

# CaliberSchools

**Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter**

For a term of July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2021

Submitted to the Vallejo City Unified School District

April 20, 2015

Material Revision Submitted

October 1, 2019



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## 1. Introduction

Vallejo City Unified School District (VCUSD) is one of the most diverse school districts in the Bay Area, with 15 elementary schools, three middle schools and one K–8 school. In the past few months as we have met parents, teachers and community leaders in Vallejo, we have seen the commitment to education and desire for a free public charter in VCUSD.

Caliber Schools' founding team is comprised of educators and operators who have worked hard at and run schools that have demonstrated exceptional results, as well as families who want more quality educational options for their children. Caliber's first school, Caliber: Beta Academy, opened in Richmond, CA in August 2014 and is already showing strong interim results.

Caliber Schools honors the work of VCUSD. We seek to contribute and collaborate to support the District's initiatives: full service community schools, safe and positive school campuses, rigorous K–8 programs, rigorous middle school STEAM programs, and college/career prep. We believe our innovative model can serve as a laboratory school for all VCUSD educators and administrators through the sharing of best practices.

We are eager and excited to contribute to the District's mission to provide the highest quality education to its students.

Thank you for your consideration.

The Petitioners for Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter



## 2. Charter School Intent and Charter Requirements

It is the intent of the California Legislature, in enacting the Charter Schools Act of 1992, to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish all of the following:

- (a) Improve pupil learning.
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.
- (e) Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.
- (f) Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.
- (g) Provide vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools.

California Education Code Section 47601(a)-(g)

In reviewing petitions for the establishment of charter schools, the chartering authority shall be guided by the intent of the Legislature that charter schools are and should become an integral part of the California educational system and that the establishment of charter schools should be encouraged.



### 3. Affirmations and Declaration

As the authorized lead petitioners, we, Ron Beller and Jennifer Moses, hereby certify that the information submitted in this petition for a California public charter school to be named Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter (“Caliber”, or the “Charter School”), to be located within the boundaries of the Vallejo City Unified School District (the “District” or “VCUSD”), is true to the best of our knowledge and belief. We also certify that this petition does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public charter school; and further, we understand that if awarded a charter, the Charter School will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School, including but not limited to:

- The Charter School will meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non–charter public schools. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605 (c)(1)]
- The Charter School declares that it will be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(6)]
- The Charter School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605 (d)(1)]
- The Charter School will not charge tuition. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605 (d)(1)]
- The Charter School shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School, and who submit a timely application, unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case each application will be given equal chance of admission through a public random drawing process. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605 (d)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or his or her parents within the State. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B)(i)–(iv). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(C). [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(A)–(C)]

- The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605 (d)(1)]
- The Charter School will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2007, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- The Charter School will meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]
- The Charter School will ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools are required to hold per state law and the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (“ESEA”). If allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to noncore, noncollege preparatory teachers. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605 (l)]
- The Charter School will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- The Charter School will follow any and all other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the application or operation of the Charter School.
- The Charter School shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction and days per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)–(D).
- If a pupil is expelled or leaves the Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil’s last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including report cards or a transcript of grades and health information. If the pupil is subsequently expelled or leaves the school district without graduating or completing the

school year for any reason, the school district shall provide this information to the Charter School within 30 days if the Charter School demonstrates that the pupil had been enrolled in the Charter School. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(3)]

- The Charter School may encourage parental involvement, but shall notify the parents and guardians of applicant pupils and currently enrolled pupils that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the Charter School. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(n)}
- The Charter School shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(2)]
- The Charter School shall on a regular basis consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605 (c)]
- The Charter School shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities. [Ref. California Education Code Sections 47605 and 47605.1]
- The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. California Education Code Sections 47612(b), 47610]
- The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the ESEA, as reauthorized and amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA").
- The Charter School shall comply with the Public Records Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with Government Code Section 1090, *et seq.*, as set forth in Education Code Section 47604.1.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Political Reform Act.

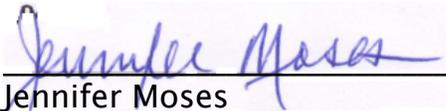
- The Charter School shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum of school days. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960]
- The Charter School shall continually strive for a healthy, collaborative, synergistic partnership with VCUSD.
- The Charter School has adopted the California State Standards.
- The Charter School will operate in compliance with generally accepted government accounting principles.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Ron Beller  
Caliber Schools

4/17/2015

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Moses  
Caliber Schools

4/17/2015

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## 4. Executive Summary

### I. Vision Statement

The mission of Caliber Schools is to provide all students with a challenging, engaging, relevant and personalized education that equips our young people with the knowledge, character, and skills they will need to succeed in competitive colleges and careers. Caliber's core components include: high expectations, personalized learning plans (PLP) for every student, exceptional teaching and instructional leadership, rigorous and relevant curriculum, and a supportive school community based on rights, responsibilities, and respect.

We believe all children can get to and through a competitive four-year college without remediation if they are given high quality instruction and appropriate supports. All of our staff are united in this belief and dedicated to its execution. We have developed a rigorous, college preparatory curriculum and have paired that with an integrated program that addresses our students' social and emotional needs and develops the traits such as grit and perseverance that we believe are essential to success in school and beyond. We are committed to using data to judge the effectiveness of our programs and interventions and to refining our program based on student outcomes. We believe that every student will benefit from a personalized path to the ultimate outcome of college readiness. We have developed a program that will lead our students to mastery of the knowledge and skills they need to be college ready. We teach core skills directly but also incorporate projects so that our students learn to collaborate and to apply their knowledge and skills to relevant and real world problems. We teach our students to be comfortable with technology and fluent in its application. We want our students to have the confidence and skills to help shape their world.

### II. Founding Team

Our Founding team has experience as educators, innovators, entrepreneurs, operators and community activists. Their biographies are below:

#### **Ron Beller**

Ron Beller has been active in education for the past 11 years. He led the Children First reform program and restructuring of the New York City school system, the largest in the country with more than one million students, working under Chancellor Joel Klein. He is co-founder and Chair of Governors of King Solomon Academy an all-through state school in London

that has been rated “Outstanding,” the highest ranking by OFSTED, the UK schools inspectorate. He is a co-founder and board member of Ark Schools, a high performing network of 31 state schools in the UK and is a founding board member of Leading Educators, a New Orleans based teacher leader training organization. Ron was founder and CEO of investment companies Branch Hill Capital and Peloton Partners and was a partner at Goldman Sachs, a global investment bank. Ron is a graduate of Brown University. He is married with three children.

### **Jennifer Moses**

Jennifer Moses has spent the past decade in education, public policy and philanthropy after a career in investment banking. She is a founding Trustee of Absolute Return for Kids (ARK), one of the largest children’s charities in the UK, and co-founder of King Solomon Academy, an all-through state school in London. She is a partner at Ed-Mentor, LLC, a VC fund that invests in education technology startups. Prior to moving to California in late 2009, she was a senior policy adviser to then British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown. She was previously Chief Executive of the policy think tank Centreforum, following her banking career with Goldman Sachs. Jennifer is a graduate of Brown University and Harvard Business School. She is married with three children.

### **Natalie Walchuk**

Natalie Walchuk has been a school leader at parochial and public schools in West Contra Costa and Alameda counties serving students in grades Pre K-12 for the past 10 years.

Natalie was most recently School Leader of Glenview Elementary in Oakland where, under her leadership, the school experienced double-digit growth in both Math and ELA on the California Standards Test (CST). In 2011, Glenview achieved the most growth in the district for African American students in Math. Natalie was chosen as a mentor to fellow OUSD administrators and invited to join a task force to redefine school leadership in the district. In 2013, Edutopia selected Glenview as one of their exemplary schools for its innovative social emotional work. Her final year in Oakland, Natalie received the Excellence in Educational Leadership Award with an unprecedented number of nominations.

Natalie explored blended learning, individualized learning plans, and intensive remediation and acceleration as the Director of Education at Sylvan Learning Center.

Natalie attended UC Berkeley earning a degree in Psychology and went on to complete her teaching and administrative credential coursework at St. Mary's College and CSU East Bay respectively. She returned to CSU East Bay where she earned her master's degree in Educational Leadership with an emphasis on social justice and equity.

### **Markus Mullarkey**

Markus Mullarkey comes to Caliber after a long and successful career in the private sector. He spent over 15 years in marketing and leadership roles at successful blue-chip companies such as Proctor & Gamble, the Boston Consulting Group, and CNET Networks. And he founded and grew his own mobile entertainment start-up for 8 years before joining Caliber.

Markus has a passion for K-12 education, having consulted to EdTech companies in the sector and having served as a fundraising board member at his daughter's school. He also has a lifelong connection to the East Bay. He grew up and went to school in Richmond and Albany and now lives with his wife and two daughters only a few miles from Caliber:Beta Academy.

Markus graduated from Harvard College and went on to complete an MBA and a post-graduate Finance Fellowship from Harvard Business School.

### **Chayla Gibson**

Chayla Gibson has been with Caliber Schools as a volunteer & founding team member since its inception in 2012. Although new to the field of education, she has over 15 years experience with various start up companies in the capacity of office management and operations. Most recently as Executive Assistant / Office Manager for EducationSuperHighway and Branch Hill Capital. While raising her sons, she returned to school and received her Bachelor of Sciences degree in Business with a concentration in Marketing from The University of Phoenix. She is an active volunteer with Wardrobe for Opportunity.

### **Rui Bao**

Rui Bao joins the Caliber team as an Education Pioneer Fellow. Prior to the fellowship, Rui was a Senior Associate at McKinsey & Company, where she worked closely with clients on a variety of topics ranging from developing long-term strategy to improving and sustaining operational efficiency.

During her time in the New York office, she co-founded and led Operation Employ, an effort to improve veteran unemployment locally through an 8-week mentorship program that impacted over 100 veterans. Prior to McKinsey, Rui has worked at United Way and America's Promise Alliance. Rui graduated from Yale with a degree in Ethics, Politics, and Economics

### **Pete Briger, Board Member**

Pete Briger is a Principal and Co-Chairman of the board of directors of Fortress. He has served as a member of the board of directors of Fortress since November 2006 and was elected Co-Chairman in August 2009. Pete has been a member of the Management Committee of Fortress since March 2002. He is responsible for the Credit and Real Estate business at Fortress. Prior to joining Fortress in March 2002, Pete spent fifteen years at Goldman, Sachs & Co., where he became a partner in 1996. He serves on the board of Tipping Point, a non-profit organization serving low-income families in the Bay Area. Pete received a B.A. from Princeton University and an M.B.A. from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.

### **Dan Katzir, Board Member**

Dan Katzir joined Alliance College-Ready Public Schools in LA as CEO and President in March 2015. Most recently, Katzir has been an independent strategic education advisor to CEOs and boards of directors in school districts, charter management organizations, state departments of education, and education for-profit and non-profit organizations. He has helped numerous clients across the country in curriculum design, operational planning, executive/board training, and many other issues educational institutions and organizations face today. Prior to serving as an independent consultant, Katzir was the founding Managing Director at the Eli & Edythe Broad Foundation, where he served for eleven years. During his time at the Broad Foundation, he designed and implemented four national flagship initiatives, including the Broad Prize for Urban Education and the Broad Institute for School Boards.

In his more than two decades of leadership in the education sector, Katzir has also been Regional Director for Sylvan Learning Systems, the Executive Director for UCLA School Management Program, and Chief Operating Officer for Teach for America. He began his career as a consultant for Bain & Company, an international management consulting firm.

Katzir has served on many education boards, including The Broad Center for the Management of School Systems, the Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Public Policy at Dartmouth College, and the advisory board of the Los Angeles Alliance for College-Ready Public Schools.

Dan has an MBA from Harvard Business School, and received a bachelor's degree in history from Dartmouth College. In his spare time, he lectures at Stanford's Graduate School of Business and is a Volunteer Leader at Dartmouth College and Harvard Business School.

### **Vivian Wu, Board Member**

Ms. Wu currently runs education technology impact investments for Mark Zuckerberg and Priscilla Chan. Her focus is on investments in disruptive for-profit companies serving PreK-12 with a dual focus on impact and sustainable business models.

Vivian Wu has over 15 years of experience in private equity and venture capital, most recently running investments for a family office. Previously, she was a Principal at TA Associates where she invested in and served on the boards of several growth technology businesses. Prior to TA, Vivian worked at Accel Partners, a leading venture capital firm, as well as Morgan Stanley Capital Partners in Hong Kong, where she focused on private equity investments in Asian growth companies. She started her career as a strategy consultant at McKinsey & Company and has worked at eBay, Sun Microsystems and Sun Life. Vivian holds an MBA from Harvard University, a B.S.Econ in finance, summa cum laude, Beta Gamma Sigma, from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, and a B.A. in history, summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, from the University of Pennsylvania.

The chart below summarizes the expertise of the founders. Appendix 1 provides recent articles regarding the success of King Solomon Academy, co-founded by Ron Beller and Jennifer Moses.

Founder	Educational Program	Educational Technology & Innovation	New School Experience	Finance	Facilities	Governance	Fundraising	Operations	Community Outreach
Ron Beller	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Jennifer Moses	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Natalie Walchuk	x	x	x					x	x
Markus Mullarkey				x		x	x	x	
Chayla Gibson			x		x			x	x
Rui Bao				x				x	x
Pete Briger				x	x	x	x	x	
Dan Katzir	x	x				x	x	x	
Vivian Wu		x		x		x	x	x	

### III. Community Outreach and Support

Members of the Vallejo community have demonstrated strong support for Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter. We have been in discussions with 68 parents in the Vallejo community who have expressed interest in being part of our Founding Family and hosting events for friends they believe would be interested in enrolling at Caliber. As of April 20, 2015, we have conducted over 25 individual and small group meetings with community and parent leaders from across the district.

We have collected more than 250 petition signatures from parents who are meaningfully interested in enrolling their children at Caliber. These signatures can be found in Appendix 2. We have specific plans for continued outreach as we progress through the school planning and start-up phases. See Element G for information regarding community meetings held thus far as well as a student recruitment plan. In addition, Appendix 3 shows sample distribution materials shared within the community.

In addition to strong support from families, we have received strong support from a number of community leaders. These leaders have visited our Richmond campus to observe our model and share our commitment to providing educational options that prepare students for competitive colleges, careers and communities. See Appendix 4 for letters of support from Jerry Kea, Dean of Solano Community College; Sarah Creighton-Kirley, Founding Family member of Vallejo Charter School; and Daniel Blankenship, Executive Director of Vallejo Futbol Academy.

Strong communication and substantive collaboration with families and the community will remain a hallmark of Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter. Working together, we will provide students with an education that equips them with the knowledge, character, and skills they will need to succeed in competitive colleges, careers, and communities.

## 5. Element A: Description of the Educational Program

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

*The annual goals, for the charter school for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in paragraphs (2) to (8), inclusive, of subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served by the charter school, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals. A charter petition may identify additional school priorities, the goals for the school, and the specific annual actions to achieve those goals. – Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii)*

### I. Mission and Core Components of Caliber Schools

Our mission is to provide students with a challenging, engaging, and personalized education that equips them with the knowledge, character, and skills they will need to succeed in competitive colleges, careers, and communities.

Our educational philosophy derives from lessons we have learned from high-performing urban schools and research<sup>1</sup> on effective practices that can raise student achievement. In addition, our dedication to personalization and our desire to deeply engage students in taking responsibility for their learning requires innovation in how we structure our learning environment. For more information on each of the concepts below, please see the section entitled “How Learning Best Occurs” below.

#### Core Components of Caliber Schools

1. **High Expectations.** We believe all children can succeed in college and in life if they are willing to put in the work and believe in themselves and if they develop essential character traits such as grit and perseverance.
2. **Data Driven Instruction.** Our teachers will plan lessons and units based on feedback from educational software, student writing, ‘exit tickets’ and other student artifacts.
3. **Personalized Learning.** Each student will have a personalized learning plan (PLP). We will teach core content in part through “blended learning”

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<sup>1</sup> Research citations are embedded throughout, but for a good summary of the characteristics of existing high performing urban schools, see: Carter, Samuel Casey. *No Excuses: Lessons from 21 high Performing, High-Poverty Schools*. The Heritage Foundation, 2000.

that uses adaptive educational software. Students will take ownership of their learning.

4. **Continuous Improvement and Innovation.** Our school will be a laboratory for new ideas. We are committed to sharing with and learning from others.
5. **Exceptional Teaching and Instructional Leadership.** Our school leader will be an instructional leader responsible for improving the quality of our instruction. We will recruit and develop great teachers, who will work together as part of a collaborative professional community and benefit from opportunities for career advancement.
6. **Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum.** Students will be offered a challenging, Common Core-aligned curriculum. Computer coding will be our “second language.” We will have an intense focus on writing. Students will work in teams using a project-based learning (PBL) approach for science and social studies. The school day will be longer and the school calendar will be different.
7. **Supportive School Community with Rights and Responsibilities.** Our school community will be a family in which students take care of each other. We will use peer tutoring to help students take responsibility for others and demonstrate competence. We will partner with families. We cannot educate our students unless parents are informed, involved, and supportive.

## II. Target Population

### Population to be Served by the Charter School

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will grow to serve students in grades kindergarten through eight from throughout the Vallejo City Unified School District. As mandated in Ed. Code § 47605(d)(2)(A)-(C), Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will serve all families that submit an application for their children in corresponding grades up to our enrollment capacity. A public random drawing will be held should the number of applications received exceed the number of available spaces.

In the school’s first year, 2016-2017, our financial model reflects an assumption of 210 students across grades K, 1, 2, 3, and 6. Our target enrollment is 270 students across these grades – a target that was exceeded in Year 1 of our Richmond campus. However, as a new presence in the Vallejo community, we are aware of the possible challenges to enrolling fully 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades, which is why we have projected 30 students in each of these grade levels for year one, and 60 in K and 6th. We will fill these cohorts over time to reach a full cohort of 90 students per grade. Caliber will reach its full enrollment in the school’s fifth year, 2020-21, with 810 students, as represented in the table below.

CALIBER SCHOOLS: K-8 CHARTER PROJECTED ENROLLMENT					
Grade Level	Anticipated Enrollment Year 1 2016-17	Anticipated Enrollment Year 2 2017-18	Anticipated Enrollment Year 3 2018-19	Anticipated Enrollment Year 4 2019-2020	Anticipated Enrollment Year 5 2020-2021
K	60	90	90	90	90
1	30	75	90	90	90
2	30	45	90	90	90
3	30	45	60	90	90
4		45	60	75	90
5			60	75	90
6	60	90	90	90	90
7		75	90	90	90
8			90	90	90
<b>Totals</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>810</b>

Caliber will seek to enroll a student population that mirrors the demographics of the public elementary and middle schools in Vallejo, but will make particular efforts to recruit lower income children. According to the California Department of Education, the 2013-14 student body attending district elementary and middle schools in Vallejo was 71% Free/Reduced Lunch, 19% English Language Learners, 36% Latino and 30% African American<sup>2</sup>. 11% of all K-8 students attending Vallejo schools were classified as Special Education students as of December 2013<sup>3</sup>.

**Need for the proposed school**

According to STAR data from 2011-2013, at least 64% of both 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in VCUSD are testing at the basic, below basic, or far below

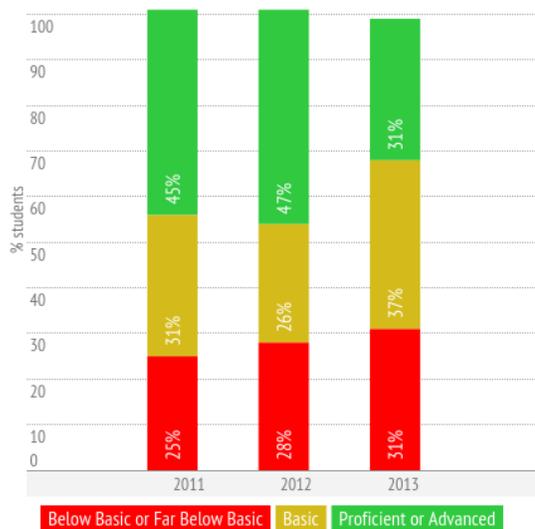
<sup>2</sup> <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

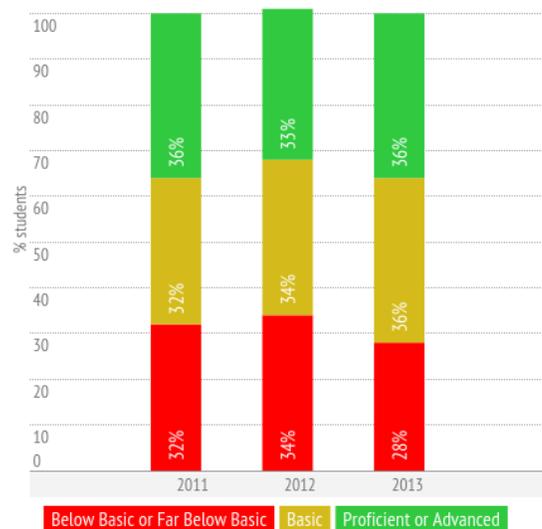
basic levels in English Language Arts<sup>4</sup>. As per the California Department of Education website, the basic level “represents limited performance. Students demonstrate a partial and rudimentary understanding of the knowledge and skills measured by this assessment, at this grade, in this content area.”<sup>5</sup> Developing strong literacy skills is critical to students’ future academic achievement. According to the National Research Council, “Academic success, as defined by high school graduation, can be predicted with reasonable accuracy by knowing someone’s reading skill at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. A person who is not at least a modestly skilled reader by that time is unlikely to graduate from high school.”<sup>6</sup>

Figures 1 and 2 below show that across grades and over the past three years, up to 2/3 of students in VCUSD have not tested proficient or advanced in English Language Arts.

*Figure 1: 3<sup>rd</sup> grade STAR scores in English–Language Arts, 2011–2013*



*Figure 2: 8<sup>th</sup> grade STAR scores in English–Language Arts, 2011–2013*



Mastery of math skills in early years is critical to future success by providing college and career options, and increasing prospects for future income. According to the National Mathematics Advisory Panel, a strong mathematical foundation “correlates powerfully with access to college, graduation from college, and earning in the top quartile of income from

<sup>4</sup> <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

<sup>5</sup> [http://star.cde.ca.gov/star2012/help\\_scoreexplanations.aspx](http://star.cde.ca.gov/star2012/help_scoreexplanations.aspx)

<sup>6</sup> National Research Council (1998) <http://www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/ReadDiff>

employment.”<sup>7</sup> The panel notes that the importance of a strong mathematical foundation will increase with time, as the National Science Board has indicated the growth of jobs in the mathematics-intensive science and engineering workforce is outpacing overall job growth by 3:1.

STAR data from 2011–2013 shows that at least 53% of students in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in VCUSD are testing at proficient or advanced levels in Math (Figure 3). However, by 7<sup>th</sup> grade this number has dropped dramatically. In 2012, only 28% of students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade were scoring at proficient or advanced levels, and in 2013 this figure dropped to 22%. (Figure 4). <sup>8</sup> Note that 7<sup>th</sup> grade results are used here rather than 8<sup>th</sup> grade because over 80% of VCUSD students took the 7<sup>th</sup> grade CST General Mathematics Exam, whereas only 30–60% of students took each of the CST math exams for 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

Figure 3: 3<sup>rd</sup> grade STAR scores in Mathematics, 2011–2013



Figure 4: 7<sup>th</sup> grade STAR scores in Mathematics, 2011–2013



The trend of declining mathematical proficiency is concerning for the future of VCUSD students. According to research, “The achievement gap between students of differing ethnic and socioeconomic groups can be significantly reduced or even eliminated if low income and minority students increase their success in high school mathematics and science courses”<sup>9</sup> However,

<sup>7</sup> The Final Report of the Mathematics Advisory Panel (2008), <http://www2.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/mathpanel/report/final-report.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

<sup>9</sup> Evan, A., Gray, T., & Olchefske, J. (2006). *The gateway to student success in mathematics and science*. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.

students are entering high school with low proficiency in basic math, making it nearly impossible for them to succeed in high school and beyond.

The California State Board of Education set the statewide API target at 800 out of a possible 1,000. The 2013 weighted 3 year API average show that out of 16 elementary schools, 15 are below 800. All four middle schools are also below 800.

The federal law requires schools, districts, and the state as a whole to demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in English/language arts and math. To do this, student test results are matched to Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) based on proficiency levels. In 2013, 0 out of 20 elementary or middle schools in VCUSD achieved Adequate Yearly Progress.

All schools in California are ranked compared to 100 other schools with similar demographic characteristics, educational challenges and opportunities. Schools are then ranked into deciles receiving a 1 (low) - 10 (high).

According to the 2013 Academic Performance Index (API) state ranking, 70% (14 out of 20) of VCUSD elementary or middle schools fall in the lowest three deciles as compared to schools across the state.<sup>10</sup>

The table below summarizes the demographic characteristics and Academic Performance Index results for the VCUSD elementary and middle schools located in Vallejo.

