification will include the specific reasons for the charter-granting agency's conclusions.

If the charter school submits satisfactory annual reports for four consecutive years, during year five, the charter is automatically renewed.

15. LABOR RELATIONS

Renaissance Leadership Academy shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer for purposes of the Education Employment Relations Act. Renaissance Leadership Academy recognizes its responsibility to adhere to the legal requirements to engaging in negotiations of a collective bargaining agreement with employees if they so desire to pursue this option.

16. SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES

If Renaissance Leadership Academy ceases operation, and its Board of Directors determines that there is no successor charter school, then the school's governing board shall designate an entity or individual to be responsible for conducting closure activities. The designated entity or individual shall be known as the "Authorized Closer." The Authorized Closer shall commence closure proceedings by which the school participates, the retirement systems in which the school's employees participate, and the California Department of Education.

The notice shall include the effective date of the closure ("Closure Date"), and the party to contact for information related to the closure, the pupil's districts of residence and the manner in which parents and guardians may obtain copies of pupil records, including information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements. The school shall provide the Authorized Closer with a list of pupils in each grade level and the classes they have completed, together with information on the pupils' districts of residence.

Pupil records, including all state assessment results and special education records, shall be maintained and transferred to the custody of the Authorized Closer, except for records and/or assessment results that, under the provisions of the governing charter, are required to be transferred to a different entity. Personnel records shall be maintained and transferred in accordance with applicable law.

The school shall complete an independent final audit within six months of the school's closure. The audit may also serve as the annual audit. The audit must include at least the following:

- An accounting of all assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment and supplies.
- 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.
- An assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the school. The Authorized Closer must provide for the completion and filing of any annual reports required by Ed. Code section 47604.33.

Renaissance Leadership Academy may form as or be operated by a California nonprofit public benefit corporation. If in connection with the closure, the Board of Directors determines that it will dissolve the school corporation (“Dissolution”), then (i) the Dissolution shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law (“Law”) including, without limitation, Corp. Code sections 6610 et seq. and sections 6710 et seq., and (ii) the Board may select the Authorized Closer to assist with the wind-up and Dissolution of the school corporation. Any assets remaining after all debts and liabilities of the school corporation (i) have been paid to the extent of the school’s corporation’s assets, or (ii) have been adequately provided for, shall be distributed in accordance with the school’s corporation’s Articles of Incorporation.

Prior to the distribution of any remaining net assets, the school corporation shall:

- Determine if there are any remaining proceeds of any restricted Government Grant that have not been expended for the purposes set forth in the restricted Government Grant, and shall return any such remaining proceeds to the applicable federal or California governmental agency; and
- Dispose of, distribute or otherwise utilize any proceeds of any grants or donations (whether in cash or in-kind) —i.e. materials or property—received by the school or the school corporation from any private foundation, any other entity exempt from tax under section 501 © (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, any other person, or the general public in accordance with the restrictions, if any, imposed by the grantor or donor on such grants or donations at the time received by the school or the school corporation.

For purposes of sub-paragraph (a) above, “Restricted Government Grant” means any grant or donation (cash or in-kind, i.e. materials or property) made by any federal or California governmental agency to the school or the school corporation, the grant instrument of which, or the applicable law governing, requires that, upon closure of the school or dissolution of the school corporation, any proceeds of such restricted Government Grant that have not been expended for the purposes set forth in the grant instrument or in applicable law, be returned to the granting or donating governmental agency. The school shall use, but is not limited to, school reserves normally maintained for contingencies and emergencies to fund closure proceedings.

Miscellaneous Clauses

Amendments

Any amendments to the charter shall be made by the mutual agreement of the governing boards of the charter school and charter-granting agency. Material revisions and amendments shall be made pursuant to the standards, criteria, and timelines in Education Code Section 47605.

Severability

The terms of this charter contract are severable. In the event that any of the provisions are determined to be unenforceable or invalid for any reason, the remainder of the charter shall remain in effect, unless mutually agreed otherwise by the Alameda Unified School District and the Board of Directors of Renaissance Leadership Academy. The district and school agree to meet to discuss and resolve any issues or differences relating to invalidated provisions in a timely, good faith fashion.

Communications

All official communications between Renaissance Leadership Academy Charter School and the Alameda Unified School District will be sent via First Class mail or other appropriate means.

APPENDIX A

DISTRICT IMPACT STATEMENT The Renaissance Leadership Academy and Alameda Unified School District

INTENT

This statement is intended to fulfill the terms of Education Code 47605(g) and provides information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of The Renaissance Leadership Academy Charter School on the Alameda Unified School District. This document is for informational purposes only and to assist the district in understanding how the proposed school may affect the district. This is an informational document, does not constitute a legally binding contract or agreement, is not intended to govern the relationship of the school and district, and is not a part of the Charter of The Renaissance Leadership Academy or any related agreements or memoranda of understanding.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The Renaissance Leadership Academy Charter School will be constituted as a California Public Benefit (“nonprofit”) Corporation and will be governed by a board of directors as described in the school’s charter. A school director (“principal”) will enjoy lead responsibility for administering the school under policies adopted by the school’s governing board. The school anticipates that it will provide or procure most of its own administrative services independent of the district. These include, but are not limited to, financial management, personnel, payroll and instructional programs development. The school does anticipate purchasing some services from the school district including special education assessments and support services. The school will seek to define the specific terms and cost for these services in an annual operational agreement (or memorandum of understanding). In addition, the district will be required to provide oversight and performance monitoring services, including monitoring school and student performance data, reviewing the school’s financial statements and audit reports, performing annual site visits, engaging in the dispute resolution process, and considering charter amendment and renewal requests.

FACILITIES

Renaissance Leadership Academy plans to initially locate in facilities in the West End of Alameda. We are presently seeking the professional assistance of commercial real estate brokers to locate the appropriate facilities in the West End, including Marina Village and Alameda Point. At the time this document was drafted, the school's developers estimate that the school would need classroom and related support facilities to accommodate approximately 105 students in its first year of operations, growing to 205 students in four years. For this first year of operation, the school does not anticipate having any material effect on the district's facilities needs: we do plan on applying for the Proposition 39 provision for facilities for charter schools for year two and moving forward.

CIVIL LIABILITY

The Renaissance Leadership Academy Charter School plans to form as or be operated by a public benefit corporation. As such, the school's founders presume that the Alameda Unified School District will not be liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c). The school intends to purchase liability, property, and error and omissions insurance to protect the school's assets, staff, and governing board members.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

A financial plan for the school, including a first-year operational budget including start up costs, a cash flow statement, and financial projections for the next five years, follows. This plan is based on the best data available to the developers at the time the plan was assembled. The plan is based on many key assumptions, including the following:

- The school will enroll 105 students in grades Kindergarten, First, Second, Third, and Sixth.
- The students will be absent from school an average of 5% of school days.
- The school will be funded pursuant to the charter school block grant system at rates estimated by the Charter Schools Development Center as of December 20, 2007, and
- The school will qualify for funds from special-purpose funding programs that are not specifically included in the block grant, including:

- Class size reduction funding for grades K-3,
- Title 1,
- Title 2,
- Title 4,
- Economic Impact, and
- Supplementary Hourly Instruction.