General info		Student info (%)			Student demographics (%)					Performance			
School name	Type	Enrollment	FRL	ELA	Hispanic	Af-Am	Asian or Pacific Islander	White	Other	Weighted 3 year API average	Met state API standards?	Met AYP standards?	2013 API ranking
Annie Pennycook Elementary	E	576	66%	15%	27%	29%	20%	17%	7%	791	No	No	4
Beverly Hills Elementary	E	283	88%	34%	53%	34%	4%	6%	4%	718	No	No	1
Cave Language Academy	E	231	74%	47%	65%	17%	5%	7%	6%	658	No	No	1
Dan Mini Elementary	E	545	81%	44%	44%	18%	30%	6%	2%	781	No	No	4
Elsa Widenmann Elementary	E	465	88%	40%	49%	31%	15%	3%	2%	711	No	No	1
Federal Terrace Elementary	E	414	78%	30%	36%	33%	21%	7%	3%	732	No	No	2
Glen Cove Elementary	E	517	60%	17%	23%	30%	27%	12%	7%	750	No	No	3
Grace Patterson Elementary	E	365	93%	41%	48%	39%	8%	4%	1%	709	No	No	1
Highland Elementary	E	641	91%	38%	54%	27%	7%	6%	6%	757	No	No	3
Johnston Cooper Elementary	E	574	81%	26%	33%	40%	13%	7%	6%	750	No	No	3
Joseph H. Wardlaw Elementary	E	908	52%	15%	18%	27%	45%	8%	2%	833	Yes	No	7
Lincoln Elementary	E	219	96%	26%	40%	43%	7%	7%	3%	725	No	No	2
Loma Vista Environmental Science Academy	E	509	84%	30%	43%	35%	13%	6%	4%	678	No	No	1
Mare Island Health And Fitness Academy	E	473	83%	24%	48%	24%	10%	15%	3%	746	No	No	2
Steffan Manor Elementary	E	676	84%	32%	49%	23%	13%	12%	4%	792	No	No	4
Vallejo Charter	E	526	48%	7%	26%	26%	14%	27%	7%	781	No	No	4
Franklin Middle	M	699	88%	11%	44%	38%	11%	4%	3%	634	No	No	1
Hogan Middle	M	1118	61%	5%	24%	33%	28%	10%	5%	721	No	No	2
Mare Island Technology Academy	M	441	67%	6%	49%	17%	20%	14%	1%	780	No	No	5
Solano Middle	M	710	80%	16%	32%	35%	24%	4%	5%	674	No	No	1

<sup>10</sup> <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>. 2011 results. Similar Schools rankings for 2012 have not yet been released.

These results demonstrate that a significant majority of students attending public school in Vallejo are unlikely to be able to gain entrance into or succeed in a competitive college. We believe that all children, regardless of the circumstances into which they are born, deserve the opportunity to receive a rigorous, college-preparatory public education that equips them to pursue whatever professional paths they choose. VCUSD's vision statement includes the goal that "every student to see clear attainable pathways to career and/or college success."<sup>11</sup> We believe that in order to achieve this mission, VCUSD needs more high quality public school options. Caliber will provide a rigorous education that prepares students to succeed in competitive colleges, careers, and communities.

### **How We Will Meet the Needs of Our Target Population**

The needs of Caliber's target population are great. As evidenced by the data above, we believe that current public education options are not meeting the needs of all students in Vallejo. The needs of our target population go beyond the academic realm. The very real presence of violence and poverty in many parts of the community means that social, emotional, and character development must be an integral part of our students' education in order for them to be successful both academically and personally. We also know that many students are choosing to disengage from their education at a very early age, as evidenced by high discipline and suspension rates at many VCUSD elementary and middle schools. According to data from CDE, the suspension rate across elementary and middle schools in VCUSD in 2011–2013 ranged from 11% to 14%.<sup>12</sup> This indicates a need for relevant coursework that engages students in the moment while providing them with tangible skills that they can use to find a job in the future.

Knowing these challenges, we have designed Caliber to provide personalized instruction for each student, with a focus on character development and relevant skills that will enable students to succeed in today's economy. We will hold high expectations for all of our students academically and yet we know that our students will enter with a broad range of academic abilities and progress at different rates. Through a blended learning and workshop model of instruction, students will be met at their level and guided towards competency with more personalized instructional supports. The personalized learning plan (PLP) – updated frequently in a one-on-one conference with a

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<sup>11</sup> [http://www.vallejo.k12.ca.us/cms/page\\_view?d=x&piid=&vpid=1310029251984](http://www.vallejo.k12.ca.us/cms/page_view?d=x&piid=&vpid=1310029251984)

<sup>12</sup> <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

teacher – is at the heart of our model, and will ensure that students are truly progressing towards competency and beyond.

We know that our students, particularly at the youngest ages, need to be explicitly taught and given opportunities to practice following the rules, respectfully interacting with adults and their peers, and managing emotions and resolving conflict appropriately. Regular class meetings, family-style meals and direct instruction in rules and tools will enable our students to develop these socio-emotional skills. Character development is built into the Personalized Learning Plan, and the frequent conferences each student has with his or her teacher will enable students to reflect on their participation in the class and school community and learn and grow from their mistakes and successes.

### III. What It Means to be an Educated Person in the 21st Century

Educated citizens in the 21st century are able to use their knowledge and skills to understand and improve both society and themselves. This ability requires that students achieve the competencies described below, in order to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners who are prepared for competitive colleges, careers, and communities.

California’s adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which were designed to scaffold learning toward college and career readiness starting in Kindergarten provides an excellent framework for understanding what content and skills students need to succeed. The authors of the CCSS have worked with colleges and the business community to determine where students need to be for literacy (in fiction, non-fiction, science, and social studies) and math at each grade level in order to ensure readiness for college after high school. The more general summary of student competencies below is adapted from the CCSS website<sup>13</sup>.

In addition to the CCSS, we also believe that students need certain other “21<sup>st</sup> century skills,” such as flexibility and self-direction, to succeed in competitive careers and become self-motivated, competent and lifelong learners. Those skills listed below are from the earning.<sup>14</sup> Finally, to provide students with tangible skills in a particular sector, we offer computer programming and robotics as a way to introduce students early on to a career path that is in high demand, particularly in the Bay Area.

#### **College and Career Readiness**

Students who are college and career ready:

- **Demonstrate independence.** In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, students will need to be savvy consumers and producers of information, and this work of

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.corestandards.org/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.p21.org/overview/skills-framework>. See Appendix 5.8 for more information.

comprehending, analyzing, synthesizing, applying, and communicating information requires independent judgment. Students can, without significant scaffolding, comprehend and evaluate complex texts across a range of types and disciplines, and they can construct effective arguments and convey intricate or multifaceted information. Likewise, students are able independently to discern a speaker's key points, request clarification, and ask relevant questions. They build on others' ideas, articulate their own ideas, and confirm they have been understood. Without prompting, they demonstrate command of standard English and acquire and use a wide-ranging vocabulary. More broadly, they become self-directed learners, effectively seeking out and using resources to assist them, including teachers, peers, and print and digital reference materials.

- **Assessment:** Student performance on ELA, social studies, and science interim and summative exams and projects; teacher observations of student behavior.
- **Build strong content knowledge.** Although we live in a world in which content knowledge seems readily available online, students need to establish a base of knowledge that they can access immediately in order to solve problems, engage in discussions, and have reference points to help with comprehension of more difficult content. Students establish a base of knowledge across a wide range of subject matter by engaging with works of quality and substance. They become proficient in new areas through research and study. They read purposefully and listen attentively to gain both general knowledge and discipline-specific expertise. They refine and share their knowledge through writing and speaking.
  - **Assessment:** Student performance on interim and summative exams and projects assessing mastery of content standards in ELA, math, social studies, science, and computing (for older students).
- **Respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.** Students adapt their communication in relation to audience, task, purpose, and discipline. They set and adjust purpose for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use as warranted by the task. They appreciate nuances, such as how the composition of an audience should affect tone when speaking and how the connotations of words affect meaning. They also know that different disciplines call for different types of evidence (e.g., documentary evidence in history, experimental evidence in science).
  - **Assessment:** Student performance on ELA interim and summative exams and projects, particularly writing, and

secondarily through performance on social studies, science, and math interim and summative assessments, where appropriate.

- **Comprehend as well as critique.** Students are engaged and open-minded—but discerning—readers and listeners. They work diligently to understand precisely what an author or speaker is saying, but they also question an author’s or speaker’s assumptions and premises and assess the veracity of claims and the soundness of reasoning.
  - **Assessment:** Student performance on interim and summative exams and projects in ELA and social studies, particularly through the written form.
- **Value evidence.** Students cite specific evidence when offering an oral or written interpretation of a text. They use relevant evidence when supporting their own points in writing and speaking, making their reasoning clear to the reader or listener, and they constructively evaluate others’ use of evidence.
  - **Assessment:** Student performance on interim and summative exams and projects in all subject areas.
- **Use technology and digital media strategically and capably.** Students employ technology thoughtfully to enhance their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language use. They tailor their searches online to acquire useful information efficiently, and they integrate what they learn using technology with what they learn offline. They are familiar with the strengths and limitations of various technological tools and mediums and can select and use those best suited to their communication goals.
  - **Assessment:** Primarily through student performance on interim and summative projects in computing, social studies, and science, and secondarily through ELA and math tasks.
- **Understand other perspectives and cultures.** Students appreciate that the twenty-first-century classroom and workplace are settings in which people from often widely divergent cultures and who represent diverse experiences and perspectives must learn and work together. Students actively seek to understand other perspectives and cultures through reading and listening, and they are able to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds. They evaluate other points of view critically and constructively. Through reading great classic and contemporary works of literature representative of a variety of periods, cultures, and worldviews, students can vicariously inhabit worlds and have experiences much different than their own.

- **Assessment:** Student performance on social studies projects as well as written responses to fiction and non-fiction texts in ELA.
- **Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.** When presented with a problem, students start by explaining to themselves the meaning of the problem and looking for entry points to its solution. They analyze givens, constraints, relationships, and goals. They make conjectures about the form and meaning of the solution and plan a solution pathway rather than simply jumping into a solution attempt. They consider analogous problems, and try special cases and simpler forms of the original problem in order to gain insight into its solution. They monitor and evaluate their progress and change course if necessary. They can understand the approaches of others to solving complex problems and identify correspondences between different approaches.
  - **Assessment:** Primarily through student performance on interim and summative assessments in mathematics, as well as through computer programming and science projects, and secondarily through social studies projects.
- **Reason abstractly and quantitatively.** Educated citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century need to make sense of quantities and their relationships in problem situations. They bring two complementary abilities to bear on problems involving quantitative relationships: the ability to *decontextualize*—to abstract a given situation and represent it symbolically and manipulate the representing symbols as if they have a life of their own—and the ability to *contextualize*, to pause as needed during the manipulation process in order to probe into the referents for the symbols involved. Quantitative reasoning entails habits of creating a coherent representation of the problem at hand; considering the units involved; attending to the meaning of quantities, not just how to compute them; and knowing and flexibly using different properties of operations and objects.
  - **Assessment:** Primarily through interim and summative exams in mathematics.
- **Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.** Students understand and use stated assumptions, definitions, and previously established results in constructing arguments. They make conjectures and build a logical progression of statements to explore the truth of their conjectures. They are able to analyze situations by breaking them into cases, and can recognize and use counterexamples. They justify their conclusions, communicate them to others, and respond to the arguments of others. They reason inductively about data, making plausible arguments that take into account the context from

which the data arose. Proficient students are also able to compare the effectiveness of two plausible arguments, distinguish correct logic or reasoning from that which is flawed, and—if there is a flaw in an argument—explain what it is. Elementary students can construct arguments using concrete referents such as objects, drawings, diagrams, and actions. Such arguments can make sense and be correct, even though they are not generalized or made formal until later grades. Later, students learn to determine domains to which an argument applies. Students at all grades can listen or read the arguments of others, decide whether they make sense, and ask useful questions to clarify or improve the arguments.

- **Assessment:** Primarily through student performance on interim and summative math assessments as well as computer programming projects.
- **Model with mathematics.** Mathematically proficient students can apply the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life, society, and the workplace. In early grades, this might be as simple as writing an addition equation to describe a situation. In middle grades, a student might apply proportional reasoning to plan a school event or analyze a problem in the community. Mathematically proficient students who can apply what they know are comfortable making assumptions and approximations to simplify a complicated situation, realizing that these may need revision later. They are able to identify important quantities in a practical situation and map their relationships using such tools as diagrams, two-way tables, graphs, flowcharts and formulas. They can analyze those relationships mathematically to draw conclusions. They routinely interpret their mathematical results in the context of the situation and reflect on whether the results make sense, possibly improving the model if it has not served its purpose.
  - **Assessment:** Student performance on interim and summative mathematics exams.
- **Use appropriate tools strategically.** Students can consider the available tools when solving a problem. These tools might include pencil and paper, concrete models, a ruler, a calculator, productivity or content creation software such as PowerPoint, Word, Excel, iMovie, or a spreadsheet. Proficient students are sufficiently familiar with tools appropriate for their grade or course to make sound decisions about when each of these tools might be helpful, recognizing both the insight to be gained and their limitations.
  - **Assessment:** Primarily through student performance on projects in science, social studies, and computing.

- **Attend to precision.** Proficient students try to communicate precisely to others. They try to use clear definitions in discussion with others and in their own reasoning. They state the meaning of the symbols they choose, for example, by using the equal sign consistently and appropriately, or by using a consistent method and template for all lab experiments and reports. In math and science, they are careful about specifying units of measure, and labeling axes to clarify the correspondence with quantities in a problem. They calculate accurately and efficiently, express numerical answers with a degree of precision appropriate for the problem context. In the elementary grades, students give carefully formulated explanations to each other.
  - **Assessment:** Student performance on interim and summative assessments in mathematics as well as student performance on science and computing projects.
  
- **Look for and make use of patterns and structure.** Well-educated students look closely to discern a pattern or structure. Young students, for example, might notice that three and seven more is the same amount as seven and three more, or they may sort a collection of shapes according to how many sides the shapes have. They may conduct experiments and notice that the experimental group all exhibited the same phenomena (e.g. all the plants who received more sunlight grew faster). They may examine historical events and notice similar patterns in governmental structures, the causes of conflict, and the characteristics of wealthy societies.
  - **Assessment:** Student performance on science and social studies projects as well as performance on relevant standards in mathematics and ELA (for example, sentence structure, poetry structure, etc.).

The following abilities come from the Framework for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning.

- **Adapt to change.** Students can adapt to varied roles, job responsibilities, schedules, and context. They can work effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities. They can *be flexible*, by incorporating feedback effectively, dealing positively with praise, setbacks and criticism. They can understand, negotiate and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multi-cultural environments.
  - **Assessment:** Student performance on projects in social studies, science, and computing.
  
- **Manage goals and time.** Students can set goals with tangible and intangible success criteria. They can balance tactical (short-term) and

- strategic (long-term) goals. They can utilize time and manage workload efficiently.
- **Assessment:** Student performance on projects in social studies, science, and computing, as well as student participation in one-on-one coaching.
  - **Work independently.** Students can monitor, define, prioritize, and complete tasks without direct oversight.
    - **Assessment:** Teacher observation of student performance while working independently during personalized blended learning time.
  - **Be self-directed learners.** Students can go beyond basic mastery of skills and/or curriculum to explore and expand their own learning and opportunities to gain expertise. They can demonstrate initiative to advance skill levels towards a professional level. They can demonstrate commitment to learning as a lifelong process. They can reflect critically on past experiences in order to inform future progress.
    - **Assessment:** Teacher observation of student performance while working independently during personalized blended learning time, as well as performance during project-based learning
  - **Interact effectively with others.** Students know when it is appropriate to listen and when to speak. They conduct themselves in a respectable, professional manner.
    - **Assessment:** Student performance on projects in social studies, science, and computing, as well as teacher observations during class time, lunch time, etc.
  - **Work effectively in diverse teams.** Students respect cultural differences and work effectively with people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds. They respond open-mindedly to different ideas and values. They leverage social and cultural differences to create new ideas and increase both innovation and quality of work.
    - **Assessment:** Student performance on projects in social studies, science, and computing.
  - **Manage projects:** Students set and meet goals, even in the face of obstacles and competing pressure. They prioritize, plan and manage work to achieve the intended result.

- **Assessment:** Student performance on projects in social studies, science, and computing.
- **Produce results:** Students demonstrate additional attributes associated with producing high quality products including the abilities to:
  - Work positively and ethically
  - Manage time and projects effectively
  - Multi-task
  - Participate actively as well as be reliable and punctual
  - Present oneself professionally and with proper etiquette
  - Collaborate and cooperate effectively with teams
  - Respect and appreciate team diversity
  - Be accountable for results
    - **Assessment:** Student performance on projects in social studies, science, and computing, as well as general participation such as attendance, questioning, etc. during class.
- **Guide and lead others.** Students can use interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence and guide others toward a goal. They can leverage strengths of others to accomplish a common goal. They can inspire others to reach their very best via example and selflessness. They demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior in using influence and power.
  - **Assessment:** Student performance on projects in social studies, science, and computing. For older students – peer tutoring performance.
- **Be responsible to others.** They can act responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind
  - **Assessment:** Student performance during projects as well as teacher observations of classroom behavior and behavior during peer tutoring (for older students), whole-group meetings, lunch, extended day, etc.

#### IV. How Learning Best Occurs

The set of learning goals from the section above is ambitious. In order to achieve them, Caliber will implement a set of core components that summarizes our view of how learning best occurs. The set of components results in a unique Caliber learning model that will equip students with the

necessary content and skills to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.

## 1. High Expectations in Academics and Character

**We believe all children can succeed in college and in life** if they are willing to put in the work and believe in themselves. Our curriculum will be rigorous and college preparatory. There is a substantial body of research that shows that high expectations<sup>15</sup> and a growth mindset<sup>16</sup> can positively affect student performance. Our program will be built around this belief.

**We also believe that character is critical to student success** and will interweave a character curriculum into our academic program. We will expect and support students to behave appropriately and develop essential character traits such as grit and perseverance that they will need to succeed in college and in life. Some of the ways that we build personal strength at Caliber include:

- **Frequent class circles** where we discuss specific character traits and offer testimonials of strengths in action.
- **Integrating Restorative Justice, Mindfulness, and Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)** through the school day to develop and reinforce appropriate school behaviors.
- **A “personal strengths” section on our PLP**, where teachers write about student character strengths in the following areas:
  - **Self-Awareness**
    - Develop and demonstrate self awareness skills to:
      - Identify personal, cultural, and linguistic assets
      - Identify prejudices and biases towards people different than oneself  
Understand the connections between one’s emotions, social contexts and identity
      - Demonstrate an accurate self-concept based on one’s strengths and challenges
      - Identify when help is needed and who can provide it
  - **Self-Management**
    - Develop and demonstrate self-management skills to:
      - Regulate one’s emotions and behaviors in contexts

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<sup>15</sup> See Education Partnerships, Inc.: <http://gearup.ous.edu/sites/default/files/Research-Briefs/ResearchBriefHighExpectations.pdf> as well as The Power of High Expectations: Closing the Gap in Your Classroom, from Teach for America’s Teaching as Leadership: [http://teachingasleadership.org/sites/default/files/Related-Readings/DCA\\_Ch2\\_2011.pdf](http://teachingasleadership.org/sites/default/files/Related-Readings/DCA_Ch2_2011.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> For more on the growth mindset, see “Mindset” by Carol Dweck: <http://mindsetonline.com/>

- with people different than oneself
  - Motivate oneself to set and achieve goals
- Social Awareness
  - Develop and demonstrate social awareness skills to:
    - Establish and maintain healthy interactions and relationships across diverse communities
    - Embrace diversity and take the perspectives of people different from oneself
    - Demonstrate empathy for people similar to and different from oneself
- Relationship Skills
  - Develop and demonstrate relationship skills to:
    - Relate to people similar to and different than oneself
    - Communicate clearly and effectively
    - Build, establish and maintain healthy relationships
- Responsible Decision Making
  - Develop and demonstrate responsible decision-making skills to:
    - Problem solve effectively while being respectful of people similar to and different from oneself
    - Behave responsibly in personal, professional, and community contexts
    - Make constructive and respectful choices that consider the well-being of self and others

## 2. Personalized Learning

**Each student will have a personalized learning plan (PLP).** This plan will show information about a student’s background, his or her current achievement levels and pace, as well as his or her learning goals and strategies. In this way, students will know where they need to speed up or get help. See Appendix 5.2 for an example of the PLP we are using currently. We will offer one-on-one coaching so that students can update their learning plans and gain increased independence in managing their time and work.

**We will teach core content through “blended learning.”** Students will learn core Math and ELA content through a combination of whole group, small group, one-on-one, and customized independent learning. Approximately 30% of a student’s time during this portion of the day will be spent with adaptive online curricula. Our adaptive online programs will engage students

at or above their skill level (their “zone of proximal development”<sup>17</sup>) and provide regular feedback regarding his or her gaps in knowledge. Some benefits of online curricula are:

- a. Repetition: Students can reinforce skills with multiple on-line lessons targeted at a particular skill as needed without the teacher having to re-teach an entire class.
- b. Adaptivity: Many online software programs will adjust the problems that a student sees based on whether they just answered correctly or incorrectly. The pathway through the curriculum is thus customized to each student’s needs.
- c. Failure is motivational: Many online software programs use game design to ensure that students stay motivated. Thus, students who are struggling get encouragement to improve rather than feeling like they have failed simply because they are moving at a slower pace.

**Teachers will use data to personalize instruction.** Teachers will use daily student progress data, generated through online programs and their own teaching, to inform the scheduling and composition of small-group tutorials<sup>18</sup>. In addition, they will use interim assessments and other formative assessments such as MAP and DRA to determine when students have reached competence in a given area. Students and teachers will discuss this evidence during individual coaching sessions.

Our staff will be focused on helping our students achieve competence in each subject area. Teachers cannot just cover material, they must make sure their students understand and eventually master the material. This reflection on student performance is critical to our model. As Paul Bambrick-Santoyo writes in his book Leverage Leadership, “Effective instruction is not about whether we taught it. It’s about whether the students learned it” (p. 23). According to Leverage Leadership, there are four steps to creating a data-driven instructional model: assessment, analysis, action and systems creation.<sup>19</sup>

### Assessment

At Caliber, we will not assume that students have gained competency in any particular area until we see evidence. We will gather evidence daily (through mastery quizzes, teacher questioning and conference, as well as through

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<sup>17</sup>See “Personal Learning Environments and the Revolution of Vygotsky’s Zones of Proximal Development” by Ismael Pena-Lopez: <http://ictlogy.net/20120831-personal-learning-environments-and-the-revolution-of-vygotskys-zone-of-proximal-development/>

<sup>18</sup> The positive benefits of one-on-one tutoring and mastery learning are summarized in the influential Benjamin Bloom study, “The Two Sigma Problem: The Search for Methods of Group Instruction as Effective as 1:1 Tutoring” (Bloom 1984). <http://www.comp.dit.ie/dgordon/Courses/ILT/ILT0004/TheTwoSigmaProblem.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> For an overview of the research supporting this approach, please see “Using Student Achievement Data to Support Instructional Decision Making”, from the What Works Clearinghouse. [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice\\_guides/dddm\\_pg\\_092909.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/dddm_pg_092909.pdf)

assessments embedded in online programs), weekly or biweekly (through unit tests) and approximately every 6 weeks (interim assessments). Our assessments will serve as opportunities for students to show evidence that they have achieved competence. Our curriculum will start from grade-level standards but the real work happens when we ask what the evidence of meeting such standards will look like. We will use a combination of daily assessments to determine mastery of individual skills, as well as interim assessments and projects to determine whether this competence has been retained as well as whether it can be applied to novel situations that require the application of multiple skills to solve more complex problems. In general, a score of 80% *for the questions pertaining to a specific learning objective* indicates competence in that objective, but this can change depending on the learning objective in question.

### Analysis and Action

Once teachers collect evidence, they will analyze it for patterns and take action to improve. Teachers will analyze four different types of evidence: in-the-moment, daily, weekly, and interim assessments, and each serves a particular purpose.

Type of Evidence	When is it analyzed?	What steps might be taken?
<p><b>Just-in-time.</b> (For example, when a teacher is questioning the class or a particular student)</p>	<p>In-the-moment. The teacher can use evidence from a few selected students as a proxy for the whole class' understanding and adjust the lesson. This type of analysis is faster but less personalized, because the students the teacher selects are not fully representative of each student's understanding.</p>	<p>The teacher can adjust the lesson on-the-spot, by spending more or less time on a topic, by quickly changing a grouping, or by deciding to coach a student individually.</p>
<p><b>Daily.</b> (For example, through the reports from an online learning provider, through homework, or through digital exit slips)</p>	<p>Daily (the teacher may analyze this evidence during prep periods)</p>	<p>The teacher may use this evidence to adjust the next day's instruction. Daily evidence can affect groupings, pacing, content, or some mix of all three.</p>

<p><b>Weekly.</b> (For example, through weekly quizzes)</p>	<p>During weekly prep time, during prep periods, or outside the school day</p>	<p>The teacher may use this evidence to check off competence on the personalized learning plan and to inform frequent one-on-one meetings with each student; the teacher may adjust unit planning and weekly groupings; the teacher may use this to reflect on and improve individual lesson planning</p>
<p><b>Interim</b> (For example, through longer-term projects, formative assessments that test retention, etc.)</p>	<p>During weekly prep time; during teacher retreats or on “data days”</p>	<p>The teacher will use this to get a big-picture trajectory of whether the class is on track; to help students set longer-term goals; to review the efficacy of projects; to determine longer-term retention versus short-term retention</p>

Systems

There are several systems that Caliber will put in place to ensure continual data-driven improvement:

- **Common and Aligned Assessments:** Classes teaching the same standards will use the same assessments. Bambrick-Santoyo writes about Mike Mann, a School Leader who explained, “Measuring outcomes is only useful if you know what the target should be. If the target is different in each classroom, then we have no way to know how students are doing across the cohort relative to each other. The students are stuck with varying degrees of rigor depending on which teacher they have. That’s not fair to our students.” Assessments must also be aligned to each other so that students have one set of learning objectives rather than multiple redundant or contradictory objectives. Our unit tests will align to the end of year tests, which will align to the Common Core State Standards. In addition, our teachers will create the assessment for each unit before that unit begins, such that the curriculum is aligned to the assessment. Therefore teachers will know what curriculum needs to be taught to ensure students are successful.

- **Common Time to Analyze Assessments:** Teachers at Caliber will engage in planning time each Friday when they can examine student evidence of learning and compare it to what was taught in order to make adjustments. In addition, the school will engage in a common calendar of interim assessments so that all staff members understand that learning, not teaching, is the primary goal at Caliber. By creating common schedules around collecting and analyzing evidence of student learning, we will build a culture focused on using evidence, rather than intuition, to guide the continuous improvement of our teaching practices and our student performance. Personalized Learning Plans that collect all the data in one place will be sent home five times a year.
- **Common Processes for Data Analysis:** With the support of a data analyst, Caliber will use common processes and protocols for analyzing data.

**Students will take ownership of their learning<sup>20</sup>.** We believe that students should be engaged in designing their learning experience. Students at Caliber will take ownership of their personalized learning plans via frequent one-on-one coaching sessions with teachers, where they will set goals and strategies. Over time we will teach students how to work independently with significant choice about when, how, where, and with whom they work.

### 3. Continuous Improvement and Innovation.

**Our school will be a laboratory for new ideas.** We will continually evaluate the approaches and programs we are using to critically assess what is working and what is not and to look for opportunities to improve. We will also continually look for new approaches (both online and offline) that can improve the educational experience for our students and the professional experience for our teachers. We will be a data driven school. As we try new approaches, we will closely evaluate their effectiveness and focus on what works. The School Leader and Assistant Principal, with input from the entire staff, will engage in termly reflections to plan new pilots and assess what is working and what requires improvement.

**We are committed to sharing with and learning from others.** We believe that educational outcomes for all students will only improve through the sharing of best practices. We plan to share our program with other schools in Vallejo and beyond. Our doors will always be open for educators to visit our classrooms and critique our model. Similarly, we plan to learn from best practices locally and nationally. We look forward to the feedback and collaboration with other VCUSD schools and with other schools in the Bay Area and around the country.

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<sup>20</sup> See “Developing Responsible and Autonomous Learners: A Key to Motivating Students” by Barbara McCombs, Ph.D.: <http://www.apa.org/education/k12/learners.aspx?item=1>

#### 4. Exceptional Teaching and Instructional Leadership

**Our school leader will be an instructional leader** responsible for improving the quality of our teaching. The primary role of our school leader will be to support and develop teachers. S/he will provide real time feedback to teachers through frequent observations and coaching sessions. The school leader's role will be practical and focused on low-stakes feedback cycles that directly impact classroom instruction.<sup>21</sup>

**We will recruit and develop great teachers.** We will seek staff with demonstrated leadership qualities in prior roles, expertise in their content areas, experience working with students from underserved communities, and the belief that all our children can get to and through college. Our teachers will also need to be flexible and data driven.

**Our teachers will be part of a collaborative professional learning community.** Teachers will spend one half-day per week working collaboratively to plan instruction and improve their performance, and teachers will have up to 25 days of PD each school year to develop best practice. Teachers will work in grade level and cross age teams to plan curricula, visit each other's classrooms, and model sample lessons.

See our staffing plan later in this section, which incorporates several opportunities for teachers to work collaboratively and plan together. In addition, our students will engage in frequent reflection sessions with teachers in order to discuss their performance and update their personal learning plans. They will also engage in frequent one-on-one conferencing during blended learning workshops, and teachers often end workshop blocks by asking students to reflect on their performance.

**We will provide opportunities for career advancement.** Our differentiated staffing model will provide teachers with opportunities to advance. Associate teachers will work alongside senior teachers, who will provide mentorship and peer development. Each grade level will be led by a grade level chair, who facilitates grade level planning and supports the development of senior and associate teachers on their team.

#### 5. Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum

**Students will be offered a challenging, Common Core-aligned curriculum** in English language arts (ELA), math, social studies and science. We do not

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<sup>21</sup> Sarah Archibald Ph.D. et al. "High Quality Professional Development for All Teachers" National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, February 2011.

assume that just because a topic was taught, it was learned. We will give students multiple opportunities to demonstrate competence. Ultimate progress is assessed by external norm-referenced measures.

**Computer coding will be our “second language”.** We want our students prepared for challenging careers in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math). All students will study computing, which includes robotics, engineering, and coding. At all levels our focus will be on logic and rule-based thinking, sequencing, and hands-on engineering, writing computer code, constructing online applications and programs, and participating in individual and group design projects.

**We will have an intense focus on writing.** We will have a daily writing block for all grade levels and will embed writing and speaking instruction throughout all content areas. Students will receive instruction in all essay formats with special attention to expository and persuasive styles in response to the changing demands of the Common Core. The integration of non-fiction and writing will play a large role in Science and Social Studies classes. Children will be taught to argue persuasively in writing and in speech for their point of view, while grounding it in claim and evidence. In particular, our ELL students will receive special support throughout the day in achieving English writing and speaking proficiency, using push-in and pull-out groups and additional support as needed.

#### Writing Throughout the Curriculum

Reading and writing will be embedded in all subject areas. Our own beliefs about effective literacy instruction, as well as the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, will make literacy throughout the curriculum essential in the Caliber learning experience. Our projects will require the application of foundational literacy skills to solve more complex problems in a team setting. For example, a project that focuses on studying immigration will require students to communicate in a variety of media, using some of the same techniques that they are being taught explicitly during literacy blocks. So, students who are learning about how to change time periods and tenses in their writing during their literacy block may have to employ this technique as part of their immigration project, perhaps by writing a memoir from the perspective of an immigrant.

In addition, students will be asked to use writing and speaking as a way to reflect on the learning process more generally. Each project will include an opening reflection and a closing reflection in which students will discuss the successes and challenges of the learning experience. In addition, during frequent one-on-one coaching sessions, students will write down their goals and strategies for the week. Other opportunities to practice speaking occur at whole-school or cross age activities, where students will read aloud and engage in group projects, and at breakfast, where students begin the day by discussing a shared table question.

## More Time for Literacy Instruction

To ensure that students have the literacy skills to achieve this level of rigor, we will focus on providing more time and more personalization for literacy instruction.

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Daily Literacy Instruction Time</u>
<b>K and 1</b>	120 minutes for reading instruction and/or independent reading; 45 minutes for writing; plus homework
<b>2 and 3</b>	105 minutes for reading instruction and/or independent reading; 60 minutes for writing; plus homework
<b>4 through 8</b>	45 minutes for reading instruction or independent reading; 60 minutes for writing/communication; plus independent learning time; plus homework

In grades K–1, students will have 120 minutes of reading instruction or independent reading time and 45 minutes of writing instruction every day for a total of 165 minutes per day of explicit literacy instruction.

In grades 2–3, students will have 165 minutes of explicit literacy instruction each day. This will be comprised of approximately 105 minutes of reading instruction or independent reading time and 60 minutes of writing instruction every day. This dedicated time for writing will be used to ensure that students not only spend time writing, but also spend time talking about and sharing their writing, which itself is a form of communication.

In grades 4–8, students will have approximately 105 minutes of explicit literacy instruction per day. Students will engage in a 45-minute independent reading or literature analysis seminar each morning. Based on what students have read or what students have discussed in the seminar or independent reading time, students will have 60 minutes of communication instruction, including but not limited to writing. At this point, reading and writing tasks will be deeply embedded into the project-based learning courses that students take for two hours each afternoon.

## More Personalized Literacy Instruction

Our approach to literacy will focus on personalization. We will use a balanced, workshop-style literacy approach that blends in adaptive literacy software. A typical reading block will consist of the teacher meeting with a small group of students while other students are either practicing reading independently or engaged in an adaptive online reading program. The small group will be chosen carefully by the teacher, based on the individual needs of students in that group. Likewise, the adaptive learning software will be able to move students at their own pace through a phonics and comprehension curriculum so that every student will be learning the right lesson, at the right time. During

independent reading, students will read books at a level that they have selected, in consultation with a teacher. This kind of independent learning will help students learn to read about their passions and explore their curiosity about particular subjects.

The same will be true for our approach to writing instruction. We will keep whole-class instruction to a minimum so that students have time to practice writing while teachers can conference individually or in small groups with students. This individual and small group time will enable the teacher to give targeted, personalized feedback that would not be possible using a whole-class approach. Utilizing software like No Red Ink, students will engage in discrete, personalized grammar instruction.

**All students , even K, will have science and social studies. We will use a project-based (PBL) approach.** Using hands-on science labs or social science investigations, students will start with a deep problem and learn relevant information they need to solve the problem or complete the investigation rather than learning without understanding the context or relevance of the subject matter.<sup>22</sup> Research shows the positive effects of a PBL approach.<sup>23</sup>

We want our students to achieve at or above grade level on all standardized tests, but we see that as a means, not an end, to the higher purpose of education. For our students to be successful in college and careers, they will need to solve and communicate their solutions to novel, real-life problems using a combination of critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity. As Daniel Pink writes, “We are preparing students for jobs that don’t yet exist, using technologies that haven’t yet been invented, to solve problems we haven’t yet encountered.”

We will achieve this through a project-based learning approach for science and social studies (and the interdisciplinary space between them). All projects will be aligned to the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards and will require the team-based application of foundational skills learned in literacy and math blocks. Through their work, students will demonstrate competency in performance tasks that they will need for future success. We focus on depth over breadth so students will learn a small number of skills or subjects deeply and can then apply this approach to learning to other skills or subjects.

**The school day will be longer and the school calendar will be structured to shorten summer learning loss.** Students will be in school from

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<sup>22</sup> See also the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s (OECD) report “21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning: Research, Innovation, and Policy”: <http://www.oecd.org/site/educeri21st/40554299.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> For a summary of this research to date, see <http://cell.uindy.edu/docs/PBL%20research%20summary.pdf>

approximately 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. every day except Friday, when school will end early for staff planning and collaboration. Instead of taking a long summer break – which research<sup>24</sup> shows leads to significant learning loss – Caliber will take a shorter summer break and a longer winter break. Other holidays will be aligned with the VCUSD school calendar. Caliber will offer an optional winter break camp during the second week of December for families who would prefer that their children are in school during this time. See Appendix 4.9 for the draft 2016–2017 school calendar.

## 6. Supportive School Community with Rights and Responsibilities

**We will partner with families. Our students do best when parents are informed, involved and supportive.** Teachers, parents, and students must work together as partners. Caregivers will always be welcome at the school and will be encouraged to volunteer at the school for at least 40 hours per year. The school will establish a Parent Teacher Partnership to ensure that families are valued and heard as essential stakeholders at Caliber. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(n), the Charter School shall notify the parents and guardians of applicant pupils and currently enrolled pupils that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the Charter School.

**Our school community will be a family in which students take care of each other.** Students will engage in a range of mixed age activities. These activities will create a close community within the school where older students will mentor and support younger students. Students will provide support for and celebrate the achievements of other schoolmates during school wide meetings and individual class celebrations. Meals will be served family style and students will share responsibility for serving and cleanup.

**We will use peer tutoring to help students take responsibility for others and enhance their learning.** At Caliber, students will tutor, coach, and model for their peers in structured ways that give them a sense of responsibility and respect for others. Older students will be trained to work with younger students and have the opportunity, once they have demonstrated competence in a subject to be a peer tutor.

### V. Curriculum and Instructional Design

*Charter school will have at least 175 days of instruction and*

*(1) For each fiscal year, offer, at a minimum, the following number of minutes of instruction:*

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<sup>24</sup> “Summer Learning Loss: The Problem and Some Solutions” by Harris Cooper ([http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref\\_Summer\\_Learning\\_Loss/](http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_Summer_Learning_Loss/))

- (A) To pupils in kindergarten, 36,000 minutes.
- (B) To pupils in grades 1 to 3, inclusive, 50,400 minutes.
- (C) To pupils in grades 4 to 8, inclusive, 54,000 minutes.
- (D) To pupils in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, 64,800 minutes.

### **Overview**

Caliber Schools will offer a Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade college-preparatory program. We anticipate our day running from 8:00 a.m. (with students welcome on campus from 7:30 am) to 4:00 p.m., except for Fridays, when students will be dismissed at 1:00 p.m. and teachers will stay for common planning and professional development. We offer free aftercare with curriculum-aligned and enrichment programming until 6 pm every school day. Our model will differ by grade band (K-1, 2-3, 4-5, and 6-8) and at each grade band we will have a slightly different approach in terms of staffing, time, and curriculum.

### **Where We Start: Definition of Outcomes and a Personalized Learning Plan**

Our school will begin by defining content and skills that are necessary for successful participation in competitive colleges, careers, and communities (as described above in the “what it means to be an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century” section). Based on this understanding of where we need to go, teachers work with each student and his/her family to create a Personalized Learning Plan (see Appendix 5.2) that shows what that student knows and what that student needs to know. This plan also includes information about the whole child that may influence his or her academic success. Students (and less frequently, parents) meet with their teacher to discuss and update this plan. With the plan as an anchor, we will offer students learning opportunities that will engage them and prepare them to demonstrate competency in a particular area.

### **Our Curriculum**

We will carefully review curricular materials for each subject and grade level to determine what will be appropriately rigorous, engaging, and personalized for our student population<sup>25</sup>. In reviewing curricula, we will ask ourselves the following questions:

- Is it aligned with Common Core State Standards. Next Generation Science Standards and California standards?
  - Is there research that shows that such curricula are successful, particularly for our student population?
  - Is this curriculum used in other high performing urban schools?
  - Is there appropriate support for developing teachers’ ability to plan with and implement the curriculum within the constraints of our particular school model?
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- Does the curriculum emphasize our core beliefs – is the curriculum challenging, personalized, and engaging, and conducive to continuous improvement?
- Does the curriculum accommodate our particular focus on writing and communication?

As described earlier, Caliber will be a laboratory for new ideas and approaches. We will continually look for new curriculum that can improve the educational experience for our students and the professional experience for our teachers. As we pilot new curriculum, we will closely evaluate its effectiveness and focus on what works.

**Current Curriculum Materials and Justification for Core Subjects (Subject to change based on research / new information)**

Subject	Online	Rationale	Offline	Rationale
ELA	iReady ThinkCerca Newsela Learning A-Z Razz Kids ABC Mouse No Red Ink	Used in high performing blended learning schools with a similar population; aligned to Common Core; engaging; used successfully with similar students <sup>26</sup>	Materials from the Teachers College Readers and Writers Project <sup>27</sup> + teacher-designed extensions	Variations on this workshop model are used in successful urban elementary schools such as the Harlem Success Academies. The curriculum has a strong focus on writing in particular.

<sup>26</sup> See the Mimio website for a case study on the effect of Mimio Reading programs in Nashville: <http://www.mimio.com/en-NA/Products/MimioReading-Comprehension-Suite.aspx>

<sup>27</sup> For the research base for the Readers and Writers Workshop approach, see <http://readingandwritingproject.com/about/research-base.html>

Math	Zearn STMath iReady Ten Marks	Used in high performing blended learning schools with a similar population; engaging; aligned to Common Core	Math in Focus: Singapore Math + teacher-designed extensions	A recent 2011 study <sup>28</sup> found significant gains for students using Math in Focus, regardless of ability or demographic group
Social Studies	Blendspace teacher created units	Teachers best equipped to build customized content to meet student needs	GLAD <sup>29</sup> + Home-grown Project-Based Learning Projects	GLAD projects will help us meet the needs of English Language Learners – it has been tested for many years with California ELL students; in order to make the curriculum relevant to the students in Vallejo, we want teachers to tailor these projects to the interests of this particular population.
Science	Blendspace teacher created units  Mystery Science	Best available, research-based content supplemented by teacher customization	FOSS Kits	GLAD resources will help us address the needs of English Language Learners

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.hmhelearning.com/math/mathinfocus/resources/MiF%20Course%201-Study.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> For information on GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design), see <http://www.projectglad.com/>

	FOSS online extensions			
Computer coding, robotics and engineering	Tynker  Scratch  Snap  Code.org	Scratch is the most widely used elementary level program; Tynker is a newly developed program for teaching computer programming to elementary school students which uses a project based approach. These will be supplemented or replaced over time as new software arises	Homegrown, in conjunction with code.org an organization dedicated to computer science instruction in K-12 and computer programming educators at Stanford University.	This is an area of innovation, as very few schools offer as thorough a computer coding and robotics program to elementary school students as we do.
Arts (Music, Art, Dance, Etc.)	Art in Action	Standards aligned units	Capoeira;  Band program for 6 <sup>th</sup> grade and up;  zSharp for all grades;  incorporated into project-based learning	Creates a relevant context for learning about the arts in an interdisciplinary way

Physical Education	N/A	N/A	Teacher-designed and aligned to California State Standards	Presidential Fitness in 5 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grade
Socio-emotional Learning	Class Dojo	Enables all staff to reward students on the spot for appropriate behavior	Modeled on Oakland Unified School District rubric	Use of Restorative Justice, Mindfulness, PBIS and Class Dojo to create critical self-awareness and group norms

See Appendix 5.9 for Scope and Sequence for Grades K,1,2,3 and 6

### **Writing**

Writing is critical to 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and to success on common core subjects. Caliber students will spend an hour each day writing, both fiction and informational text. Building off of Lucy Calkins, Units of Study for Teaching Writing, students will move through the various writing genres. Beginning with narrative, students will build confidence and work to find their writing voice. Then students will work through argumentative and informative writing, short fiction stories, and poetry. Literature, math, social studies, and science content are woven into the writing curriculum to maximize instructional minutes and realistic application of writing skills. Caliber students will spend an hour a day writing, both fiction and non-fiction work. Writing is critical to 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and to success on common core subjects.

Students will learn to manage short and long responses to question prompts. They will be coached on explaining their reasoning through their writing, making their internal thought process visible.

ThinkCerca, an online writing program, will be used with 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and up to practice the claim and evidence writing cycle in response to high quality fiction and informational text. Clear rubrics and efficient opportunities for teacher feedback and student editing are features of ThinkCerca.

Units of Study and SBAC rubrics are used throughout the grade levels to ensure consistency in expectations and rigor within and between grade levels.

### **Computer Coding**

At Caliber, all students learn how to use computers and how to program. In computing class, students play and create games by coding. All students are learning how to type and use the internet. Students also learn how to program with robots, coding puzzles, and electronics. Computing class teaches students how to solve problems and work together. Caliber teaches design thinking and follows the standards put forward by the Computer Science Teachers Association to ensure our students are ready for the future.

#### **Why Computing Class?**

Computers are everywhere in our world and they will only become more prevalent and important. It is necessary for our students' generation to understand how to use computers to their fullest potential so that they can take advantage of all they have to offer. We are at a point now where technological skills like programming seem like a luxury, but in the future, these skills will be an important part of working productively.

Not all students will choose a career in which they use every skill taught to them in computing class of course, but computer science teaches habits of mind that are useful to everyone. Programming encourages students to think carefully through a process, make it more systematic, and then convey it to a digital device. This is the same idea as having students teach others to deepen their own understanding.

### **An Outline of the 2014–2015 Caliber Computing Program**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Content</b>
<b>Kindergarten</b>	Students program Bee-Bots and work through the pre-readers course on code.org. Students also learn some basic commands in Scratch.
<b>1st Grade</b>	Students program Bee-Bots to navigate mazes, complete the pre-readers course on code.org, and build simple programs in Scratch.

<b>2nd Grade</b>	Students complete the first course for readers on code.org and build programs on Scratch to tell stories. Students also begin learning how to make their own games.
<b>3rd Grade</b>	Students complete the first course for readers on code.org and work extensively on Scratch. Students also begin learning about electronics and robots using Makey Makeys and the Hummingbird robot kit.
<b>6th Grade</b>	Students use the Snap! programming language to make games and to program robots using the Hummingbird robot kit. We are using the Beauty and Joy of Computing curriculum with the 6th grade students and expect to finish most of it by the end of 7th grade.

### **The Future of Computing at Caliber**

During the Charter School’s first year, a lot of grades look alike because all of our students are coming with little or no prior knowledge of computer science or programming, but in subsequent years, we will be able to push our older students more and more.

Most students will continue using graphical programming languages like scratch and snap!, but some older students may choose to learn a text-based language such as javascript or python. The hummingbird duo will be our physical computing platform for all beginners, with more advanced students moving on the arduino, and possibly the raspberry pi.

Coding at Caliber is modeled on the UC Berkeley course ‘Beauty and Joy of Computing’ (BJC). BJC is one of the courses that follow the AP Computer Science Principles framework. This course is being taught at UC Berkeley to non-CS majors. The current AP Computer Science class is focused on programming and is meant for those with an interest in pursuing Computer Science in college. The new AP CS Principles course, and BJC by extension, focus on the broader aspects of technology, its uses, and the implications of its use. Our 6th graders are currently working through the course material, and they will continue through 7th grade. More than this though, BJC serves as a guide to us as we develop and direct all of our computing students at Caliber.

Grade	Goals
1st	Students will begin working on more complicated programs that have more animation, more movement, and even some interaction.
2nd	Students will make increasingly complex games and begin using electronics like the Makey Makey to physically interact with their programs.
3rd	Students will be able to start robotics much earlier in the year, allowing them to make much more complex and interactive projects. They will also continue their programming practice by using more abstract ideas.
4th	Students will get to dive deeper into how software, computers, and electronics work, and how to make sense of the technology they see everyday.
5th	Students will eventually be able to create software with a high degree of sophistication. This may include games, websites, apps, robots, and more.
6th	The current 3rd graders will be our first 6th graders with prior computing instruction. They will be capable programmers at this point, and will be creating things that are relevant to their other classes and to the rest of their lives.
7th	Students will grow in their computing skills and programming skills by creating things that they choose to create. They will also investigate the big ideas of technology and engineering in our modern age.
8th	8th graders who will have studied with us for several years will be competent technologists with several developed skills and specialties. Those that choose to, will dive deeper into the more abstract and complex ideas of computer science. Others will create things like music, visual arts, games, and videos using their digital media proficiencies.

## VI. Special Populations

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

Caliber’s commitment to personalized, competency-based learning is especially relevant for special populations. By personalizing instruction for each student within the core curriculum the school ensures that each student is progressing towards competence on a path that is supportive of their individual needs and strengths.

Our focus on personalization is inspired by generations of educators who have advocated for students with special needs. These educators realized that schools needed to take a proactive, whole-child approach to ensuring that all learners received adequate support. In recent years, a focus on ensuring that students are taught in the least restrictive environment has led to an emphasis on Universal Design for Learning, a teaching model that emphasizes multiple options for student engagement and expression while ensuring high levels of rigor. The following chart shows how our model, in particular, can help special populations to achieve at high levels.

Caliber Design Element	How This Helps Special Populations Students
<p><b>Home Visits and Family Engagement:</b> Before matriculating at Caliber, most students will receive a home visit where we talk with the family about the child as a whole person, not just as a student. We identify both the</p>	<p>These visits will help us do early identification of students who may have behavioral or interpersonal challenges, in addition to identification of students who are advanced and may need acceleration. It will also help us to understand a student’s family background in order to ensure that we can a) form a close relationship with</p>

<p>child’s strengths as well as any Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)<sup>30</sup> that may affect their experience.</p>	<p>the families of our students with highest needs, whom we know will require frequent contact and b) create a plan of action for families whose students have special needs, but may, for a variety of reasons, be unable to adequately participate in the child’s day-to-day educational progress.</p> <p>At Caliber, we realize that students with special needs require support from all the “influencers” in their lives, and family support is critical. Home visits, parent meetings, frequent phone calls, and parent visits are some of the strategies we will use to ensure that children who have special needs are surrounded by a group of adults who are coordinating a shared strategy for improvement.</p>
<p><b>Personalized Learning Plan:</b> Each student will have a personalized learning plan that will include holistic biographical information, clear year-end objectives, personalized action plan, assessment tracker to monitor academic and personal progress, and the student’s goals and strategies.</p>	<p>The personalized learning plan will be particularly helpful for students who have special needs (in addition to IEPs where appropriate). First, it will help give teachers background information that may inform their approach to interventions, not just for special education students but also for academically low or high achieving students as well as ELL students. Second, it will enable teachers to track progress quickly, using a common set of learning objectives across a given grade level. Third, because students interact with the plan by setting goals and strategies, it will help give voice and choice to students with special needs, as well as improving their executive functioning skills. The goal-setting occurs in one on one meetings, which is another way to ensure that every student gets individual attention.</p>
<p><b>Restorative Justice, Mindfulness, and Positive Behavior Intervention and</b></p>	<p>Students who have special needs often manifest these needs through behavioral or interpersonal challenges. These</p>

<sup>30</sup> Tough, Paul. How Children Succeed. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing, 2012.

<p><b>Supports (PBIS):</b> Together these programs and systems create a community-focused environment that seeks to help student make decisions intrinsically.</p>	<p>students often feel different, left out, or ostracized, which can lead to difficulties coping with their frustration, boredom, lack of English language comprehension, and so forth. This curriculum has been used by members of our founding team and has been particularly effective with low achieving students.</p>
<p><b>Universal Design for Learning<sup>31</sup>:</b> Students will have opportunities to learn, and prove competency, in a variety of ways. For literacy and numeracy, this includes small group, peer group, and independent learning online or offline. For social studies and science, this includes project-based learning.</p>	<p>Academically low achieving students will benefit from the wide variety of learning settings that Caliber is designed to offer. Students who are struggling often need multiple ways to access content, and for these students we offer a combination of whole-group, small group, and independent learning, both online and offline.</p> <p>Students with special needs also need a variety of ways to express their knowledge, and our model enables these students to express their understanding in a variety of settings – for example, some students prefer to express their knowledge through their actions rather than through words, and Caliber’s projects and online curricula offer that opportunity.</p> <p>For English Language Learners, discrete English instruction combined with scaffolded core content and project-based learning curriculum drawing on resources from <b>Project GLAD</b> (Guided Language Acquisition Design), which specializes in helping these students learn vocabulary and engage in conversation within a meaningful, engaging context.</p> <p>Of course, we will help students learn to work in a variety of settings, but the first step is to help students feel that they can</p>

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<sup>31</sup> Universal Design for Learning is a scientifically valid approach to ensuring that schools meet the needs of all learners, especially those with special needs, through an inclusive environment that provides multiple means of a) recognition b) action and expression and c) engagement. For a summary of the research supporting this approach, see <http://www.udlcenter.org/research/researchevidence>.

	be successful at our school. For this reason, we offer a number of settings and the ability for teachers to flexibly adjust the amount of time that students spend in each.
<b>Assessment and Early Intervention:</b> Caliber will use an Rtl approach to ensure that students who are falling behind academically are quickly identified and supported. Frequent meetings of the COST team will ensure that students are identified and monitored.	Through diagnostic assessments (annually) regular exit tickets and quizzes (weekly), on-going data from software, and interim assessments (approximately every six weeks), we will build a base of evidence to identify students who require further intervention or acceleration and can provide them with a graduated system of support. See below for details.
<b>Peer Support:</b> At Caliber, through peer tutoring and cross age activities, students will have support from their peers in meeting academic goals.	Students with academic needs who are struggling to reach their potential often need a different messenger rather than just a different message. For this reason, peer tutoring is available for students who learn some material better from peers than from adults. In addition, this helps our high achieving students who can demonstrate their competency by tutoring their peers.

### Academically Low Achieving Students

Caliber sets high expectations for all students and is committed to working with those who are not meeting outcomes to help them achieve at expected levels, providing all necessary supports in meeting individual needs and achieving ambitious student goals. Students who perform below grade level as described below will receive a mix of intervention services, including: in-class individual tutoring by classroom teachers; in-class small group tutoring by classroom teachers; or before- or after-school tutoring by non-classroom educators one-on-one or in small groups, all based on the specific corrective instruction plans created by classroom teachers in follow-up to each assessment and aligned with every student’s personalized learning plan (see “How Learning Best Occurs” portion of the Educational Program for more information on personalized learning plans). In addition to targeted small-group and individualized interventions with educators, students not meeting outcomes will have access to online intervention supports such as ReadWell.

The identification process for students targeted for additional intervention will include, but are not limited to, students who meet the following criteria:

- Scoring below 70% on Interim Assessments
- Students reading one year or further below grade level
- CAASPP/SBAC/Linkit – ELA or Math Standard Not Met or Standard Nearly Met
- NWEA – lowest quintile or less than average annual progress
- Parent Recommendation – written documentation referred to the Response to Intervention (RtI) team for analysis
- Teacher Recommendation – written documentation referred to the RtI team for analysis

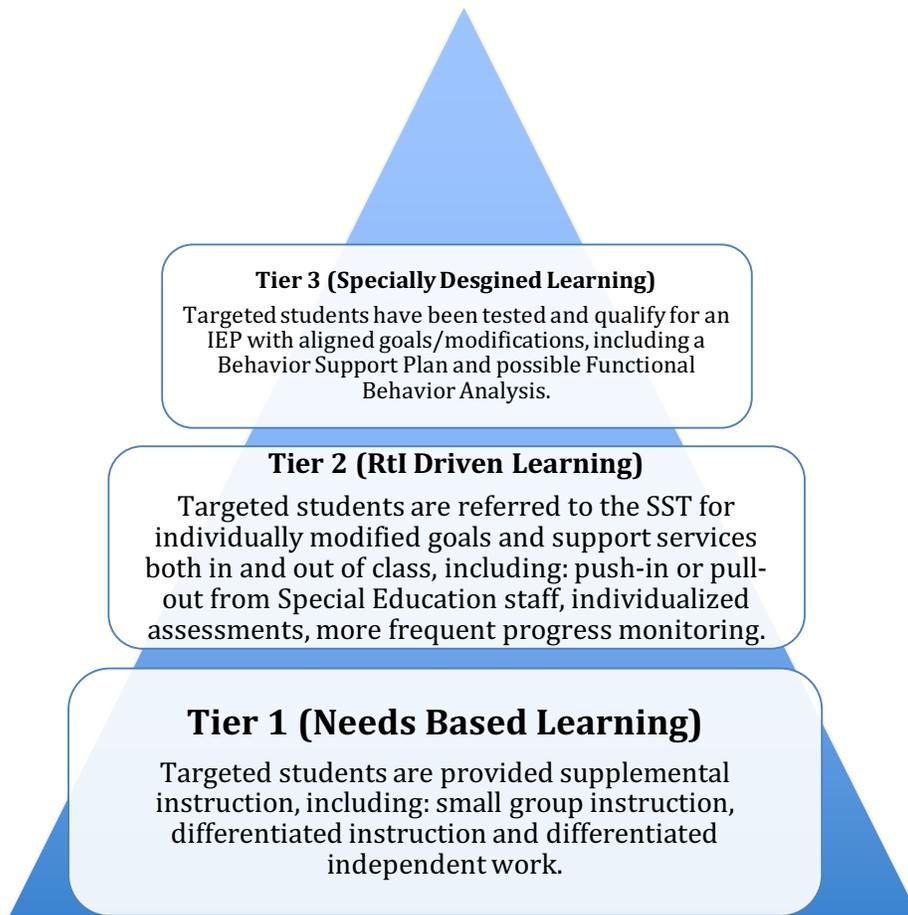
Once a student is identified, parents/guardians are contacted and an initial meeting takes place. Baseline student data is reviewed, student experience prior to and during school is evaluated and parent and school goals are shared. A plan is developed that clearly identifies targets, an action plan, and steps to monitor progress. The team meets periodically to review the plan and ensure that adequate forward progress is occurring.

Caliber uses the Response to Intervention framework (RtI) to support all students below grade level. RtI is a process by which schools are proactive and universal in assessing students' academic, behavioral and socio-emotional development needs and providing students with timely, targeted, and effective research-based interventions. The framework has three tiers of intervention (See diagram below). Students who are not achieving sufficient progress are identified early and proactively placed in the first tier as a way to address the issue before it becomes more severe. In many cases this works and the child is removed from RtI. If this intervention does not work, the student can move up tiers, each of which offers additional support. RtI team meets monthly and is comprised of the School Leader, Assistant Principal, Senior Teachers, and Associate Teachers. In most cases the student's teacher will notify families of students who are targeted for additional interventions and arrange for a meeting with the Student Study Team (SST) including the School Leader, Special Education Coordinator, RSP Teacher, classroom teacher, and the targeted student's family to determine specific interventions, classroom differentiation, individual student goals and timeline. The Special Education Coordinator will manage the SST process.

Caliber's RtI framework strives to offer a comprehensive approach to helping teachers (or a teaching team) to assess, support, and monitor the progress of their students, with the support of the Special Education Coordinator. We use weekly or interim assessments – as we do with all students– in addition to student coaching sessions and observational data as appropriate, to assess progress. RtI's framework will encompass and extend Caliber's data driven, student-focused approach to instruction and student support, and

encourages us to deepen coordination across our core classroom, intervention, special education and non-academic services. The RtI framework promotes the support services needed for the targeted student to meet their individual goals, progress to Meeting on the Interim Assessments, read at grade level, and ultimately be exited out of the SST able to meet all learning expectations without support services outside the classroom. This year, nearly one third of students at Caliber:Beta Academy are actively receiving RtI services. Most of those students are progressing significantly faster than national norms.

### **The Caliber Schools RtI Framework**



### **Academically High Achieving Students**

Caliber’s personalized competency based curriculum will ensure that each student is able to excel to his or her fullest potential and will not be held back by the limitations or needs of the rest of the class. Students achieving at the “Exceeding” level on assessments and/or reading a grade level or more above their current grade will be targeted to ensure an individualized, challenging

instructional program aligned with their personalized learning plan. There are several ways that Caliber will achieve this:

- **Personalized Blended Learning Enables Acceleration:** During the personalized blended learning portion of the day, students will spend substantial time dynamically grouped based on ability so that those achieving above grade level can continually be challenged further. Students who complete a task early will have opportunities to complete challenge activities that expand on the learning objective. For example, students who have completed word problems might go to a challenge station where they can create their own word problems and test them with other students. In addition, the online curriculum will allow each student to progress based on their own individual ability, providing an individual pathway across content areas that reach beyond grade level standards for increased exposure to higher level questions and assessments.
- **Peer Tutoring Enables Responsibility:** Above level students also will have the opportunity to serve as peer tutors for younger and below level students. In doing so they will both further their own mastery while also serving as role models for other students in the school. The National Education Association states that the “benefits of peer tutoring for students include higher academic achievement, improved relationships with peers, improved personal and social development as well as increased motivation. In turn, the teacher benefits from this model of instruction by an increased opportunity to individualize instruction, increased facilitation of inclusion/mainstreaming, and opportunities to reduce inappropriate behaviors (Topping, 2008).”
- **Computer Programming Enables Engagement:** Computer programming is a subject that will be of particular interest for our above level students, who are often motivated by the complexity of figuring out how to design programs that work. Students who are academically high performing often excel in the kind of objective, logical reasoning used in computer programming. This is particularly true for students on the autism spectrum<sup>32</sup>. Computer programming as a career values performance more than years of experience, allowing students to move at their own pace with increasingly complex projects.
- **Project-Based Learning Enables Leadership:** Project-based learning at Caliber will provide above level students with leadership opportunities, since our projects take place in teams in which members

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<sup>32</sup> For research on the talents of autistic children, see <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=the-hidden-potential-of-autistic-kids>. The authors write, “The hidden potential of autistic people seems to fall in common areas—tasks that involve pattern recognition, logical reasoning and picking out irregularities in data or arguments. Soulieres describes working with an autistic woman in her lab who can pick out the slightest flaws in logic. “At first, we argue with her,” Soulieres laughs, “but almost each time, she’s right, and we’re wrong.”

have a variety of roles. Parents are provided with information and ways to support their children with assigned projects, and invited to events like the science fair to view individual and group project work.

## **English Language Learners**

### **Overview**

Caliber will meet all applicable legal requirements for English Learners, including long-term English Learners or English Learners at risk of becoming long-term English Learners, as it pertains to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, ELL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, re-classification to Fluent English Proficient (FEP) status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirements. Caliber will implement policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding ELLs and the rights of students and parents.

### **Home Language Survey**

Caliber will administer the home language survey upon a student's initial enrollment into Caliber (on enrollment forms).

### **English Language Proficiency Assessment**

All students who indicate that their home language is other than English will be tested with the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California ("ELPAC"). The ELPAC has four proficiency levels (Level 4: well developed; Level 3: moderately developed; Level 2: somewhat developed; and Level 1: minimally developed) and is aligned with the 2012 California ELD Standards.

The ELPAC consists of two separate assessments:

- Initial Assessment ("IA")

The ELPAC IA is used to identify students as either an English Learner, or as fluent in English. The IA is administered only once during a student's time in the California public school system based upon the results of the home language survey. The locally scored IA will be the official score. The IA is given to students in grades K-12 whose primary language is not English to determine their English proficiency status.

- Summative Assessment ("SA")

ELs will take the SA every year until they are reclassified as fluent English proficient. The ELPAC SA is only given to students who have previously been identified as an EL based upon the IA results, in order to measure how well they are progressing with English development in each of the four domains.

The results are used as one of four criteria to determine if the student is ready to be reclassified as fluent English proficient, to help inform proper educational placement, and to report progress for accountability.

Both the ELPAC SA and IA are paper-pencil assessments administered in seven grade spans—K, 1, 2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12. In kindergarten and grade 1, all domains are administered individually. In grades 2-12, the test is administered in groups, exclusive of speaking, which is administered individually.

Testing times will vary depending upon the grade level, domain, and individual student. Both the ELPAC IA and SA are given in two separate testing windows through the school year.

The IA testing window will be year-round (July 1-June 30). Any student whose primary language is other than English as determined by the home language survey and who has not previously been identified as an English Learner by a California public school or for whom there is no record of results from an administration of an English language proficiency test, shall be assessed for English language proficiency within 30 calendar days after the date of first enrollment in a California public school, or within 60 calendar days before the date of first enrollment, but not before July 1 of that school year.

The SA testing window will be a four-month window after January 1 (February 1-May 31). The English language proficiency of all currently enrolled English Learners shall be assessed by administering the test during the annual assessment window.

Caliber will notify all parents of its responsibility for ELPAC testing and of ELPAC results within thirty days of receiving results from the publisher. The ELPAC shall be used to fulfill the requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act for annual English proficiency testing.

#### Reclassification Procedures

Reclassification procedures utilize multiple criteria in determining whether to classify a pupil as proficient in English including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- Assessment of language proficiency using an objective assessment instrument including, but not limited to, the ELPAC.

- Participation of the pupil's classroom teachers and any other certificated staff with direct responsibility for teaching or placement decisions of the pupil to evaluate the pupil's curriculum mastery.
- Comparison of the pupil's performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance and basic skills based upon the performance of English proficient pupils of the same age that demonstrate to others that the pupil is sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in a curriculum designed for pupils of the same age whose native language is English.
- Reclassification will occur annually, in August, so that teachers and administrative staff will have access to all relevant data from the previous school year.

### Strategies for English Language Learner Instruction and Intervention

Through various data sources (ELPAC, NWEA Map, I-Ready, and a phonics assessment) students will be leveled into groups with fellow students with common areas of growth. ELD groups will work with a teacher daily during the 2.5 hour language block. Student progress will be closely monitored and student groupings readjusted every two months to ensure that all students are growing and challenged appropriately. Direct teacher instruction will be partnered with online adaptive software to increase the time dedicated to English development, personalization of instruction, and variety in learning modalities.

Our ELD instruction focuses on four skill areas:

- **Function:** Functions are the purposes of communication. This includes social conversations, jokes, and inquiry.
- **Form:** This refers to the structure of the English language such as grammar, sentence structure, and syntax. These are used as building blocks.
- **Fluency:** Fluency is the ease in speaking the language. English language learners need ample time practicing speaking English in order to become fluent.
- **Vocabulary:** The development of a wide and varied vocabulary is essential. Research shows that English language learners should be taught key vocabulary, or brick words, prior to a lesson in order to assist them in their language development. For example, whatever concept you are teaching, it is recommended that you include vocabulary words that will make the content more comprehensible to the learner. A key ELD strategy is to provide comprehensible input for the English language learner by the use of visuals, realia, and gestures.

Taken from [www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com)

Below is an excerpt taken from EL Achieve that matches our philosophical position on targeted ELD instruction.

***Systematic ELD:***

*Equips students to use language flexibly and fluently for a wide range of collaborative purposes and registers (formal, informal, academic, social, real world, peer, adult, etc.).*

*Centers instruction on meaningful purposes for using language, and identifying the **bricks** (vocabulary) and **mortar** (text structure, syntax, grammatical forms) students need to confidently and accurately communicate their thinking.*

*Systematic ELD is the sliver of the academic day dedicated to deliberate language instruction at a student's proficiency level. This is the block of time that the CCSS and ELD standards refer to as dedicated and/or targeted ELD.*

*By meeting students at their instructional "sweet spot," we can both fill and prevent gaps in their language development. This accelerates language learning by making it more systematic, less ad-hoc. With that boost, students are better equipped to apply what they learn as they interact with peers, adults, and text throughout the day.*

*Builds communicative competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Abundant interaction and practice – whole group, small group, or partner – are woven into every phase of instruction.*

*Using well-organized visuals, templates, and other explicit scaffolds, students learn essential vocabulary and language patterns so they can be in charge of how they communicate.*

*Lessons infuse reflection so students think about what they know and make decisions about how to express themselves.*

*Students develop an in-depth meta-linguistic understanding of how English works. They use that knowledge to comprehend text and accurately express their understanding in ways that are appropriate to the task.*

How ELs access the core curriculum

We will work to create many entry points to the CCSS content. Through a range of pedagogical strategies and a variety of leveled content students will

engage in rich, project-based learning modules, dynamic direct instruction, and personalized learning opportunities.

Here are some of the ways we will create a classroom environment that supports natural English acquisition:

- Use visuals that reinforce spoken or written words.
- Employ gestures for added emphasis
- Adjust speech: Speak slowly; enunciate; use longer natural pauses; repeat words or phrases; include shorter sentences, fewer pronouns, and simpler syntax.
- Exaggerate intonations at times.
- Stress high-frequency vocabulary words.
- Use fewer idioms and clarify the meaning of words or phrases in context.
- Stress participatory learning.
- Maintain a low anxiety level and be enthusiastic.
- Physical involvement with language
- The use of multiple mediums to present information
- Opportunities to demonstrate language comprehension through physical expression
- A low-stress environment for language performance
- Success can be independent of language performance
- A large amount of interactions with other students

Building off of EL Achieve's, work below, we will offer a flexible and fluid learning environment where high academic rigor and appropriate supports meet to maximize student achievement.

*The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) place an unprecedented emphasis on language. They recognize that students must use a multi-faceted knowledge of English in their writing and speaking and make informed, skillful language choices to express themselves. Students are expected to demonstrate their understanding of content readings through discussions, presentations, and written performance tasks.*

*Yet, the CCSS, like other content standards assume native English proficiency. In fact, they state that identifying supports for English learners is "beyond the scope of the Standards" (CCSS Initiative, 2010b, p.6). Teachers deserve support in how to adequately prepare English learners to independently and confidently meet the demands of the Common Core and other content standards.*

*E.L. Achieve's work is to equip educators with the knowledge and tools to empower English learners with a flexible and fluent command of*

*English for academic achievement. Constructing Meaning (CM) provides teachers with a process for weaving explicit language instruction into content area teaching. While this provides students with scaffolded language support directly linked to lesson goals, **CM alone does not ensure a solid English language foundation.** Systematic ELD provides a time for English learners to learn and practice the foundational language they need in order to navigate a myriad of adult and peer interactions, such as discussions and collaborative work, as well as prepare them for active participation in rigorous content instruction.*

*Systematic ELD challenges students to explore language in compelling and playful ways, continually growing their ability to use English flexibly, fluently, and accurately – to have agency over their own language use. Ultimately, the goal of Systematic ELD is for English to be a bridge to academic success rather than a barrier. It addresses critical language demands of the CCSS in multiple ways:*

<p><b>Language Knowledge</b> (Anchor L.3)</p> <p>Apply knowledge of how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaches language to understand how to use it in different contexts for a range of purposes</li> <li>• Develops meta-linguistic awareness for flexibility in making language choices by infusing reflection so students think about what they know and make decisions about how to express themselves.</li> <li>• Explicitly teaches language to comprehend more fully when reading or listening</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participate in collaborative discussions</b> (Anchor SL.1)</p> <p><i>Prepare for and participate effectively in conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrates structured, targeted oral language practice into every lesson, every day</li> <li>• Provides guidelines for facilitating small-group and whole class collaborative learning</li> <li>• Builds communicative competence with abundant interaction and practice – whole group, small group, or partner – used in every phase of instruction</li> </ul>

<p><b>Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas</b> (Anchor SL.4, 6)</p> <p><i>Clearly present information appropriate to task and audience, adapting speech to the context, demonstrating command of formal English, as needed.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidently and accurately communicate thinking by centering instruction on meaningful purposes for using language, and identifying the bricks (vocabulary) and mortar (text structure, syntax, grammatical forms)</li> <li>• Equips students to use language flexibly and fluently for a wide range of purposes and registers (formal, informal, academic, social, real world, peer, adult, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reading and writing across the curriculum</b> (Anchor W.10; R.2)</p> <p><i>Write routinely for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.</i></p> <p><i>Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses grade-appropriate content topics from language arts, science, health, social studies, physical education, and visual and performing arts</li> <li>• Uses well-organized visuals, templates, and other explicit scaffolds, to learn essential vocabulary and language patterns so students are in charge of how they communicate</li> <li>• Incorporates informational articles into lessons</li> <li>• Calls out features of text structures and functional language for high leverage text types</li> </ul>

All teachers delivering instruction in core content areas will hold, or be in the process of obtaining, a Cross-culture, Language and Academic Development (CLAD) Certificate or a Bi-lingual Cross-Culture, Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) Certificate. Caliber Schools will work to recruit and hire educators who are fluent in English and Spanish to ensure accurate assessment of students' language and literacy skills, appropriate academic support, and effective communication with families. The Caliber Schools teaching staff will be given professional development in teaching English Learners in their appropriate content areas, including the balanced literacy approach, a focus on vocabulary development, the most effective practices of SDAIE (specially designed academic instruction in English), as well as the opportunity to participate in Guided Language Acquisition Development

(GLAD) training. Doing What Works<sup>33</sup>, a website established by the Federal Department of Education, provides the following strategies proven to be highly effective in supporting ELL students that Caliber Schools will implement as part of our instructional program across content areas:

- **Screen and monitor progress.** Corresponding with Caliber Schools model of data-driven instruction, teachers will analyze and identify student needs within well-developed assessments – assessing student progress frequently to develop and guide instructional plans as well as identify students in need of individual intervention as outlined in the RtI framework.
- **Provide reading interventions.** Understanding that ELL students are often at risk for reading challenges, our literacy program encourages the quick and frequent response to formative assessments through guided reading and small group instruction during daily literacy blocks as well as the academic support time offered through an extended school day.
- **Teach vocabulary.** Vocabulary development offers a critical component to overall language acquisition for ELL students. Through GLAD-inspired instruction and formal vocabulary instruction during daily Literacy and Writing blocks featuring essential word lists, child-friendly definitions, and cumulative spiraling assessments, all students – especially English Language Learners– will be exposed to authentic, language-rich classroom settings promoting the direct transfer of new vocabulary from reading to direct student implementation both orally and written. In 2015–16 middle school students will use English 3D, a program to provide support on academic language.
- **Develop academic English.** To achieve academic proficiency in all content areas, ELL students must develop cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) beyond the interpersonal communication skills (BICS) of social language. CALP is not limited to the content area vocabulary specific to academic subject areas, rather a sophisticated use of language to carry out higher-order academic tasks critical to Caliber Schools’ mission of preparing students to get to and through college and establish themselves as an educated person in the 21st Century.
- **Schedule peer learning.** EL students will have frequent opportunities through daily heterogeneous and homogenous grouping, partner work, and structured peer tutoring, both at and across grade levels, to improve their mastery of language use with the support of their fellow schoolmates – providing a significant cumulative increase in authentic language practice.

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<sup>33</sup> [http://dww.ed.gov/topic/?T\\_ID=13](http://dww.ed.gov/topic/?T_ID=13)

**Assessment, monitoring, and exit or re-designation criteria for students.** Students who have been identified as ELL will be assessed on an ongoing basis to determine their individual improvement in English proficiency. Students will take the ELPAC annually to measure English Language Development and will be reclassified as described above, including ELPAC scores used to determine reclassification of Caliber students. Reclassification procedures utilize multiple criteria in determining whether to classify a pupil as proficient in English including but not limited to, all of the following:  
English Language Proficiency Assessment: Overall score level 3 or 4 with no individual subject below level 3  
Teacher Evaluation: Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM)  
Parental Opinion and Consultation: Parents will be asked for opinion and approval for reclassification  
Comparison of Performance in Basic Skills: Achievement level of “Standards Met” or “Standards Exceeded on NWEA MAP Tests and/or SBAC

In addition to these strategies, in order to make sure that all English Language Learners have the ability to meet these expectations, all teachers at Caliber utilize pedagogical strategies that “shelter” and “scaffold” both content and skills in each discipline.

- **Shelter:** The teacher introduces new content by using visual aids, music, etc. The ELL student will be observed to note which topics come easily and which ones will require more support.
- **Scaffolding:** The teacher provides meaningful support and guidance needed for the ELL’s learning growth toward each learning objective. Also, the teacher uses questioning techniques to elicit experiences that relate to his native culture. The teacher rephrases with words the student understands and uses pictures to adapt the questioning techniques.<sup>34</sup>

As discussed previously, Caliber’s uniquely personalized model is especially beneficial for English Language Learners. In addition to targeted small-group and individualized interventions with educators, English Learners will have access to intervention supports such as ReadWell. If designated by an SST or IEP through a pullout session with the Special Education staff, and/or afterschool tutoring program, ensuring increased exposure to personalized English language acquisition for every targeted student at their individual proficiency level. The goal is high-quality instructional programs and services for English Learners that will allow them to achieve the same challenging academic and graduation standards as English-speaking students. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills will be assessed daily through formal and informal assessments with progress tracked by classroom teachers and discussed with staff at collaboration opportunities including: weekly grade

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<sup>34</sup> <http://www.keyknox.com/esl/PDF/Best%20Practices%20for%20teaching%20the%20EL%20student.pdf>

level meetings, weekly staff meetings, and data meetings all ensuring our ELL students' progress is frequently monitored and assessed for differentiation and additional support services. Caliber's English Language Learners will be prepared with the skills in English and mathematics to meet California State Standards.

### **Instructional Materials**

Caliber continuously evaluates instructional materials, and adds or removes them from the curriculum based on data from formative assessments and evaluation of student work throughout the school year. Among the materials we are currently using:

**Read-Well – Voyager Sopris** – Read Well is an innovative K-3 reading and language arts solution that helps students build the critical skills needed to be successful readers and learners. The research-based program allows teachers to effectively target students at all stages of development. Through a blended approach of whole-class instruction, differentiation small-group instruction, motivating technology, and individual student practice, teachers have the flexibility they need to meet students at their skill levels and adapt instruction accordingly. Read Well meets the challenges of the CCSS – along with the needs of each child.

**i-Ready** – i-Ready® Instruction delivers engaging and motivational online lessons at each student's level based on results from our online adaptive Diagnostic. Built to address key shifts occurring with the Common Core, online lessons and teacher resources prepare students and teachers for reading success and support blending learning.

**ThinkCerca** – Engages students in reading informational texts for ELA, Science, and Social Science. Topics are leveled by grade band for grades 4-12 and include technology and society, culture and change, social responsibility, and policy and debate leveled by grade band for grades 4-12.

ThinkCERCA's bank of mini-lessons introduces key skills and concepts of 21st Century Literacy including the Common Core State Standards and ACTs College Readiness Standards. Leveled by grade band, mini-lesson topics include basic argumentation skills, lessons on informational texts and literature, writing and research skills, grammar, punctuation, & vocabulary.

**Newsela** – Newsela is designed to help students to explore a world of nonfiction and test their comprehension. Updated daily with real-world news from major publications, students can participate in conversation about the most urgent topics of our time, all while becoming stronger readers.

## Staff – EL coordinator

### *Staff Support*

- Provide support to the teaching staff in the implementation of strategies in direct interaction with students to ensure that all children can learn.
  - Teacher training
  - Implementation of the District’s adopted curriculum program
  - Development of intervention programs to assist children who do not master skills from first instruction.

### *ELPAC Coordination*

#### *Intake Coordination*

- Develops a intake system for newcomers and assist in its implementation
- Assists the administration to ensure appropriate initial program and ELD placement
- Supports the administration of initial language proficiency assessments

#### *EL Programs Coordination*

- Works with administration to create learning environments where all students, including children learning English, meet grade-level benchmarks
- Stays informed about the latest ELD programs and best practices and disseminate this information to colleagues
- Supports teachers and administrators in the implementation of best practices

#### *ELD programs*

- Uses content area and English Language Development standards to support best practices ELD programs
- Provides staff with ELD student progress and ELD program implementation data
- Ensures that all ELs are receiving appropriate intervention services

## Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

The evaluation for the program effectiveness for ELLs at Caliber will include:

- Achieving the Measurable Student Outcomes for ELL students:
  - ELL students will make the same or greater annual progress as all other students enrolled at Caliber
  - All ELL students will make at least one level of advancement in language proficiency annually
- Monitoring of teacher qualifications and the use of appropriate instructional strategies based on program design.
- Monitoring of student identification and placement.
- Monitoring of parental program choice options.
- Monitoring of availability of adequate resources.

## Special Education Students

*Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter recognizes its responsibility to enroll and support students with disabilities who can benefit from its programs and who otherwise qualify for enrollment and pledges to work in cooperation with the EDCOE Charter SELPA to ensure that a free and appropriate education is provided to all students with exceptional needs. Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Furthermore, Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will comply with AB 602, district and SELPA guidelines, and all California laws pertaining to special education students.*

## Meeting the Needs of Special Education Students

Caliber is committed to providing the highest quality education and intervention possible for its' students with special needs. We believe our personalized curriculum and specific focus on developing social and emotional skills as well as our inclusive philosophy will provide an excellent platform to do so. We strongly believe that given our experience in delivering special education services and our innovative educational program that we will best be able to serve our students operating as our own LEA. Caliber:Beta Academy is a member of the El Dorado County SELPA . We intend to apply for Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter when applications open for 2016-17.

Personalization is a core tenant of the Caliber school model. We are developing a program that acknowledges that every child is unique, and therefore needs a unique educational plan. Through frequent assessment, observation, and program monitoring, all students will have a rigorous personal learning program, and the support to accomplish their plan. We will integrate technology into the school day to offer students multiple learning modes at their level. Adaptive software will support every child to learn within her zone of proximal development. Given our pedagogical philosophy, we see a natural connection between Caliber's focus on personalization and customization and the successful implementation of an inclusion focused special education model.

We know our students' needs can be behavioral as well as academic. Our RtI must include the development of organizational and executive functioning skills. We will employ well qualified staff, a powerful curriculum, clear

student outcome and accountability structures, and ongoing differentiated staff development. We are confident that this approach, coupled with the administrative and curricular support that the El Dorado Charter SELPA provides will create a successful model for our students with special needs.

Caliber maintains high expectations for all students, including those with identified special education needs. To ensure effective implementation of Special Education services, we will hire staff with the appropriate Special Education credential and experience to oversee and implement our program. We expect to serve a special education population similar to that of VCUSD elementary and middle schools. According to the California Department of Education, 9% of all K–8 students attending Vallejo schools were classified as Special Education students as of December 2013<sup>35</sup>.

Our Special Education Coordinator will be responsible for overseeing IEPs, 504s, and the IEP process, and implementing or coordinating the service needs for special education students. Caliber will hire Resource Specialist Teachers (RSP) at a ratio of one RSP for every 25 students requiring special education services. In addition, the school will also hire Special Education Aides at a ratio of one Aide for every 30 students requiring special education services. Caliber will contract with a part-time Speech Pathologist and School Psychologist in Years 1–4. When the school reaches full capacity in Year 5, Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will employ a full-time Speech Pathologist and a School Psychologist.

We will employ both push-in and pull-out services depending on the needs of students and/or contract with outside agencies to provide the services required by the IEP. We will ensure that students are appropriately placed in the least restrictive environment.

Our primary model of special education will be inclusion: all regular education and special education students will take the same academic classes together. Students with IEPs will receive additional in-class support, out-of-class support, accommodations, and/or modifications to enable them to meet high standards of achievement.

Special education students at Caliber will be supported with accommodations and instructional structures and delivery methods while ensuring student achieve competency in the same skills and content. As described previously (see the introduction to the section on Special Populations), Caliber's personalized learning will ensure that each student is progressing towards competency on a path that is supportive of his or her individual needs and strengths. Our support structure for special education students will include:

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<sup>35</sup> <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

- **Home visits prior to matriculation**, in which we will identify special education students who need additional support in order to a) build a close relationship with the families of these students and b) plan in-school support services that will be needed
- **Creation of a personalized learning plan** to compile biographical information, track progress against standards, and allow students and teachers to set goals
- **Use of a Universal Design for Learning<sup>36</sup> approach** to unit and lesson planning (for more on Universal Design for Learning see the introduction to Special Populations section), in which a single classroom environment is designed to offer students multiple learning environments, teaching approaches, and methods of assessment in order to give all learners access to the curriculum without sacrificing rigor
- **Use of a Response to Intervention (RtI) Framework** (see the section on “Academically Low Achieving Students” for more information) ensuring that students who are struggling are a) identified early and given fast but moderate intervention – Tier 1 b) monitored for progress and c) either given more intense intervention – Tiers 2 and 3 or d) removed from intervention, if progress is observed and the support is no longer needed. RtI services are often provided in advance of formal special education identification to ensure that no learning time is lost for students as they progress through the testing process.

In addition, classroom instruction itself will differ. Specific examples of how instruction may be differentiated to meet the needs of all special education students include:

- **Size:** Adapting the number of items the student is expected to learn or complete, or adjusting the amount of information that a student is provided at one time.
- **Time:** Extending the amount of time the student has to complete a task or demonstrate competence.
- **Input:** Adapting the way instruction is delivered by using a variety of strategies and materials. Caliber’s personalized blended learning model enables students to access content via whole group, small group, and independent learning, both online and offline.
- **Output:** Adjusting the type of work the student produces, such as changing an assignment to a project, task, or presentation for a student whose disability makes written expression difficult. Caliber’s project–

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<sup>36</sup> Universal Design for Learning is a scientifically valid approach to ensuring that schools meet the needs of all learners, especially those with special needs, through an inclusive environment that provides multiple means of a) recognition b) action and expression and c) engagement. For a summary of the research supporting this approach, see <http://www.udlcenter.org/research/researchevidence>

based learning curriculum will provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate competence in a variety of formats.

- **Level of support:** Increasing the amount of individualized assistance the student receives during a given task. Caliber’s peer tutoring model will provide opportunities for additional individual support for students.
- **Participation:** For students whose disability is intertwined with self-esteem issues, allowing for less public forms of participation in order to prevent the student from shutting down to learning.

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

### **Charter SELPA**

The Charter School shall be its own local education agency (“LEA”) and will apply directly for membership in a Special Education Local Plan Area (“SELPA”) in conformity with Education Code Section 47641(a). The Charter School LEA intends to apply to become a member of the El Dorado County Office of Education (“EDCOE”) SELPA.

See Appendix 5.3 for a Letter to the El Dorado County Office of Education SELPA indicating intent to apply by the Charter School for membership in the EDCOE SELPA, pending Charter approval. In the event the Charter School seeks membership in a different state-approved SELPA, the Charter School will provide notice to the District and the SELPA before June 30<sup>th</sup> of the year before services are to commence. The Charter School shall provide evidence of SELPA membership to the District no later than 30 days prior to the commencement of instruction or as otherwise agreed upon between the parties.

The Charter School shall comply with all state and federal laws related to the provision of special education instruction and related services and all SELPA policies and procedures; and shall utilize appropriate SELPA forms. The Charter School shall not discriminate against any pupil with a disability in the admissions process or any other aspect of operation.

The Charter School is responsible for the provision of all required services. The Charter School may request referrals for related services (e.g. Speech, Occupational Therapy, Adapted P.E., Nursing, and Transportation) from the SELPA. The Charter School may also provide related services by hiring credentialed or licensed providers through private agencies or independent contractors.

The Charter School shall be solely responsible for its compliance with the IDEIA, Section 504 and the ADA. The facilities to be utilized by the Charter School shall be accessible for all students with disabilities.

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

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

A 504 team will be assembled by the School Leader and shall include the parent/guardian, the student (where appropriate) and other qualified persons, such as the Special Education Coordinator, Resource Specialist Program (RSP) teacher, Master Teacher and Associate Teacher who are knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and accommodations. The 504 team will review the student's existing records: including academic, social and behavioral records, and is responsible for making a determination as to whether an evaluation for 504 services is appropriate. If the student has already been evaluated under the IDEIA but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under the IDEIA, those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team who will evaluate the nature of the student's disability and the impact upon the student's education. This evaluation will include consideration of any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program and/or activities. The 504 team may also consider the following information in its evaluation:

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

The final determination of whether the student will or will not be identified as a person with a qualifying 504 condition is made by the SST Team and then passed to the 504 team to draft an appropriate plan. Written notice is given to the parent or guardian of the student in their primary language along with the procedural safeguards. If during the evaluation the SST team obtains information indicating possible eligibility of the student for special education per the IDEIA, a referral for assessment under the IDEIA will be made by the SST team.

If the student is found by the SST team to have a disability under Section 504, the SST team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations or services are needed to ensure that the student receives the free and appropriate public education (“FAPE”). In developing the 504 Plan, the SST team shall consider all relevant information utilized during the evaluation of the student, drawing upon a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, assessments conducted by the Charter School’s professional staff.

The 504 Plan shall describe the Section 504 disability and any program accommodations or services that may be necessary.

All SST team participants, parents, guardians, teachers and any other participants in the student’s education must have a copy of the student’s 504 Plan. The site administrator will ensure that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that he/she reviews the 504 Plan. A copy of the 504 Plan shall be maintained in the student’s file. Each student’s 504 Plan will be reviewed at least once per year to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, needed modifications to the plan, and continued eligibility.

See Appendix 5.4 Section 504 Policy and Process.

### **Services for Students under the IDEIA**

The Charter School will apply to become an LEA member of the EDCOE Charter SELPA.

The Charter School intends to provide special education instruction and related services in accordance with the IDEIA, Education Code requirements, and applicable policies and practices of the SELPA.

The Charter School will provide services for special education students enrolled in the Charter School. The Charter School will follow SELPA policies and procedures, and shall utilize SELPA forms in seeking out and identifying and serving students who may qualify for special education programs and

services and for responding to record requests and parent complaints, and maintaining the confidentiality of pupil records.

The Charter School agrees to promptly respond to all SELPA inquiries, to comply with reasonable SELPA directives, and to allow SELPA access to Charter School students, staff, facilities, equipment and records as required to fulfill all SELPA obligations or imposed by law.

As required of LEA members within the EDCOE Charter SELPA, the Charter School provides the following assurances:

*Free Appropriate Public Education* – The Charter School will assure that a free appropriate public education shall be provided to all enrolled students including children with disabilities who have been expelled from school.

*Child Find* – To comply with Child Find requirements as specified by law, Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will establish a referral and assessment process that brings together the parent/guardian, student, and school staff to identify and address any issues that interfere with a student’s success. This process will include search and serve, a Student Support Team, referral, assessment and IEP review.

For students already identified as eligible for special education our plan is as follows:

Prior to commencement of the school year, the administrative team will visit all students at home. During that process staff will identify students with existing IEPs, 504s, or who recently were evaluated for special education service eligibility. Documents will be reviewed to determine service requirements and to develop a schedule to best meet student needs. Additionally, 30-day IEP meetings will be scheduled for the beginning of the school year to transition the IEPs to the new LEA.

Office staff will review all cumulative files to identify additional students with special needs. Any student records indicating current or past IEPs will be referred to the Special Education Coordinator for review.

For those students who do not have an IEP at the time of our home visit, our plan is as follows:

Initial Identification:

All parents/guardians are given a handbook annually that contains the “Annual Child Find Notice to Parent/guardian”. This notice details the process for identifying students with disabilities and the rights of parents/guardians to request a Student Support Team review and/or a special education assessment.

The referral process is a formal, ongoing review of information related to students who are suspected of having disabilities or who show potential signs of needing special education and related services. Home visit and prior school information will be carefully screened for possible special education needs.

Teachers will track all students’ academic progress regularly. parents/guardians will receive formal academic and social progress updates twice every term, at the midpoint and the end. Grade level teams will regularly review the progress of students and make recommendations for general education differentiation and intervention as part of the school Response to Intervention program. The administration team will meet weekly to review notes from grade level teams and add additional information from outside the core instruction time. If a grade level team observes that a student is consistently struggling, despite RtI interventions, the grade level team will request a Student Support Team (SST) meeting.

The Student Support Team will include the school counselor, the school leader, the student (when appropriate), the parent/guardian, and at least one of the child’s teachers. The SST will design a set of interventions and action steps to be implemented over a four-week period. At the end of this period, the SST will reconvene to assess outcome of the interventions. Based on the outcomes, the SST may recommend the interventions to continue, for more intensive general education interventions to be developed or for assessment for possible special education eligibility. The SST may also choose to refer a student for services through the provisions of a Section 504 Plan, if appropriate.

The parent/guardian of any student suspected of needing or qualifying for special education services may also make a referral for an evaluation. The Special Education Coordinator will respond to any such referrals in writing within 15 days.

Parent/guardian consent will be obtained prior to any assessment for special education. In cases where the parent/guardian refuses evaluation, Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will make reasonable attempts to obtain informed parent/guardian consent as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The school will document these attempts and could pursue a due process impartial hearing for authorization to conduct the evaluation.

*Full Educational Opportunity* – The Charter School will assure that all students with disabilities have access to the full range of programs available to non-disabled students.

*Least Restrictive Environment* – The Charter School will assure that students with disabilities are educated with students who are not disabled to the maximum extent appropriate. This will be addressed through the use of supplementary aids and services in the general education environment in accordance with each student’s IEP.

*Individualized Education Program* – The Charter School will assure that an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) is developed, reviewed and revised for each eligible student under the IDEIA.

*IEP Meetings* – The Charter School shall arrange and notice the necessary IEP meetings. IEP team membership shall be in compliance with state and federal law. The Charter School shall be responsible for having the following individuals in attendance at the IEP meetings: the School Leader and/or the Charter School designated representative with appropriate administrative authority as required by the IDEIA; the student’s special education teacher; the student’s general education teacher if the student is or may be in a regular education classroom; the student, if appropriate; and other Charter School representatives who are knowledgeable about the regular education program at the Charter School and/or about the student. The Charter School shall arrange for the attendance or participation of all other necessary staff that may include, but are not limited to, an appropriate administrator to comply with the requirements of the IDEIA, a speech therapist, psychologist, resource specialist, and behavior specialist; and shall document the IEP meeting and provide of notice of parental rights.

#### ANNUAL IEPS

##### *Before the IEP:*

- Complete all informal assessments, including any observations that need to be conducted.
- Solicit teacher feedback and incorporate in to IEP.

- Complete a draft of the IEP in SEIS at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. The services and offer of FAPE should be written by the team during the meeting and should not be drafted prior.
- Provide notice of the IEP to the family (at the beginning of the year, 30 days prior to the IEP, and 10 days prior to the meeting).
  - Best practice is to also include the IEP meeting agenda with the 10-day notification.
  - If the parent/guardian is unable to attend at the scheduled time, reschedule and notify team members immediately.
  - Parents/guardians may also attend IEP meetings via conference call; however, it is preferable for them to attend in person whenever possible.
- Confirm the time and location for the meeting with your school site at least one week prior to the meeting. Determine which school leader will attend as the administrator or administrative designee.
- If necessary, secure a translator at least a week before the meeting.
- If any significant changes in program or services are going to be recommended at the meeting:
  - Discuss these changes with your school team prior to the meeting. Please remember that conversations regarding specific students should not be held over email.
  - Call the family ahead of time to notify them of any proposed changes and give them a chance to ask questions. Please remember that any changes in a student's IEP are a *team* decision, so you are not telling parents/guardians what will change during this pre-meeting conversation – rather, you are informing them of changes that will be recommended for discussion.
- Prepare any evidence of progress (graphs of progress monitoring data, student work samples, etc.) that you will share at the meeting.
- Gather/create any logistical documents (procedural safeguards, team member excusal forms, meeting agenda, IEP signature page from SEIS, etc.) Also print the drafts of the goals and any other pertinent pages for team members to review during the meeting.
- Determine who will take notes at the meeting.
- It is best practice to create a “one-pager” for parents/guardians that summarizes progress since the last IEP, current present levels, proposed goals, etc.

*During the IEP Meeting:*

- Welcome team members and summarize the purpose of the meeting. It is also best practice to review the agenda. Ask team members to sign-in on the IEP signature page.

- Ideally, the note-taker will take notes directly on to the IEP document within SEIS. If a computer is not available, notes can be taken by hand and then transferred to SEIS.
- Always start by asking for parent/guardian input; what is going well, what challenges or concerns they have, etc. Note this on page two of the IEP in the parent/guardian input section.
- Summarize present levels of performance and student progress on previous IEP goals. Begin with student strengths and provide evidence of progress (student work samples, assessments, etc.) Summarize areas of need.
- Review new/drafted IEP goals and provide rationale for the goals (keeping in mind that goals must be based on identified student need). Remember that goals are a team decision, so when you are presenting goals, use language such as, “I am proposing the following goal in math...Does the team agree? Are there any changes that the team would propose?”
- Discuss the proposed services, and provide rationale as to how those services will support student progress towards the goals.
- \*Note: All service providers will present for the particular area of need addressed by their services. It is best practice for all team members to be present for the duration of the meeting. If a team member must be excused, the parent/guardian must consent and a Team Member Excusal Form must be signed.
- Discuss the student’s participation in statewide assessments, including any proposed accommodations or modifications.
- Summarize the offer of FAPE. Notify the parent/guardian that they may sign in consent at the time of the meeting, but that they are also able to defer signing the IEP if they need more time to review the offer of FAPE.
- Provide the parent/guardian with a copy of the IEP.

*After the IEP Meeting:*

- Affirm and attest the IEP.
- Upload the signature page to SEIS as an attachment.

TRIENNIAL IEP MEETINGS

All of the processes for annual IEP meetings are followed for triennials as well. Additional steps that must be taken for a triennial include:

*Before the IEP Meeting:*

- Consult with the lead assessor in the creation of the assessment plan. Check-in with any other related service providers (OT, APE, etc.) to confirm what they need to have included on the assessment plan.
- Obtain a signature on the assessment plan as close to (and no more than) 60 days prior to the scheduled IEP date. Be sure to explain the assessment plan and process to parents/guardians – do not just send the assessment plan home with no explanation. This could include a

description of the purpose of a triennial IEP (to review progress since the last evaluation, and review eligibility), who the assessors will be and what they will be evaluating, how the parent/guardian will be involved in the assessment, etc.

- Complete the academic evaluation using both formal (WJ-III or KTEA) and informal (progress monitoring, performance on STEP and NWEA, etc.) methods. Write the academic report. Academic testing must be completed within 30 days of the date the assessment plan was signed to allow enough time for lead assessors to determine an eligibility recommendation. Academic reports must be completed no later than 5 days prior to the IEP meeting.
- Consult with the lead assessor regarding an eligibility recommendation prior to the IEP meeting.

### INITIAL IEP MEETINGS

The process for initial IEP meetings generally follows the same process as a triennial, with the exception that the assessment plan will be created by the lead assessor and will be, whenever possible, signed at an in person meeting with the family.

### EXIT IEPS

If a member of the IEP team is recommending that a student be dismissed from special education services, they should discuss the recommendation with the School Psychologist or Speech Language Pathologist prior to the student's annual or triennial IEP. In order for a student to be exited from services, the team does need to conduct an evaluation so this conversation should happen as close to 60 days prior to the meeting as possible to allow the team time to evaluate.

*IEP Development* – The Charter School understands that the decisions regarding eligibility, goals/objectives, program, services, placement, and exit from special education shall be the decision of the IEP team, pursuant to the IEP process. Programs, services and placements shall be provided to all eligible Charter School students in accordance with the policies, procedures and requirements of the SELPA and State and Federal law.

A Caliber student will be assessed in all areas of suspected disability by the Caliber: Beta special education team and other contracted professionals qualified to provide assessment as required to determine eligibility as indicated by the parent/guardian signed assessment plan. Within 60 days of the signed assessment plan, an IEP meeting will be convened with the IEP team consisting of the parent/guardian, the student (if appropriate), the school psychologist, the education specialist, general education teacher, an administrator (or designee), and other professionals as necessary to review the results of the assessments and determine eligibility.

The parent/guardian is the key stakeholder in these meetings and the school will make every effort to accommodate parent/guardians' schedules and needs so that they are able to fully participate on the IEP team. The school will provide an interpreter if necessary to ensure that all parents/guardians understand and can participate in the IEP process. If a parent/guardian cannot attend the IEP meeting, the school will ensure his/her participation using other methods, such as conferencing by telephone or meeting at the parent/guardian's home.

If the IEP team determines that a student does qualify, the team will develop an initial IEP including appropriate goals, services and accommodations/modifications based on the needs of the student ensuring compliance with FAPE in the least restrictive environment. Upon the parent/guardian's written consent, the IEP will be implemented by Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter staff. A copy of the IEP will be given to the parent/guardian.

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter staff will execute the IEP to ensure that the student successfully achieves academic and social success. This includes the implementation of appropriate services and classroom interventions, strategies, and techniques. The school passionately embraces the federal mandate of the "least restrictive environment", meaning that the school will make every attempt to educate special education students along with their non-disabled peers. Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will be inclusive as much as is appropriate according to each IEP, combining a comprehensive inclusion program with specialized academic instruction.

Each student's IEP requires different kinds of interventions for instruction and a range of services, therefore the educational strategies of the IEP are built around the student's needs and how these fit within the general educational program of the school. Appropriately qualified personnel will deliver the instructional plan outlined in each student's IEP.

Student progress toward IEP goals will be evaluated every term (approximately nine weeks) by the administrative team, special education coordinator, resource specialist and other service providers. The IEP team will convene at least annually to review student's present levels, and the appropriateness of goals, services and accommodations. Adjustments will be made at the team meeting. Additional IEP meetings will be convened by request if a parent/guardian or staff member feels the student's educational needs are not being met. Caliber encourages open communication between the family and the IEP team.

The IEP will include all required components and will be written on EDCOE SELPA SEIS forms. At a minimum, the IEP will include:

- The rationale for placement decisions.

- The services the student will receive and the means for delivering those services.
- A description of when services will begin, how often the student will receive them, who will provide them, and where they will be delivered.
- Annual goals and short-term objectives building on the student's current level of performance.
- A description of how the student's progress will be measured and monitored.

IEP meetings will be held according to the following schedule:

- Yearly to review the student's progress and make any necessary changes. (Annual IEP)
- Every three years to review the results of a mandatory comprehensive reevaluation of the student's progress and to determine continued eligibility and continued educational need. (Triennial IEP)
- After the student has received a formal assessment (Initial IEP) or reassessment to review the results of the assessments.
- When a parent/guardian or teacher feels that the student has demonstrated significant educational growth or a lack of anticipated progress. Once the request is received, the school has thirty days, not including school vacations greater than five days, to hold the IEP meeting.
- When a special education student has been suspended, especially if they demonstrate a pattern of misbehavior, to determine if changes to the IEP are required to address the misbehavior.
- Prior to an expulsion or once there is an accrual of 10 suspension days, there must be a meeting to determine if the student's misconduct was a manifestation of his/her disability.
- If a member of the IEP team is recommending that a student be dismissed from special education services and the appropriate evaluation has been conducted. (Exit IEP)

parents/guardians will be informed eight times a year (which is the same frequency as progress will be reported to all students and parents/guardians) of the student's progress toward meeting annual goals and whether the student is expected to meet his/her annual goals. The Goals and Objectives section of the IEP will be attached to the general progress report. This will serve to document the method by which the student's progress toward achieving the annual goal is measured, the student's progress during the relevant period, the extent to which it is anticipated the student will achieve the annual goal prior to the next annual review, and where needed, the reasons the student did not meet the goal.

*IEP Implementation* – The Charter School shall be responsible for all school site implementation of the IEP. As part of this responsibility, the Charter School shall provide parents with timely reports on the student's progress as

provided in the student's IEP, and at least quarterly or as frequently as progress reports are provided for the Charter School's non-special education students, whichever is more. The Charter School shall also provide all home-school coordination and information exchange. The Charter School shall also be responsible for providing all curriculum, classroom materials, classroom modifications, and assistive technology.

*Assessments* – The term “assessments” shall have the same meaning as the term “evaluation” in the IDEIA, as provided in Section 1414, Title 20 of the United States Code. The Charter School will determine what assessments, if any, are necessary and arrange for such assessments for referred or eligible students in accordance with applicable law. The Charter School shall obtain parent/guardian consent to assess Charter School students. The Charter School will assure that an IEP review shall be conducted on an annual basis at a minimum. In addition a reassessment shall be conducted at least once every three years, in accordance with the IDEIA, and more often if conditions warrant or requested by the student's parents or teacher. Parents will receive reports on their individual student's progress toward IEP goals and progress at the IEP meeting and student-led conferences.

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will adhere to the following assessment guidelines:

- Parents/guardians of any student referred for assessment must give his/her written consent for the school to administer the assessment.
- The student must be evaluated in all areas related to his/her suspected disability.
- Multiple assessments will be administered by professionals qualified to measure the student's strengths and needs.
- Assessments will be delivered without cultural, racial or gender bias.
- Assessments will be given in the student's primary language, unless a qualified interpreter is provided.
- Assessments will be adapted as necessary for students with impaired sensory, physical or speaking skills.
- A multidisciplinary team will be assembled to assess the student, including a general education teacher knowledgeable about the student.

Upon receipt of a signed assessment plan, Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter's Special Education Coordinator in partnership with the Education Specialist ,psychologist (contracted) and other designated specialists (contracted) will gather information to determine the student's disability, eligibility for services, and the nature and extent of required services. We hope to use Seneca services or a similar provider to provide the necessary professionals to ensure a comprehensive assessment.

Assessment procedures will be conducted in the student's primary language, using an interpreter as needed. The types of assessments for determining eligibility for specialized instruction and services will include: individual testing, observations, interviews, review of school records, reports, work samples, and parent/guardian input.

Specific assessment tools to be used will be determined by the evaluator, but may include:

Cognitive/processing:

- Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition
- Differential Abilities Scale, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition
- Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning
- Test of Auditory Processing Skills, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition
- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing
- Test of Visual Processing Skills, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition
- Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition

Behavior/Social-Emotional:

- Behavior Assessment System for Children, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition
- Conners Rating Scales, Revised
- Gilliam Autism Rating Scales, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

Speech/Language:

- CELF-4 Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals, Fourth Edition
- CELF Spanish Edition
- CASL Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language
- EOWPVT-4th Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test
- ROWPVT-4th Receptive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test
- EOWPVT Spanish-Bilingual Edition
- ROWPVT Spanish-Bilingual Edition
- GFTA-2 Goldman Fristoe Test of Articulation 2
- KLTP-2 Khan-Lewis Test of Phonological Processes 2

Psycho-educational evaluations also integrate findings from record reviews, interviews with teachers and families, and observations of the child in the school setting.

The Special Education Coordinator will be responsible for scheduling, coordinating and facilitating the IEP meeting. Professionals qualified to interpret test results will present the assessment data at the IEP meeting. Translation will be available at all IEP meetings to share findings in the family's home language.

*Confidentiality and Procedural Safeguards* – The Charter School will assure that the confidentiality of identifiable data shall be protected at the collection, storage, disclosure and destruction stages. In addition, students and their parents shall be provided with safeguards through the identification evaluation and placement process and provisions for a free appropriate public education.

*Student Discipline* – Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will ensure that all special education student discipline will be in compliance with education code as outlined below. The IEP team will lead all discipline discussions and decisions.

***Case-by-case determination.*** School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether a change in placement, consistent with the other requirements of this section, is appropriate for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

(b) ***General.***

(1) School personnel under this section may remove a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct from his or her current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or suspension, for not more than 10 consecutive school days (to the extent those alternatives are applied to children without disabilities), and for additional removals of not more than 10 consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct (as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement under § 300.536).

(2) After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days in the same school year, during any subsequent days of removal the public agency must provide services to the extent required under paragraph (d) of this section.

(c) ***Additional authority.*** For disciplinary changes in placement that would exceed 10 consecutive school days, if the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the school code is determined not to be a manifestation of the child’s disability pursuant to paragraph (e) of this section, school personnel may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to children without disabilities, except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section.

(d) ***Services.*** (1) A child with a disability who is removed from the child’s current placement pursuant to paragraphs (c), or (g) of this section must—

(i) Continue to receive educational services, as provided in § 300.101(a), so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and

(ii) Receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

(2) The services required by paragraph (d)(1), (d)(3), (d)(4), and (d)(5) of this section may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

(3) A public agency is only required to provide services during periods of removal to a child with a disability who has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days or less in that school year, if it provides services to a child without disabilities who is similarly removed.

(4) After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days in the same school year, if the current removal is for not more than 10 consecutive school days and is not a change of placement under § 300.536, school personnel, in consultation with at least one of the child's teachers, determine the extent to which services are needed, as provided in § 300.101(a), so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP.

(5) If the removal is a change of placement under § 300.536, the child's IEP Team determines appropriate services under paragraph (d)(1) of this section.

(e) ***Manifestation determination.*** (1) Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the LEA, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team (as determined by the parent/guardian and the LEA) must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents/guardians to determine—

(i) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or

(ii) If the conduct in question was the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP.

(2) The conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's

disability if the LEA, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that a condition in either paragraph (e)(1)(i) or (1)(ii) of this section was met.

(3) If the LEA, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine the condition described in paragraph (e)(1)(ii) of this section was met, the LEA must take immediate steps to remedy those deficiencies.

(f) ***Determination that behavior was a manifestation.*** If the LEA, the parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team must—

(1) Either—

(i) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless the LEA had conducted a functional behavioral assessment before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child; or

(ii) If a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (g) of this section, return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent/guardian and the LEA agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

(g) ***Special circumstances.*** School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, if the child—

(1) Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of an SEA or an LEA;

(2) Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of an SEA or an LEA; or

(3) Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of an SEA or an LEA.

(h) **Notification.** On the date on which the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the LEA must notify the parents/guardians of that decision, and provide the parents/guardians the procedural safeguards notice described in § 300.504.

(i) **Definitions.** For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) **Controlled substance** means a drug or other substance identified under schedules I, II, III, IV, or V in section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)).

(2) **Illegal drug** means a controlled substance; but does not include a controlled substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under that Act or under any other provision of Federal law.

(3) **Serious bodily injury** has the meaning given the term “serious bodily injury” under paragraph (3) of subsection (h) of section 1365 of title 18, United States Code.[1]

(4) **Weapon** has the meaning given the term “dangerous weapon” under paragraph (2) of the first subsection (g) of section 930 of title 18, United States Code. [2]

*Personnel Standards and Staffing* – The Charter School will attract, recruit and hire appropriately trained and credentialed personnel to provide special education services to children with disabilities as required by Education Code and the IDEIA. Professional development opportunities in this regard will include annual special education compliance trainings as well as monthly trainings to maximize teacher effectiveness in working with special needs students and to ensure each child’s IEP is implemented fully and successfully. Charter School staff shall participate in SELPA in-service training relating to special education.

The Charter School will be responsible for the hiring, training, and employment of site staff necessary to provide special education services to its students, including, without limitation, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and resource specialists. The Charter School shall ensure that all special education staff hired or contracted by the Charter School is qualified pursuant to SELPA policies, as well as meet all legal requirements. The Charter School shall be responsible for the hiring, training, and employment of itinerant staff necessary to provide special education services to Charter School students, including, without limitation, speech therapists,

occupational therapists, behavioral therapists, and psychologists.

Caliber intends to be actively involved in trainings provided by the EDCOE Charter SELPA's Professional Development team including SEIS, writing IEPs and other appropriate trainings.

In-house, the Caliber team will begin the year with a three-week orientation. During this time one focus will be our inclusion based special education model. We will review key elements of state and federal law and collaboratively plan to ensure student success.

Key orientation topics will include: Special education timelines, assessment plans, prior written notice, 30-day IEPs, mental health changes, progress reporting, extended school year, discipline documentation, supporting and communicating with general education teachers, student support teams, and Section 504 plans.

Weekly professional development sessions, differentiated by staff skills, will be held Fridays. Grade level and department teams will closely evaluate student data, track and adjust accommodations and progress, and deepen knowledge and practice. Specialists will be invited in to train staff on identified areas of need.

In December there will be one week of staff development. This intensive time will enable us to review the program efficacy to date and make necessary adjustments.

One Assistant Principal will primarily operate in a coaching role. She will dedicate a good deal of her time goal setting, observing classrooms, one-on-one conferencing with all staff to ensure an unwavering focus on strengthening teacher capacity. One focal area of coaching will be on special education inclusion.

Lastly, we are scheduling our in-house special education staff in a way to enable a portion of their day to be dedicated to observing mainstream staff, do lesson demonstrations, monitor accommodation implementation and offer feedback.

*State Assessments* - The Charter School will assure that students with disabilities either under the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act ("IDEIA") or Section 504 are included in State assessment programs with appropriate accommodations and modifications when necessary and appropriate. These assessments include, but are not limited to, the CAASPP and the CAT 6.

*Notification and Coordination* – The Charter School shall follow SELPA policies as they apply to all SELPA schools for responding to implementation of special education services. The Charter School will adopt and implement policies relating to all special education issues and referrals.

*Interim and Initial Placements of New Charter School Students* – For students who enroll in the Charter School from another school district outside of the SELPA with a current IEP, the Charter School shall conduct an IEP meeting within thirty days. Prior to such meeting and pending agreement on a new IEP, the Charter School shall implement the existing IEP at the Charter School, to the extent practicable or as otherwise agreed with the parent/guardian.

*Non-Public Placements/Non-Public Agencies* – The Charter School shall be solely responsible for selecting, contracting with, and overseeing all non-public schools and non-public agencies used to serve special education students.

*Non-discrimination* – It is understood and agreed that all children will have access to the Charter School and no student shall be denied admission nor counseled out of the Charter School due to the nature, extent, or severity of his/her disability or due to the student's request for, or actual need for, special education services.

*Parent/Guardian Concerns and Complaints* – Parents/guardians have the right to file a complaint with the California State Department of Education if they believe that the school has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing special education. The Charter School shall adopt policies for responding to parental concerns or complaints related to special education services. The Charter School shall receive any concerns raised by parents/guardians regarding related services and rights.

As an LEA, we will oversee any state complaints, and will involve the SELPA at the earliest possible level for advice. The Charter School's designated representative shall investigate as necessary, respond to, and address the parent/guardian concern or complaint. We will seek out the appropriate legal advice throughout all stages of the process, and maintain good working relationships and open communication with parents/guardians.

*Due Process Hearings* – The Charter School may initiate a due process hearing or request for mediation with respect to a student enrolled in Charter School if it determines such action is legally necessary or advisable. In the event that the parents/guardians file for a due process hearing, or request mediation, the Charter School shall defend the case.

Due process requirements are in place to protect student and family rights throughout the special education identification, assessment, plan

implementation, and exiting processes. Due process clearly outlines communication and access expectations and the pathway to resolve any compliance complaints.

Parents/guardians of students at Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter must give written consent for the evaluation and placement of their child for special education, be included in the decision-making process when change in placement is under consideration, and be invited, along with the IEP team, to conferences and meetings to develop, monitor, and modify their child's IEP. The school will acknowledge any concerns or disagreements raised by parents/guardians within five days, after which a meeting between the parent/guardian and school will be scheduled to seek resolution of the disagreement. If a disagreement or concern persists, parents /guardians have the right to initiate a due process hearing to challenge a decision regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of their child. The school provides the parent/guardian with all notices of procedural safeguards as well as with information on the procedure to initiate both formal and informal dispute resolutions.

As an LEA, we will oversee any due process cases, and will involve the SELPA at the earliest possible level for advice. We will seek out the appropriate legal advice throughout all stages of the process, and maintain good working relationships and open communication with parents/guardians.

*SELPA Representation* – It is the Charter School's understanding that it shall represent itself at all SELPA meetings.

*Funding* – The Charter School understands that it will be subject to the allocation plan of the SELPA.

In addition, the Charter School shall comply with the EDCOE Local Master Plan and perform all corrective actions deemed necessary by the EDCOE Charter SELPA. The Charter School will develop an annual budget, hire necessary staff, contract for appropriate services and document the qualifications and competency of school leadership to meet the special education compliance and quality requirements.

The Charter School will work with EDCOE to provide professional development that builds the capacity of the special education and general education staff in the areas of promising instructional practices, compliance with state and federal statutes, reporting requirements and use of instructional data. In addition, all staff members will be provided annual professional development about practices that support the needs of special education students in the least restrictive environment, including differentiation modeling for both instruction and independent work, time allotment modifications, and venues of participation that accommodate all students, especially those with special

needs as deemed by their IEP or SST support plan.

For any student transferring to the school from another school district or state, the school will hold an IEP meeting within 30 days of enrollment to review the student’s IEP. All incoming students will also participate in a series of diagnostic assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

See Appendix 5.5 for description of the Student Study Team Process.

The Charter School supports all special education students in compliance with state and federal laws. No student will be denied admission to the Charter School because he or she is in need of special education services.

## VII. Our Staff

There are three critical aspects of our staffing plan:

- **Collaboration:** Our teachers will be part of a collaborative and supportive learning community that helps them improve their own practice and improve the practice of their peers. Teachers will work together on a grade-level team. They will share lesson planning responsibilities and meet weekly in order to examine student data, strategize around interventions, and collaborate on unit and lesson plans.
- **Differentiated Roles:** Staff will have differentiated roles depending on their experience and expertise. In all grade levels, there will be a single grade team leader who will be responsible for organizing grade-team meetings, serving as a model classroom instructor for peer observations and ensuring that assessments and curriculum are aligned across the grade. Each teacher in the team will teach to her/his strengths.
- **Tutoring:** We draw on older students to tutor younger students (see Sample Student Schedule in Appendix 5.1) and we design peer tutoring into our model by allowing students who demonstrate competency to tutor their peers during the regular school day. We also have parents and other volunteers assist during the day to help support individual projects.

### Basic Staffing Model

	<b>Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>
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<b>Base Staff</b> <i>Approx. 22.5:1 student teacher ratio</i>	One teacher per 22 or 23 students	One teacher per 22 or 23 students	Three teachers per 30 students	Three teachers per 90 students
<b>Support Staff</b>	Special Education Community Partners Mental Health Team Instructional Assistant	Special Education Community Partners Peer Tutors Mental Health Team Instructional Assistant	Special Education Community Partners Peer Tutors Mental Health Team	Special Education Community Partners Mental Health Team
<b>Support Technology</b>	One laptop per child	One laptop per child	One laptop per child	One laptop per child

### **Our Staff Development Plan**

#### **A Collaborative Professional Teaching and Learning Environment**

Caliber will recruit outstanding, committed teachers who have demonstrated leadership qualities in prior roles, expertise in their content areas, experience working with students from underserved communities, and believe that all children can achieve at high levels. Much is expected of Caliber teachers. In addition to the extended time in class, teachers are expected to be focused on the school's mission, committed to its values, and open to collaboration and ongoing improvement.

In return, Caliber teachers will be treated as professionals. They will be supported in their professional growth with time for planning and collaboration, stipends for conferences and school visits, and resources for improving instruction. Teachers at Caliber will regularly visit each other's classrooms to create consistency in content of lessons as well as classroom culture, and to learn from their peers. Teachers will have the opportunity to receive feedback from their peers and the school's leadership team on the results of their students, which should help each improve instruction and the implementation of the Caliber model at the school. Each teacher also will be provided with the necessary tools for effective lesson preparation and communication with families, including a laptop computer, cell phone, a desk, and high speed Internet access.

## **Professional Development**

At Caliber, the School Leader and instructional leadership team will set the tone and develop the conditions under which staff members will become the keepers of the school's culture and values and grow as teachers and learners. Staff development will support the school's mission and basic values by fostering a positive campus culture, sharing the best instructional practices, and encouraging individual teacher growth. Beginning in staff orientation, the School Leader and instructional leadership team will ensure that teachers understand and support the school's mission, goals, and values, emphasizing a rigorous, standards based college preparatory program. This orientation involves specific activities designed to align the staff and foster teamwork.

During the school year, staff development will continue through professional development days, whole staff meetings, and vertical and grade level team meetings. A primary focus will be to develop teachers' ability to plan and deliver in alignment with Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, particularly in regards to embedding literacy and non-fiction texts across the curriculum. We will spend time calibrating and integrating our social-emotional initiatives. An additional focus will be strategies and support for helping special populations, such as students with IEPs and English Learners, to achieve academically. Support in these areas will happen during orientation, at weekly staff planning sessions, through inter-visitations, and through additional off-site days for teachers to learn more at workshops that they select with their coach or school leader. Teachers will be encouraged to observe each other and other excellent teachers in the community and receive regular feedback on their performance, goals, and growth. Below is a chart that summarizes the approach to various types of professional development. We will update and modify these methods as we observe the needs of our teachers over time.

Area of Professional Development	Process
<b>Introduction to Caliber Culture</b>	Pre-year orientation three weeks; mid-year staff CPD one week; end of year staff CPD one week; weekly staff meeting
<b>Special Populations</b>	Special Education training during orientation; special education study group; GLAD training for English Language Learners; Rtl training during orientation; Rtl study group; opportunities to attend off-campus professional development on special populations (ELL, special education, etc.)
<b>Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards</b>	Common Core/Next Gen overview during orientation; Common Core/Next Gen overview during each retreat; Common Core/Next Gen study group; Common Core/Next Gen-aligned unit and lesson planning during Wednesday planning sessions; additional training for grade-team leaders
<b>Using Data to Inform Instruction</b>	Overview and practice during orientation (intro to data collection and analysis); data analysis during each Friday planning session; quarterly (or more) “data days” (or half-days) to review student data in teams; data focus for teacher feedback meetings
<b>Habits of Personalized Educators (HOPE):</b> How to plan and teach in a personalized, blended learning environment	Personalized learning role playing and expectations during orientation and mid-year retreat; mandatory personalized learning study group during Friday sessions; visits to schools that excel at personalized learning; visits to classrooms that excel at personalized learning
<b>General Support and Development</b>	Setting teaching expectations for all teachers during orientation; weekly (or more) observations with quick feedback; quarterly reviews for goal-setting and video playback; mandatory teaching

	quality study group during Friday sessions with video playback and mini-lessons; visits to excellent classrooms both within and outside the school
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Targeted Professional Development for working with English Learners

All teachers delivering instruction in core content areas will hold, or be in the process of obtaining, a Cross-culture, Language and Academic Development (CLAD) Certificate or a Bi-lingual Cross-Culture, Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) Certificate. Caliber will work to recruit and hire educators who are fluent in English and Spanish to ensure accurate assessment of students’ language and literacy skills, appropriate academic support, and effective communication with families. The Caliber Schools teaching staff will be given professional development in teaching English Learners in their appropriate content areas, including the balanced literacy approach, a focus on vocabulary development, the most effective practices of SDAIE (specially designed academic instruction in English), as well as the opportunity to participate in Guided Language Acquisition Development (GLAD) training.

**Instructional Leadership and Support**

The primary role of the school leader will be to support and develop teachers. S/he will provide real time feedback to teachers through frequent observations and coaching sessions. Professional development will be practical and focused on improving classroom instruction.

Teachers will receive feedback on their instruction through at least one weekly informal observation, frequent 15-minute coaching sessions that mimic the way that teachers coach students, and one quarterly session for an hour. In addition, staff will meet weekly during a common prep period, and on Friday afternoons they will engage in more common planning in addition to structured professional development. Teachers will also attend five weeks of professional development each year – three weeks in the fall before the start of school, one week in December, and one week in June.

**Defining Quality Instruction**

Effective schools have a common vision of quality instruction. The basic resources that will serve as the foundation of this vision are the Profession. Teachers will develop quality instruction through the use of common rubrics for excellent teaching.

This rubric will combine the California Standards for the Teaching Profession as a broad approach to high-quality instruction, Doug Lemov’s “Teach Like a Champion” for specific techniques and skills that these teachers need to create cultures of efficient learning and achievement, THINK Literacy as used

at Success Academies in New York, as well as our own unique Habits of Personalized Educators (HOPE) toolkit that is critical for teaching in a blended environment in which students gain independence.

### **California Standards for the Teaching Profession**

The CSTP are organized around six interrelated domains of teaching practice. The following are the six standards:

- Engaging and Supporting All Students in Learning
- Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning
- Understanding and Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning
- Planning Instruction and Designing Learning Experiences for All Students
- Assessing Students for Learning
- Developing as a Professional Educator

Together these six standards represent a developmental, holistic view of teaching and are intended to meet the needs of increasingly diverse teachers and students in California. For a more detailed view of the standards, see Appendix 5.6.

### **Teach Like A Champion**

Teach Like a Champion has 49 practical techniques that teachers can use when engaged in more direct instruction in their classrooms. A description of how a staff might use this book to reflect on their own practice is included in Appendix 5.7

### **THINK Literacy**

THINK Literacy is an approach to reading and writing that emphasizes intensive intellectual preparation by teachers around carefully chosen texts, introducing students to quality literature and supporting critical thinking through thoughtful discussion of ideas. THINK Literacy was developed by Success Academies, the highest performing school chain in New York City.

### **HOPE**

The six anchors of the Habits of Personalized Educators (HOPE) toolkit are:

- Helping Students to Set and Adjust Goals and Strategies
  - Our teachers need to be able to coach students in how to set goals and create learning strategies. Caliber will ensure that teacher professional development trains teachers in this set of skills. Teachers will have frequent one-on-one coaching sessions with students. HOPE offers teachers a common tool and protocol for

such sessions, as well as a rubric for administrators to use when sitting in on student coaching sessions.

- Using Data to Personalize Planning and Grouping
  - Teachers will group students according to their needs and abilities so that they can better target instruction to these groups. This part of the HOPE rubric gives teachers a tool to modify groupings, to create quick pullout tutorials, as well as techniques for creating more differentiated lesson plans. Teachers will use assessment data, conversations, and other data to inform groupings. In this way, teachers can ensure that students learn material until they have mastered it.
- Managing Behavior in Personalized Learning Environments
  - The Caliber model relies on supporting student independence and a variety of learning environments, from independent reading to projects. In addition, students spend more time learning online than at many schools. For these reasons, classroom management techniques must be adjusted to account for the different behavioral norms in different learning environments. This part of the HOPE rubric includes these norms, so that students learn a clear set of behavior expectations.
- Coaching Students in Personalized Learning Environments
  - Our personalized blended learning and project-based learning model remove the teacher from the front of the classroom. Instead, our teachers often teach the whole class very briefly and then let the students go to work. During this work time, teachers have the ability to conference individually or with small groups. It is crucial that teachers have the ability to ask the right questions, guide students to find their own answers, and give very explicit feedback on what students are doing well and not yet doing well. This part of the rubric offers teachers scripts, tools, and protocols for coaching students in personalized, student-centered learning environments.
- Designing Projects
  - At many elementary schools and middle schools, project-based learning takes a back seat to basic literacy and numeracy. At Caliber we try to do both. While we will use a standard curriculum for literacy and numeracy, we also want teachers to develop their own, unique, timely projects. In order to minimize the burden on teachers, teacher teams at a grade level will share projects so that they do not need to design each one alone. This part of the HOPE toolkit gives teachers a bank of potential projects as well as

templates for designing their own. Over time, we will build our own collaborative library of projects that teachers can use.

- Coaching Students to Coach Each Other
  - Peer tutoring is a critical part of the Caliber model. One of the more innovative parts of our model is that we give teachers explicit time to teach students how to tutor their peers. This requires its own curriculum, so that teachers can model appropriate tutoring scripts for students and then allow them to practice tutoring each other.



## **6. Element B: Measurable Student Outcomes**

*Governing Law: "The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. "Pupil outcomes," for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the charter school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the charter school's educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 47607. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in paragraphs (2) to (8), inclusive, of subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served by the charter school." Cal. Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(B).*

*CHARTER SCHOOL has clearly defined schoolwide outcome goals in compliance with California Education Code sections 47605(b)(5)(B) and 52060(d).*

*CHARTER SCHOOL will pursue the following schoolwide and subgroup outcome goals, as measured by multiple and varied benchmark assessments that are aligned to state and federal standards (including the new Common Core) and reflect proficiency measures required by the [selected assessment(s)], as well as applicable state priorities detailed in California Education Code § 52060(d) that apply for the grade levels served by the charter school. For purposes of measuring achievement of these goals, a numerically significant pupil subgroup includes all of the following:*

*(i) A pupil subgroup is one that consists of at least 30 pupils.*

*(ii) For a subgroup of pupils who are foster youth or homeless youth, a numerically significant pupil subgroup is one that consists of at least 15 pupils. Cal. Education Code §§ 47607(a)(3)(B) and 52052(a)(3)(A)–(B).*

*The following charts delineate CHARTER SCHOOL school-wide and subgroup outcome goals and performance targets aligned to the state's priorities that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school, methods for measuring progress and the individual(s) with primary responsibility for each, all aligned with the state's priorities defined in paragraphs (2) to (8), inclusive, of Cal. Ed. Code Section 52060(d). As the State and District finalize new standardized assessment tools (e.g., [assessments]) and new school performance measures (e.g., CAASPP and California State Dashboard), and finalize the format for the new Local Control Accountability Plans as applicable to charter schools, CHARTER SCHOOL will work with the District to ensure that it creates and updates its plans and goals accordingly. The LCAP shall not be deemed part of the charter, and therefore, annual amendments to the LCAP shall not be considered*

*a “material revision to the charter” as defined on section 47607. Actions intended to ensure that the school meets these goals and targets are delineated throughout this charter petition (e.g., Element 1: Educational Program; Element 4: Governance and parental involvement; etc.) See the following chart for specific actions, their corresponding assessments and the school personnel responsible for their implementation.*

As described in the Educational Program section, Caliber is a data driven school. Caliber will succeed because we will not assume that students have gained competency in any particular area until we see evidence. Assessments serve as opportunities for students to show such evidence.

### **School Outcome Goals**

Caliber is dedicated to documenting student achievement of the state content standards each year through state-mandated student assessments. As is required by Education Code Section 60605, students will participate in SBAC, CAA where appropriate and Physical Fitness testing and all other mandated accountability programs (ELPAC, etc.). Through these assessments, Caliber will demonstrate student competency with regards to state standards. Standardized assessments allow us to compare our students' performance with the rest of the state. In addition, Caliber may provide internal learning performance accountability documentation. This internal documentation may include, but is not limited to: personalized learning plan goals, internally developed interim assessments, teacher review of student work, and other assessment methods.

Caliber’s School Outcome Goals are informed by State Priorities, goals and outcomes associated with the Local Control Funding Formula:<sup>37</sup>

1. Student Achievement (State Priority #4)
2. Student Engagement (State Priority #5)
3. Parental Involvement (State Priority #3)
4. School Climate (State Priority #6)
5. Other Student Outcomes (State Priority #8)

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<sup>37</sup> As described by the California Department of Education:  
[http://www.csba.org/GovernanceAndPolicyResources/FairFunding/~media/CSBA/Files/GovernanceResources/GovernanceBriefs/2013\\_08\\_LCFF\\_Fact\\_Sheet-funding\\_priority.ashx](http://www.csba.org/GovernanceAndPolicyResources/FairFunding/~media/CSBA/Files/GovernanceResources/GovernanceBriefs/2013_08_LCFF_Fact_Sheet-funding_priority.ashx)

- 6. Basic Services (State Priority #1)
- 7. Implementation of Common Core (State Priority # 2)
- 8. Course Access (State Priority #7)

Subject Area	Measurable Outcome	Assessments	Annual Goal
Academic Achievement	Caliber will meet or exceed its CAASPP target score; students will progress on all aspects of their PLPs, and take ownership of their learning	SBAC	Caliber SBAC score will meet or exceed 800 within the first three years of the school's CAASPP testing
		SBAC	Caliber will meet or exceed its annual SBAC growth target
		SBAC	Caliber will meet or exceed SBAC growth targets each year for each significant student subgroup following the first year of SBAC testing
		SBAC	Caliber will meet or exceed its annual Adequate Yearly Progress targets
		PLP	100% of students 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade and up will meet weekly with a teacher to review weekly progress, and jointly draw up weekly goals
Attendance	Caliber will demonstrate strong annual attendance	Average Daily Attendance (ADA); student attendance	The ADA rate will meet or exceed 95% each year; > 80% retention excluding moves
Suspension and Expulsion	Caliber will minimize student time lost through	Suspension and Expulsion data	Less than 1% expulsion; less than 5% suspensions

	suspension and/or expulsion		
English Language Arts	Students will be proficient readers and writers of the English Language	SBAC test in English Language Arts (Gr 3–8)	75% of all students who have been enrolled at Caliber for at least three full academic years will score at the Standard Met or Standard Exceeded level
		Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) in Reading (Gr K–8)	Growth of >1 grade level per year until grade level reached and maintained
		Early Literacy Assessment (i.e. DRA, Dibels, Fountas & Pinnell)	All students who have been enrolled at Caliber for at least three full years will be reading at/above grade level
Math	Students will be proficient in mathematical skills and content	SBAC test in Math	75% of all students who have been enrolled at Caliber for at least three full academic years will score at the Standard Met or Standard Exceeded level
		Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) in Math	Growth of >1 grade level per year until grade level reached and maintained

Science	Students will be proficient in science skills and content	California Science Test (CAST)	75% of all fifth grade and eighth grade students who have been enrolled at Caliber for at least three full academic years will score at the Standard Met or Standard Exceeded level
Social Studies	Students will be proficient in social studies skills and content	End of course examinations	75% of all eighth grade students who have been enrolled at Caliber for at least three full academic years will score at the proficient or advanced level
Computer Coding, Robotics and Engineering	Students will be proficient in Computer Coding, Robotics and Engineering	Beauty and Joy of Computing Standards	90% proficient on annual assessment based on Computer Science Teacher's Association grade level computing standards
PE	Students will cultivate lifelong healthy habits with a focus on nutrition, physical fitness, and lifestyle choices	Presidential Fitness Test	75% of students are in the Healthy Fitness Zone in 5 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grades as defined by the Presidential Youth Fitness Program
Arts	Students will develop an appreciation of art history and a range of art skills	Art in Action Portfolio of Work; Music theory and practice	100% of students will complete the full Art in Action curriculum annually  95% of students in two concerts annually

	across varied media		
Modern Foreign Language (7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> )	Students will complete a freshman level foreign language course	High School Language Placement Exam	75% of students will test into the second year of language class in their 9 <sup>th</sup> grade year
English Language Development	English learners will progress academically on pace with the rate schoolwide	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) in Reading/ Language	EL students will demonstrate annual growth at the schoolwide average rate
		ELPAC	All EL student will make at least one level of advancement in language proficiency annually  Schoolwide reclassification rate will increase by 2% annually.
Special Education	Special Education students will meet all annual goals defined in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP)	IEP	80% of students will meet their annual IEP goals
Socio-Emotional Learning	Students will master key aspects of self-regulation and expected school behaviors	Personalized Learning Plans; based on standards adopted by Oakland Unified School District	All students will be proficient after three years at Caliber.

Parental Engagement	Parents will be an integral part of the Caliber community	Annual parent survey; attendance at PLP meetings, PTP meetings, school events, district board meetings; parent university series	75% of parents participate in at least one key PTP event; parents will review PLP with teacher; > 80% satisfaction on parent survey
Teachers	Caliber Schools is a teacher-driven organization. Teachers will deliver outstanding lessons and lead on academics and culture in the school	Teacher observation; professional development; credentials and skills; teacher retention; annual teacher survey	90% of teachers are “effective” or “highly effective” according to our teacher evaluation rubric (see Appendix 8.4 for details); >75% retention; >80% level of satisfaction

The overlap between Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter and State Priorities is clear and compelling. The table below details the direct alignment between the State Priorities and the Charter School’s six priorities in Element A, IV How Learning Best Occurs:

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Outcome measurement</b>	<b>Charter School Goal (Element A, IV How Learning Best Occurs)</b>
<b>Student Achievement</b>	<b>SBAC; MAP; Early Literacy Assessment; CAST in Science ; High School language placement test; Presidential Fitness Test; Personalized Learning Plans; ELPAC</b>	1. High Expectations in Academics and Character 2. Personalized Learning 3. Continuous Improvement and Innovation 4. Exceptional Teaching and Instructional Leadership 5. Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum
<b>Student Engagement</b>	<b>Attendance; Suspensions and Expulsions; PLP data on behavior; student achievement; student retention</b>	6. Supportive School Community with Rights and Responsibilities 5. Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum
<b>Parental Involvement</b>	<b>Student retention; attendance at key events; parent survey results</b>	6. Supportive School Community with Rights and Responsibilities
<b>School Climate</b>	<b>Attendance; Suspension and Expulsions; progress on PLP goals, both academic and behavioral; ownership of PLP goals</b>	1. High Expectations in Academics and Character 2. Personalized Learning 6. Supportive School Community with Rights and Responsibilities

<b>Other Student Outcomes</b>	<b>Computer coding and robotics, arts, music targets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High Expectations in Academics and Character</li> <li>2. Personalized Learning</li> <li>3. Continuous Improvement and Innovation</li> <li>5. Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum</li> </ul>
<b>Basic Services</b>	<b>Teacher credentialing; basic skills; teacher observation; teacher retention and survey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Exceptional Teaching and Instructional Leadership</li> <li>6. Supportive Community with Rights and Responsibilities</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation of Core Curriculum</b>	<b>SBAC; CAST; CAASPP; MAP; other academic measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High Expectations in Academics and Character</li> <li>5. Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum</li> </ul>
<b>Course Access</b>	<b>PLPs; IEPs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High Expectations in Academics and Character</li> <li>2. Personalized Learning</li> <li>4. Exceptional Teaching and Instructional Leadership</li> <li>5. Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum</li> </ul>

## 7. Element C: Assessment of Student and School Outcomes

*Governing Law: The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card. —California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(C).*

### Assessments

Caliber will utilize a comprehensive range of assessments to monitor pupil progress across grade level subjects and competencies, including state summative, diagnostic, interim, and formative assessments.

- **State Summative Assessments.** Caliber will administer the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium Tests (SBACs), assessing grade level mastery in English Language Arts and Math as well as the California Science Test (CAST) in Science; the California Alternate Assessment (CAA) in those same subjects as appropriate for Special Education students per IEP specifications and the ELPAC, by which students demonstrate progress towards English proficiency.
- **Diagnostic Assessments and Growth Measures.** Caliber is using NWEA's MAP assessments at the beginning of the year to help teachers understand the baseline achievement of their students along with specific areas of strength and weakness. To formally assess whether students are on track during the year, we anticipate administering the NWEA assessment three times annually. Reading assessments will be administered at the beginning of the year to assess the reading level of students in Grades K-2. To formally assess whether students are on track with their reading progress, we anticipate administering these assessments at least three times annually. Benchmark exams that are similar to the SBAC assessment will be given three times during the year. Additionally, on-going assessments provided by student academic software will provide a wide range of data.
- **Interim Assessments.** Caliber will provide interim assessments every six weeks to ensure students are progressing towards competency. The School Leader and Assistant Principal will lead an annual process for creating and revising interim assessments to ensure they are standards aligned and correlated to the SBAC. Data reports will be used by teachers and administrators in regular cycles of inquiry and re-teaching after each assessment. Performance cut-points on these assessments will be recalibrated each year based on prior year correlation with SBAC scores, so that the results are strongly predictive of SBAC performance.

- **Formative Classroom Assessments.** Teachers will administer and utilize assessment data daily through reports from online learning providers and just-in-time tools such as exit tickets.

The chart below provides an overview of the assessment tools, timelines, and minimum performance levels required to attain standards that we will employ to measure pupil progress in meeting the outcomes delineated in Element B of this charter. Appendix 6 contains data from Caliber:Beta Academy’s first year and a sample of how that data is used to inform teaching.

Assessment	Purpose	Grade	Timeline	Minimum Performance Level
<b>English Language Arts</b>				
Formative Classroom Assessments	Measure competency against standards	K-8	Daily	80% correct on online assessments
Interim Assessments	Measure competency against standards	K-8	Every 6 weeks	80% correct on online assessments
Developmental Reading Assessment	Measure students’ ability to decode and comprehend	K-2	Upon enrollment and each quarter and/or as needed	On grade level
Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC)	State Criterion-Based Assessment	3-8	Annually	Standard Met
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)	National Norm-Referenced Test	K-8	3 times annually	Growth of >1 grade level until grade level is reached and maintained

LinkIt Benchmark Assessment	National Norm-Referenced Test	1-8	3 times annually	80%
<b>Mathematics</b>				
Formative Classroom Assessments	Measure competency against standards	K-8	Daily	80% correct on online assessments
Interim Assessments	Measure competency against standards	K-8	Every 6 weeks	80% correct on online assessments
Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC)	State Criterion-Based Assessment	3-8	Annually	Standard Met
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)	National Norm-Referenced Test	K-8	3 times annually	Growth of >1 grade levels until grade level is reached and maintained
LinkIt Benchmark Assessment	National Norm-Referenced Test	1-8	3 times annually	80% correct
<b>Science</b>				
Formative Classroom Assessments	Measure competency against standards	K-8	Daily	80% correct
Interim Assessments	Measure competency against standards	K-8	Every 6 weeks	80% correct

California Science Test (CAST)	State Criterion-Based Assessment	5, 8	Annually	Standards Met or Standards Exceeded
<b>Social Studies</b>				
Formative Classroom Assessments	Measure standards mastery	K-8	Daily	80% correct
Interim Assessments	Measure standards mastery	K-8	Every 6 weeks	80% correct
<b>English Language Learning</b>				
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)	National Norm-Referenced Test	K-8	3 times annually	Growth of >1 grade levels until grade level is reached and maintained
ELPAC	Measure English language acquisition	K-8	Upon enrollment and annually thereafter	Reclassification after three years at Caliber
<b>Special Education</b>				
Individualized Education Plan	Measure student progress	K-8	3 times annually	Meet IEP goals

### **Use and Reporting of Data**

As discussed in the Education Program section, teachers will engage in weekly common planning time when they can examine student evidence of learning and compare it to what was taught in order to make adjustments. A primary focus of staff development and support will be focused on data-driven instruction. The school leader will spend much of his or her time working with teachers to improve their use of data to inform how they are working with students.

Caliber will use a student information system such as Illuminate as a common platform for student data collection, analysis, and dissemination

Student progress towards skill competence will be documented in each students' personalized learning plan. Students will review this data frequently in one-on-one sessions with their teacher. We view parents as critical partners who must also have frequent access to student data. Parents will participate in parent-teacher conferences and will be invited to frequent school assemblies where they will have the opportunity to view student work. Families who are unable to visit the school will be invited to participate in telephone conferences or teachers will make home visits as needed. Additionally, student level data will be accessible for parents online so they can review at home and discuss with their child. Families who do not have access to the internet at home will be invited to use computers at the school.

The school will publish student results annually through the SARC, in compliance with the California Constitution, California Education Code and ESSA. In addition to the annual SARC, Caliber will develop an annual performance report based upon the data compiled. This report will be provided to all families at the school as well the governing board. It will also be posted on the Caliber website for public viewing.

The report will include:

- Summary data showing student progress toward the goals and outcomes from assessment instruments and techniques as described in this section. This data will be displayed on both a school-wide basis and disaggregated by major racial and ethnic categories to the extent feasible without compromising student confidentiality.
- A summary of major decisions and policies established by the Board during the year.
- Data on the level of parent involvement in Caliber's governance (and other aspects of the school, if applicable) and summary data from an annual parent and student satisfaction survey.
- Data regarding the number of staff working at the Charter School and their qualifications.
- A copy of the Charter School's health and safety policies and/or a summary of any major changes to those policies during the year.
- Information demonstrating whether Caliber implemented the means listed in the charter to achieve a racially and ethnically balanced student population (see Element G).

- An overview of Caliber's admissions practices during the year and data regarding the numbers of students enrolled, the number on waiting lists, and the numbers of students expelled and/or suspended.
- Analyses of the effectiveness of Caliber's internal and external dispute mechanisms and data on the number and resolution of disputes and complaints.
- Other information regarding the educational program and the administrative, legal and governance operations of Caliber relative to compliance with the charter generally.

Caliber shall comply with Education Code Section 47604.3 and the Public Records Act.



## **8. Element D: Governance and Legal Issues**

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

### **I. Legal Affirmations**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will be non sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, will not charge tuition, and will not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, national origin, gender, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or any of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220, including immigration status.

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws. Caliber Schools will retain its own legal counsel when necessary. Caliber Schools will purchase and maintain as necessary general liability, automotive liability, errors and omissions, property, workers compensation and unemployment insurance policies, either as part of VCUSD’s insurance program or its own insurance program.

The Charter School will operate autonomously from the District, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services as negotiated between the District and the Charter School. Pursuant to California Education Code Section 47604(d), the District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of the Charter School, operated by a California non–profit benefit corporation, or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the Charter School as long as the District has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

The Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter, the Caliber Schools Board of Directors, any administrators, managers or employees, and any other committees of the school will comply with federal, state, and local laws, nonprofit integrity standards, and the District’s policies and regulations regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

Caliber Schools is solely responsible for the debts and obligations of the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter.

### **II. Legal Structure**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will be a directly funded independent charter school and will be operated by Caliber Schools, a California non–profit public benefit corporation with 501[c](3) status. Caliber Schools is the Charter Management Organization (CMO) for the schools in its network. It is the responsibility of Caliber Schools to be accountable to the State of California and VCUSD for the governance and operations of the Caliber K–8 Charter. Caliber Schools exists to ensure that the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter adheres to this charter, and that the

school has the resources and support necessary to be successful. The Board of Caliber Schools will govern the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter.

Caliber Schools is a duly constituted California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation, and is governed in accordance with applicable California Corporations law. Please refer to Appendix 7 for the organizational documents of Caliber Schools, including articles of incorporation, bylaws, and conflict of interest code.

A description of the roles and responsibilities of the Board and the CMO are found below.

### **III. Board of Directors**

Caliber Schools is governed by a corporate Board of Directors (the “Board”). The Board shall be ultimately responsible for the operation and activities of the school. The Board shall be governed in accordance with its corporate bylaws which shall be consistent with the charter, the Charter Schools Act and all other applicable laws.

The Board’s primary methods for executing its responsibilities are to create, adopt and monitor a long term strategic plan and associated budget, and to employ and evaluate the leadership of Caliber Schools.

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will form a Parent Teacher Partnership (“PTP”) group (see below) to involve parents and members of the community in the operation of the school. This council may assist the School Leader with activities such as recruitment, community outreach, resource development, extracurricular programs, and community service projects. Feedback from each school in the Caliber network’s PTPs will be communicated to the Board through CMO leadership.

Caliber Schools’ Board of Directors hold public meetings in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and Education Code Section 47604.1(c). Parents and members of the public are invited to attend or join public board meetings in person or via free conference line. Meetings are held in network schools. Board members support the mission of Caliber Schools and serve voluntarily. Caliber Schools will seek to ensure that its board members represent a broad area of expertise. Caliber Schools will ensure that the Board includes members with expertise in educational programs, real estate, law, finance, management, and philanthropy.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47604(c), Caliber Schools’ bylaws permit one representative of the District to serve on the organization’s Board of Directors, should the District choose to appoint one. If the District chooses to do so, the Board shall appoint another director to ensure that the Board is maintained with an odd number of directors. The District representative will help

to facilitate communication and mutual understanding between Caliber Schools and VCUSD.

In accordance with the Caliber Schools bylaws, the Board consists of at least three directors and should not exceed thirteen directors. The board currently has five directors. Based on governance best practice, Caliber will seek to have a range of seven to thirteen directors over time. This number allows for sufficient expertise and the population of committees, while also ensuring the size is manageable for making strategic decisions. Each director will serve a three-year term. Terms will be staggered to ensure that at any given time no more than one third of the Board has less than one year of experience on the Board. New directors will be partnered with experienced ones in order to further the new directors' effectiveness. Directors may not serve more than two consecutive terms unless approved by 2/3 of the Board.

Directors' terms will expire according to the bylaws and as indicated in the Term Expiration Dates chart, included below. Directors shall have experience in one or more areas critical to charter schools success: education, school administration, school finance, corporate structure, accounting, legal compliance, leadership or fundraising.

Our Board is comprised of individuals with significant experience in charter school management, education, school administration, school finance, education technology, real estate and fundraising. New directors will be recruited and nominated by the governance committee or the entire Board as described below.

<b>Member</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>
Jennifer Moses	Chairman (until July 2015)	2018
Ron Beller	Chief Executive Officer	2017
Dan Katzir	Secretary	2018
Vivian Wu	Chairman (beginning July 2015)	2017
Pete Briger		2017

**Roles and Responsibilities of the Board**

The Caliber Schools Board of Directors' primary responsibility is to help set policies and guide the leadership team of Caliber Schools. The Board is empowered to:

- Ensure that all Caliber Schools, including Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter adhere to the goals outlined in their charters, as well as state and federal guidelines and other Caliber Schools policies.

- Hold the leadership of the CMO accountable for overall network performance.
- Provide support to the CMO for fund raising, marketing and other services as needs arise.
- Define and refine Caliber Schools' mission, vision, and strategic direction.
- Ensure effective organizational capacity and planning.
- Ensure adequate resources and the effective management of those resources.
- Enhance the organization's public standing.
- Ensure fiscal, legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability.
- Recruit and orient new board members.
- Assess board performance.

The Caliber Schools Board of Directors will meet at least quarterly. Meeting notices and agendas will be posted in compliance with the requirements of the Brown Act. Approved minutes from the previous Board meeting will be available in the administrative office. The Board Secretary will be responsible for recording governing board actions.

The Board will comply with all federal, state and local laws that are applicable to independent public charter schools, including but not limited to the Brown Act, the Political Reform Act, and Government Code Section 1090, *et seq.*, as set forth in Education Code Section 47604.1.

Caliber Schools has adopted a conflicts code, included in Appendix 7.3, which complies with the Political Reform Act, Corporations Code Conflicts of Interest rules, and which shall be updated with any charter school specific conflicts of interest laws or regulations. As required, the Conflicts Code will be submitted to the County Board of Supervisors for approval. The organization will retain its own legal counsel when necessary, and will purchase and maintain, as necessary, general liability, officers and directors, property, workers compensation, and unemployment insurance policies.

Caliber Schools may initiate and carry out any program or activity, or may otherwise act in any manner which is not in conflict with or inconsistent with, or preempted by any law and which is not in conflict with the purposes for which charter schools are established.

The Board may execute any powers delegated by law to it and shall discharge any duty imposed by law upon it and may delegate to an employee of Caliber Schools any of these duties with the exception of budget approval or revision, approval of the fiscal audits, and the adoption of Board policies. The Board however, retains ultimate responsibility over the performance of those powers or duties so delegated. Such delegation will:

- Be in writing,

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

The Board of Directors will attend an annual in-service for the purposes of training individual board members on their responsibilities with topics to include at a minimum Conflicts of Interest and the Brown Act.

### **Board Committees**

The Board anticipates appointing three standing committees with the following responsibilities:

- **Finance and Audit Committee:** Reviews budget proposals and year-to-date expenses and revenues and elects an auditor, reviews the annual audit, and reports to the full board;
- **Compensation Committee:** Reviews the CEO of Caliber Schools; and
- **Governance Committee:** Responsible for board recruitment and development.

The Board may also appoint other ad hoc committees comprised of staff, parents, community members or other members of the public with varying areas of expertise. Examples of possible ad hoc committees include: Development, Academic, and Real Estate. All committees will adhere to the Brown Act, as applicable.

### **III. Charter Management Organization**

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will be a member of the Caliber Schools network. All schools in the CMO receive support and services from the network in exchange for a fee. Services include:

- Hiring the school leader
- Holding the School Leader of the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter accountable for the academic and fiscal performance of the school.
- Recruiting school staff jointly with school leader
- Advocating on behalf of Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter by working to establish partnerships with community organizations, institutes of higher

learning, and foundations and corporate entities that support public education.

- Providing training and support for school leaders and operations coordinators
- Developing training materials to be used by school leaders and operations coordinators at each school site
- Technical support, including hardware and software procurement, installation and maintenance
- Enrollment services
- Real estate services
- Procurement services
- School growth and opening
- Budgeting and financial reporting
- Compliance in conjunction with school leaders
- Fundraising
- Data management
- Innovation and curriculum development
- Development of assessment rubrics

The School Leader has responsibility at each Caliber School for the execution of the academic and socio-emotional program, developing relationships with parents, enrollment, relationships with the District and community groups and supervision of school based employees.

#### Role of the School Leader

The School Leader will be the instructional and cultural leader of Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter. He/she is responsible for ensuring that the curriculum is successfully implemented in order to maximize student-learning experiences and to facilitate outstanding academic progress for all students at the school. The School Leader will report directly to the CMO, and is responsible for the orderly operation of the school and the supervision of all employees in the school. His/her tasks may include but are not limited to the following:

- Ensure Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter lives up to its mission and vision;
- Coach, evaluate and support all teachers and staff;
- Communicate and report to the CMO;
- Operate to the agreed school budget;
- In partnership with the CMO, participate in and develop professional development for school staff ;
- Interview and recommend employee hiring, promotion, discipline, and/or dismissal;
- Ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and help secure local grants;
- Communicate with parents, recruit new families and students, and assure families of academic growth;
- Take responsible steps to secure full and regular attendance at school of the students enrolled in accordance with policies established by the CMO;
- Complete and submit required documents as requested or required by the charter and/or the CMO and/or the District;
- Identify the staffing needs of the school and offer staff development as needed;
- Maintain up-to-date financial records;
- Ensure that appropriate evaluation techniques are used for both students and staff;
- Ensure the security of the school building;;
- Attend District administrative meetings upon request by the District and stay in direct contact with the District regarding changes, progress, etc.;
- Attend meetings with the Chief Financial Officer of the District on fiscal oversight issues as requested by the District;
- Provide all necessary financial reports as required for proper attendance reporting;

- Develop the School annual performance report and the SARC;
- Manage student discipline and, as necessary, implement the suspension and expulsion process;
- Participate in IEP meetings as necessary;
- Drive instructional excellence by ensuring that teachers receive appropriate and targeted coaching and professional development to implement successful classroom management and teaching strategies;
- Implement a comprehensive teacher evaluation system that includes regular classroom observations, goal setting and tracking, and formal evaluations drawing on multiple sources of evidence;
- Identify and reward strong teacher performance, drive retention of high performers, and create opportunities for professional growth;
- Engage students by being a visible, impactful presence in their daily lives on campus;
- Create a culture of high expectations and continuous improvement with a relentless focus on student achievement, operational efficiency, and self-improvement;
- Direct and supervise the behavioral program of the school, instituting supportive student discipline policies to meet student population needs by incorporating Restorative Justice, Mindfulness, and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports;
- Collaborate closely with school operations coordinator to ensure a safe and consistent school environment for students, and
- Plan the master schedule of classes as well as co-curricular supports for students.

For a job description for the School Leader, see Appendix 8.1

## **IV. Parental and Community Involvement**

### **Parental Involvement**

Caliber will operate under the premise that teachers, parents, and students must work together as partners to create the potential for a quality education. Parents will be a vital part of this partnership. Throughout the school development process and beyond, Caliber will involve parents as key stakeholders in the school.

Parents and families of Caliber students will have ongoing opportunities to communicate and engage with school leadership and the Board. While there will not be a Board seat specifically reserved for parents, the Board may invite parents to join standing or *ad hoc* committees of the Board of Directors. Additionally, all regular board meetings will be open meetings as called for in the Brown Act. Parents will be notified of meeting times and locations so that they may attend to offer public comments to the Board, offer feedback about the school, or make suggestions for board action on items being discussed by the Board.

Caliber School: K-8 Charter will form a Parent Teacher Partnership Group. The group will meet regularly with the School Leader and Assistant Principal. The group will be responsible for representing the collective needs of families and caregivers with school leadership, as well as serving in a liaison role to support families and caregivers with individual needs. The council will also play a leadership role in coordinating family activities such as whole school dinners and celebrations.

Caliber will conduct an annual parent satisfaction survey. The results of this survey will be evaluated closely by the Board and will be included in the annual dashboard of school performance data shared publically on the Caliber Schools website.

Parent Communication and Involvement	Who is Responsible
Multiple community information sessions before and during the enrollment period	School Leader
Home visits for most enrolled students before the beginning of the school year	School Leader and Teachers
Family Orientation sessions following the enrollment period and the week before the first day of school	School Leader

Family Commitment with each parent/guardian	Teachers, Parents, Students
At least two teacher/family conferences each year	Parents/Guardians, Teachers, Students
Frequent Parent Teacher Partnership meetings	School Leader and Assistant Principal
Bi-monthly newsletters to all families in English and Spanish	School Leader, Office Manager
Bi-monthly PLPs	Teachers, School Leader
Weekly Class Newsletters	Grade Level teaching teams

In addition, Caliber will encourage at least 40 hours of volunteering by each family each year, although no parent or caregiver is required to volunteer and no student will be punished if his/her family does not volunteer. The school will provide a variety of opportunities to match with family members’ different skills and interests. Examples include helping in classrooms, leading extra-curricular activities, coaching sports teams, assisting with event planning, attending field trips, attending Parent Teacher Partnership meetings, serving on parent committees, fundraising, and communicating with other parents. Caliber appreciates that each family will contribute according to their abilities and the school is very welcoming to all families, including those for whom volunteering will be more challenging due to personal circumstances

**Community Involvement**

Building strong links with the local community is critically important to Caliber’s success. Caliber will seek to partner with individuals and organizations in the community that complement Caliber’s mission. These outreach efforts may include working with community organizations in the neighborhoods in which most of our students live and where the school is located.

Examples of Vallejo community partnerships could include:

- **Youth Enrichment Strategies (YES).** Caliber has begun a dialogue with YES around a partnership to provide Caliber students with access to experiences in the natural environment, including summer and family camps.
- **zSharp.** Caliber currently partners with zSharp to provide high quality music instruction for all of its students.

- **Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.** Caliber partners with LBNL to provide science instruction and enrichment including Family Science Nights.
- **Sunny Hills Services – Youth Thrive.** Caliber partners with Youth Thrive to provide gang prevention and intervention services to our students and their families.
- **Greater Vallejo Recreation District.** Caliber has begun a dialogue with GVRD around working together for community involvement and potential after-school program partnership.
- **Filhos de Bimba California Bay Area School of Capoeira.** Caliber currently partners with Filhos de Bimba to provide lessons in this Afro-Brazilian martial art to teach physical fitness, culture, and mindfulness.

Caliber will also create opportunities to involve members of the community in supporting the school. The school's volunteer program may be composed of community members, the business community, college students, middle school students, and parents. Volunteers may perform duties that include small group tutorials, support for field trips and other extra-curricular activities, and career days.

## 9. Element E: Employee Qualifications

*Governing Law: The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the charter school. —California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(E).*

### I. Certification

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will conform to Education Code Section 47605(l), which requires that all charter school teachers shall hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, intern credential, permit, or other certification equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will employ teachers at the school who are well qualified and fully compliant with applicable ESSA requirements. Certified teachers will be responsible for overseeing student academic progress and for monitoring grading and matriculation decisions as specified in the school's operational policies. Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will maintain a current copy of teacher certificates on file and ready for inspection. The School Leader will monitor the credentials and ensure that the necessary documentation is on file. Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter may also employ or retain non certificated instructional support staff at the school in cases where an individual has an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and the demonstrated capacity to work successfully in the school's rigorous academic environment. Instructional support staff will not assign grades or approve student work assignments without the approval of a teacher except in non-core or non-college preparatory courses and activities, as allowed per Education Code Section 47605(l). Job descriptions for teachers, administration, and staff are included in Appendix 8.

### II. Commitment

All prospective staff must show a strong desire to teach an academically intense curriculum, commit to an extended school day, and continue their professional development during the school's professional development days. Additionally, all staff must meet any additional guidelines and standards set by Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter and Caliber Schools.

All Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter faculty will:

- Abide by federal, state, and local laws.
- Maintain a professional relationship with all students and a high level of professional conduct.
- Refrain from the abuse of alcohol, tobacco or drugs during the course of professional practice.
- Exemplify honor and integrity in the course of professional practice, particularly in the use of public funds and property.
- Comply with state, federal, and local laws regarding the confidentiality of student records.

- Fulfill the terms and obligations detailed in the school’s charter.
- File necessary reports of child abuse.

### **III. Hiring Procedure**

The school will recruit teachers through various channels including Education Week, Teach for America, Ed Join, the Caliber Schools website, and graduate schools of education.

Each applicant will undergo formal interviews to ensure that he/she meets the requirements of the role as described below and that his/her values are aligned with the Caliber educational philosophy. Prospective teachers will develop a project-based unit to demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter. The School Leader will be responsible for the final hiring decision.

All faculty and staff will undergo a criminal background check and fingerprinting to be conducted by the California Department of Justice, as well as a child abuse registry check. The applicants will be required to provide a full disclosure statement regarding prior criminal records. All staff will be required to produce documents for U.S. employment authorization. For medical safety, all staff must have medical clearance including proof of medical examination and a Mantoux tuberculosis (TB) risk assessment and (if necessary) exam.

### **IV. Compensation**

Teachers are the core element of Caliber’s success. It is therefore essential that teachers are supported, developed, and well compensated. The school will offer competitive salaries, and compensation will be determined individually based on teaching experience, education, responsibilities undertaken, and by agreement with the teacher.

It is Caliber’s belief that teachers are and should be treated as professionals, and as such, are not hourly employees. In addition to salary, teachers will be offered a competitive benefits package. Salary and stipends will be outlined in formal employment offer letters signed by Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter and the employee. Standards of professional conduct will be clearly explained in the Employee Handbook.

### **V. Staff Role and Responsibilities**

#### **School Leader**

The School Leader coordinates all campus level planning and decision-making that involves the school’s professional staff, parents, and community members. While serving as general manager of the entire school, the School Leader’s primary role is to serve as instructional leader of Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter. S/he will be expected to spend significant time in classrooms supporting and developing teachers. As described below, Caliber’s staffing model ensures that

the School Leader has sufficient operational support on campus to enable him/her to focus on instructional leadership. See Appendix 8.1 and 8.2 for a job description of Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter School Leader as well as information on the School Leader selection process.

### **Teachers**

Teachers will be responsible for all levels of classroom instruction and management. They will design, plan and implement a standards based curriculum that prepares students for success in college. teachers will additionally be responsible for ensuring the school’s values are lived through the school’s culture. See Appendix 8.3 for job description.

### **Resource Specialist (RSP) Teachers**

RSP teachers will be responsible for ensuring that all special education students are meeting the goals outlines in their IEP. RSP teachers will additionally be responsible for ensuring the schools’ values are lived through the school’s culture. See Appendix 8.3 for job description.

### **Other Administrative Roles at Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter**

Additional administrative roles at Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will include:

- **Assistant Principal.** Caliber will hire an Assistant Principal in year one and a second AP in year two or three. Reporting to the School Leader, one Assistant Principal will serve as a second instructional leader at the school and will spend a significant amount of time supporting teachers. A second Assistant Principal oversees the social–emotional programming. S/he will also be responsible for parent engagement and all disciplinary management on campus. See Appendix 8.3 for a job description.
- **Special Education Coordinator.** Reporting to the School Leader, the Special Education Coordinator will oversee the Special Education program at Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter. See Appendix 8.3 for job description.
- **Operations Coordinator.** Reporting to the School Leader and Caliber Schools COO, the Operations Coordinator will oversee all operational management of the school including but not limited to technology infrastructure, facilities maintenance, food service and compliance. See Appendix 8.3 for job description.
- **Office Manager.** Reporting to the operations coordinator, the office manager will support all daily operations at Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter. S/he will play a critical community liaison role by greeting all visitors, including families, as they enter the school. As such, it is a requirement that the Office Manager be bi–lingual in English and Spanish. See Appendix 8.3 for job description.

## VI. Performance Evaluation

All Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter staff will be evaluated formally by the School Leader or the Operations Coordinator annually. Annual goals and objectives will be developed jointly by each staff member and his/her supervisor in accordance with the mission and vision of Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter. Staff evaluations will be based on the degree to which goals and objectives have been achieved. If a staff member is having difficulties achieving his/her goals, the supervisor will provide appropriate support and training. Those staff members not meeting expectations will be given at least one verbal warning followed by two written warnings and thirty (30) days notice and then may be terminated. If a grievance arises regarding the evaluation process, an employee should attempt to resolve the issue with his or her immediate supervisor who conducts the employee's evaluation. See Appendix 8.4 for our teacher performance evaluation rubric.

## **10. Element F: Health and Safety Procedures**

*Governing Law: The procedures that the charter school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall require all of the following:*

- (i) That each employee of the charter school furnish the charter school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237.*
- (ii) The development of a school safety plan, which shall include the safety topics listed in subparagraphs (A) to (H), inclusive, of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 32282 and procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents.*
- (iii) That the school safety plan be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year by the charter school. —California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(F).*

In order to provide safety for all students and staff, Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will adopt and implement full health and safety procedures and risk management policies at our school site in consultation with insurance carriers and risk management experts prior to the school’s opening. The health and safety policy will be annually updated and reviewed, in consultation with staff and families. This policy will be distributed to all staff and families. Following is a summary of the health and safety policies of the Charter School.

### **I. Criminal Record Summaries**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will follow clear procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee and contractor of The Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter furnishes the school with a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1.

#### **Procedures for Background Checks**

New employees must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter shall not hire any person, in either a certificated or classified position, who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony except as otherwise provided by law, pursuant to Education Code Section 44830.1 and 45122.1. The School Leader will monitor compliance with this policy and report to Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter Board Chair will monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the School Leader. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee will be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

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

All Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter non-certificated and certificated staff will be mandated child abuse reporters and will follow all applicable reporting laws, the same policies and procedures used by the District. Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter shall provide mandated reporter training to all employees annually in accordance with Education Code Section 44691.

## **II. Facility Safety**

The school facility will comply with all applicable State, Federal and local regulations, including fire marshal codes, and maintain readily accessible records for such regulations. Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will comply with Education Code Section 47610 by either utilizing facilities that are compliant with the Field Act or facilities that are compliant with the State Building Code, including provisions for seismic safety. Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter agrees to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times.

### **Compliance with Safety Requirements Assurance**

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter assures that the school's facilities and any modifications made to its facilities will comply with state building codes, federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access requirements, and other applicable fire, health and structural safety requirements, and will maintain on file readily accessible records documenting such compliance.

### **Asbestos Management**

AHERA requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.

### **Certificate of Occupancy Assurance**

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter assures that a site will be secured with an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy 45 days prior to the opening of school, or as otherwise agreed upon by the Charter School and the District.

### **School and Student Safety Plan Assurance**

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter assures that a school and student safety plan will be developed prior to school opening and kept on file for review, and that school staff, families, and students will be trained annually on the safety procedures outlined in the plan. If VCUSD facilities are used during the term of this charter, Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter shall abide by all VCUSD policies relating to Maintenance and Operations Services.

This safety plan will include but not be limited to:

- Emergency/disaster procedures including fire, earthquake, and lockdown

- Arrival and dismissal procedures
- Visitor policy
- Student transportation
- Medical records
- Policies for storage and administration of medication
- Procedures for handling illness at school
- Procedures for handling minor and severe injuries at school
- Child abuse reporting procedures

### **Fire, Earthquake, and Evacuation Drills**

Students and staff will participate in earthquake drills every other month, fire drills as required under Education Code Section 32001, and at least one lock-down drill annually. As noted above, the school will develop a school safety plan, which will be kept on file for review. School staff will be trained annually on the safety procedures outlined in the plan.

## **III. Health and Safety Procedures**

### **TB Risk Assessment and Examination**

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter faculty, staff and volunteers will be assessed and examined (if necessary) for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment and working with students, and for employees at least once each four years thereafter, as required by Education Code Section 49406.

### **Immunizations**

All students enrolled and Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter staff will be required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Section 6000- 6075. All rising 7<sup>th</sup> grade students must be immunized with a pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine booster.

### **Medication in School**

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will adhere to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school. Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will adhere to Education Code Section 494414 regarding epinephrine auto-injectors and training for staff members.

### **Vision, Hearing, Scoliosis**

Students will be screened for vision, hearing, dental and scoliosis. Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will adhere to Education Code Section 49450, et seq. as applicable to the grade levels served by the school.

### **Diabetes**

The Charter School will provide an information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes to the parent or guardian of incoming 7<sup>th</sup> grade students, pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.7. The information sheet shall include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:

1. A description of type 2 diabetes.
2. A description of the risk factors and warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes.
3. A recommendation that students displaying or possibly suffering from risk factors or warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes should be screened for type 2 diabetes.
4. A description of treatments and prevention of methods of type 2 diabetes.
5. A description of the different types of diabetes screening tests available.

### **Suicide Prevention Policy**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter shall maintain a policy on student suicide prevention in accordance with Education Code Section 215. The Charter School shall review, at minimum every fifth year, its policy on pupil suicide prevention and, if necessary, update its policy.

### **Feminine Hygiene Products**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will stock at least 50% of its restrooms with feminine hygiene products, and shall not charge students for these products, pursuant to Education Code Section 35292.6.

### **Nutritionally Adequate Free or Reduced Price Meal**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter shall provide each needy student, as defined in Education Code Section 49552, with one nutritionally adequate free or reduced-price meal, as defined in Education Code Section 49553(a), during each schoolday.

### **California Healthy Youth Act**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter shall teach sexual health education and human immunodeficiency virus (“HIV”) prevention education to students in grades 7–8, at least once, pursuant to the California Healthy Youth Act (Education Code Section 51930, *et seq.*)

### **School Safety Plan**

Caliber Schools: K–8 shall adopt a School Safety Plan, to be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year, which shall include identifying appropriate strategies and programs that will provide or maintain a high level of school safety and address the Charter School’s procedures for complying with applicable laws related to school safety, including the development of all of the following pursuant to Education Code Section 32282(a)(2)(A)–(H):

- child abuse reporting procedures

- routine and emergency disaster procedures
- policies for students who committed an act under Section 48915 and other Charter School–designated serious acts leading to suspension, expulsion, or mandatory expulsion recommendations
- procedures to notify teachers of dangerous students pursuant to Education Code Section 49079
- a discrimination and harassment policy consistent with Education Code Section 200
- provisions of any schoolwide dress code that prohibits students from wearing “gang–related apparel,” if applicable
- procedures for safe ingress and egress of pupils, parents, and employees to and from the Charter School
- a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning
- procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents

### **Food Service and Other Auxiliary Services Safety**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will contract with an outside agency for its food service needs. The Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will be responsible and accountable for filing all documents necessary for operating the food service program, as well as for reimbursement. Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will ensure that its auxiliary services such as food services, transportation, and custodial services are safe and free from hazardous materials.

## **IV. Emergency Preparedness**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will adhere to an Emergency Preparedness Handbook drafted specifically to the needs of the school site in conjunction with law enforcement and the Fire Marshall prior to school opening. This handbook will include, but not be limited to, the following responses: fire, flood, earthquake, terrorist threats, gang activity, and hostage situations. If assuming a facility used prior as a school site, any existing emergency preparedness plan for the school site shall be used as a starting basis for updating the handbook for Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter. All Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter staff will be trained on emergency preparedness procedures.

### **CPR Training**

All instructional staff and school leadership will be CPR and first aid certified.

### **Blood Borne Pathogens**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will meet state and federal standards for dealing with blood borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the work place. The Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter Board will establish a written infectious control plan designed to protect employees and students from possible infection

due to contact with blood borne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus (“HIV”) and hepatitis B virus (“HBV”).

Whenever exposed to blood or other bodily fluids through injury or accident, staff and students shall follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

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

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will function as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.

### **Comprehensive Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policies and Procedures**

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter is committed to providing a school that is free from sexual harassment, as well as any harassment based upon the actual or perceived characteristics of race, religion, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, national origin, ancestry, ethnic group identification, genetic information, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, sex and pregnancy, physical or mental disability, childbirth or related medical conditions, military and veteran status, denial of family and medical care leave, or on the basis of a person’s association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will develop a comprehensive policy to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about sexual discrimination or harassment at Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter (including employee to employee, employee to student, and student to employee misconduct). Misconduct of this nature is very serious and will be addressed in a sexual misconduct policy that will be developed.

### **Bullying Prevention**

By December 31, 2019, Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter shall adopt procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying. The Charter School shall annually make available the online training module developed by the CDE pursuant to Education Code Section 32283.5(a) to certificated schoolsite employees and all other schoolsite employees who have regular interaction with children.

## 11. Element G: Means to Achieve Ethnic and Racial Balance

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

Caliber Schools will not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation,), or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics.

Caliber Schools strongly believes that a wide cross section of students with a variety of life experiences adds to the learning experience of all. Students will need to learn from others how to respect different viewpoints and find the commonalities in all people.

### Outreach efforts to date

We have gathered more than 300 signatures from interested families. In order to achieve this level of interest from a wide cross section of families, we used the following strategies:

- **Built a base of parent leaders.** We enlisted a team of parent leaders who helped spread the word with other families in their network.
- **Parent-hosted community meetings.** Parent supporters organized small group chats for friends they felt would be interested in learning more about our school.
- **Created and distributed materials in English and Spanish.** We created informational brochures, flyers, and posters about our program and contact information. Information was distributed at the John F. Kennedy Library, at GVRD programs, KinderCare Learning Center, Vallejo Parent Nursery School, at the Vallejo Farmer's Market, Special Touch Learning Academy Sites #1 and #2, Mustard Seed Pre-School, Little Angels Preschool, Vallejo Naval & Historical Museum, Bere's Bridal, and Community Bible Church.
- **Hosted an open information session.** We held an information session at the Little Imaginarium in downtown Vallejo for families interested in learning more about our school and had not gotten the chance to visit or have a 1:1 conversation. We brought staff, a parent, and a co-Founder from Caliber: Beta Academy in Richmond to provide different perspectives on our school.
- **Organized sports outreach.** We partnered with the Greater Vallejo Recreation District and Vallejo Futbol Club Academy to meet parents at sporting practice and events.

- **Organized weekend community walks.** We were a regular presence at the Saturday Vallejo Farmer’s Market to meet families and community members. In addition, we attended community events such as the Vallejo Youth & Family Expo and a Q&A session with Trustee Worel and Trustee Cayangyang organized by WIT Academy.
- **Easily accessible web presence.** We created a website, available in English and Spanish, for families in Vallejo interested in learning more about our school and our educational philosophy. Parents were able to read about our model, review our Charter, find out about our upcoming events, and sign up for our mailing list.
- **Grassroots social medial outreach.** Our website and events were shared through the Examiner.com, the Vallejo Moms Club mailing list, and further shared by community members through Facebook and Next Door.
- **Follow-up phone calls and visits from interested.** Families we met through our weekend community walks, sports outreach, community meetings, or website were contacted by phone and email for a 1:1 conversation about our school to gather feedback and an invitation to tour our Richmond campus.

In order to ensure that we are attracting a population that is ethnically diverse, all of our materials were translated into Spanish. We had Spanish speaking members of our staff at the open community information session, and also will bring Spanish speakers to any parent-organized events with Spanish speakers. Furthermore, we actively reached out to cultural groups in the community such as Diaz & Loera Centro Latino and the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority’s Kappa Beta Omega Chapter. See Appendix 3 for a sample of informational materials used in our outreach efforts.

### **Recruitment Plan**

Upon authorization, Caliber will implement a recruitment campaign to ensure we are fully enrolled (60 kindergarten, 30 1<sup>st</sup> grade, 30 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 30 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 60 6<sup>th</sup> grade students), with potential increase to 270 students, prior to our proposed August 2016 opening. The application for enrollment will be available for easy access.

Planned outreach strategies will begin in August 2015 and will include, but are not limited to:

- Development and distribution of marketing materials in English and Spanish through the same forums as our petition gathering efforts
- Outreach to petition signers with details about applying
- Presentations and information distribution at community centers such as the John F. Kennedy library, GVRD facilities, and the Little Imaginarium
- Presentations and information distribution at local preschools such as the KinderCare Learning Center

- Information booths and information distribution at community events, community centers, local businesses, libraries, social service agencies, faith-based organizations, grocery stores, farmers markets, and shopping centers
- Open Houses and informational meetings
- Outreach to local television, radio, and print media reporters
- Outreach through online groups such as Vallejo Moms Club, the Examiner, and Facebook.

An active community outreach and recruitment plan will begin immediately upon authorization and continue through the school's open enrollment period.

### **Targeted Community**

Our plan includes ongoing community outreach in English and Spanish that will provide an educational alternative for any interested families in the Vallejo area. We are committed to serving any child who wishes to attend Caliber, however, the majority of our recruitment efforts will focus on attracting students living in Vallejo. The local public school demographics include a strong Latino, Filipino, and African American population, as well as a high socio-economically disadvantaged population. The Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter anticipates that our student population will reflect similar socioeconomic statistics and the general student population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the District.

### **Outreach Languages**

In addition to providing promotional materials in English and Spanish, The Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will facilitate presentations and individual interactions with families in other languages as appropriate.

### **Achieving Racial and Ethnic Balance**

The Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will keep on file documentation of the efforts made to achieve racial and ethnic balance and the results achieved, as well as an accurate accounting of the ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled in the school.

In order to ensure a racial and ethnic balance, Caliber will conduct the following recruitment efforts, outreach programs, and activities:

- Maintain student demographic data to ensure accurate accounting of racial and ethnic balance of students enrolled in the school.
- Develop and distribute flyers or brochures, applications, and other recruitment materials that reflect the diversity of the community and that are in English and Spanish (the primary languages of the non-English speaking families in the surrounding neighborhood).
- Use various distribution channels to enable public relations efforts to reach a wide audience, including community presentations, flyers, the school website, and/or sending out press releases to the local media.

- Visit local pre-school and day care centers that will serve as feeders to Caliber.

### **ESSA and Federal Compliance**

Caliber will comply with all mandated requirements of ESSA including, but not limited to, the following:

- Notify parents at the beginning of each school year of their “right to know” the professional qualifications of their child’s classroom teacher .
- Develop jointly with, and distribute to, families of participating children, a school-family compact.
- Hold an annual Title I meeting for families of participating Title I students.
- Develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, families of participating children a written family involvement policy.

Caliber also understands that as part of its oversight of the school, the District may conduct program review of federal and state compliance issues.

## **12. Element H: Admission Policies and Procedures**

*Governing Law: Admission policies and procedures, consistent with [Education Code Section 47605] subdivision (d). —California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(H).*

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will be a free public school that is open to all residents of the State of California. The school will not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, gender expression, gender identity, national origin, disability of students, parents or guardians, or any of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220, including immigration status.

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the school. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into the school. Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools. Admission, except in the case of a public random drawing, shall not be determined by the place of residence of the pupil or of the pupil’s parent or legal guardian within the state. In accordance with Education Code Sections 49011 and 47605(d)(2)(B)(iv), admission preferences shall not require mandatory parental volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(4)(A), the Charter School shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the charter school for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B)(iii), including pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Similarly, in accordance with Section 47605(d)(4)(C), the Charter School shall not encourage a pupil currently attending the Charter School to disenroll from the Charter School or transfer to another school for any reason, including, but not limited to the academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B)(iii), as listed above.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(d)(4)(D), the Charter School shall post a notice developed by the CDE on the Charter School website, outlining the requirements of Section 47605(d)(4), and make this notice available to parents.

Formal recruitment of incoming students begins in or after August of each calendar year for the following school year, beginning with the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter advertising the open enrollment period. The recruitment process will begin in September of the previous year and will be held through the middle of

March. During this period any student who expresses his/her intent to enroll will do so by completing an online Intent to Enroll form through an online enrollment program (currently, SchoolMint). If admitted through the random public drawing, the student may formally enroll by completing and submitting the full registration packet and submitting the necessary paperwork, such as immunization records and a copy of the student's birth certificate, to facilitate the registration process. Upon receipt of the required documents to enter into the lottery, the student's parent/guardian receives the rules that will be followed during the lottery process.

Registration packets for students who are admitted will gather the following:

1. Student/Parent Emergency & Disaster Information
2. Annual Health Inventory Form
3. Policies distribution and signatures
4. Ethnicity & Home Language Survey
5. Copy of Birth Certificate
6. Copy of Guardian ID
7. Report of Health Examination for School Entry
8. Cumulative Records Request<sup>38</sup>
9. Oral Health Assessment Form
10. Proof of Immunization
11. Current report card

### **Public Random Drawing**

At full capacity, Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will serve approximately 810 students in grades kindergarten through eight. Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open application period each year for enrollment in the following school year.

Following the open enrollment period each year, applications shall be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability. In the event that this happens, Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will hold a public random drawing to determine enrollment for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students who are guaranteed enrollment in the following school year.

Enrollment preferences in the case of a public random drawing shall be as follows:

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<sup>38</sup> The Charter School shall not request a pupil's records or require a parent, guardian, or pupil to submit the pupil's records to the Charter School before enrollment.

1. Siblings<sup>39</sup> of students admitted to or attending the Charter School
2. Children of Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter teachers and staff
3. Children of Caliber Schools Board members
4. Children of founding team members<sup>40</sup>
5. Children who are residents of the District and eligible to receive free or reduced price meals (“FRPM”) (as determined by federal guidelines)<sup>41</sup>
6. Residents of the District
7. All other applicants

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter and the District agree to adhere to the requirement related to admission preferences as set forth in Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B)(i)–(iv).

- 1.

The Board of Directors will take all necessary efforts to ensure lottery procedures are fairly executed. Lottery spaces are electronically pulled in order of grade level by the designated lottery official (appointed by the School Leader). Separate lotteries shall be conducted for each grade in which there are fewer vacancies than pupils interested in attending. All lotteries shall take place on the same day in a single location. Lotteries will be conducted in ascending order beginning with the lowest applicable grade level. There is no weighted priority assigned to the preference categories; rather, within each grade level, students will be drawn from pools beginning with all applicants who qualify for the first preference category, and shall continue with that preference category until all vacancies within that grade level have been filled. If there are more students in a preference category than there are spaces available, a random drawing will be held from within that preference category until all available spaces are filled. If all students from the preference category have been selected and there are remaining spaces available in that grade level, students from the second preference category will be drawn in the lottery, and the drawing shall continue until all spaces are filled and preference categories are exhausted in the order provided above. The School Leader may use his or her discretion to resolve unforeseen matters related to the admission lottery.

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<sup>39</sup> Siblings include biological siblings, as well as children in non-traditional families, including children of domestic partners, step-siblings, adoptive (both formal and non), and school age children living in same household. Families are encouraged to contact the Charter School with questions in this area.

<sup>40</sup> “Founding Team Members” are those families who were recorded in 2015-16 as having supported the opening of the school.

<sup>41</sup> This preference will be implemented for a set percentage of spaces available each year, as determined by the Caliber Public Schools Board of Directors. Annually, the Charter School’s staff will review the Charter School FRPM enrollment percentage, compared with that of the District. Staff will recommend a percentage for the preference that year, which is targeted to move the Charter School toward the long-term goal of matching the District’s FRPM percentage. Following Caliber Public Schools Board approval, the percentage for the preference will be communicated to applicants on application forms and the Charter School’s website.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity will be moved to a wait list according to their draw in the lottery. This wait list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the current school year. In no circumstance will a wait list carry over to the following school year.

Lottery rules, deadlines, dates and times for the random drawing will be communicated in the enrollment applications and on the school's website. Public notice for the date and time of the public drawing will also be posted once the application deadline has passed. The lottery drawing will be selected for a date and time such that interested parties will be able to attend. The school will seek a location for the lottery either in or near the location of the school facility and in a space large enough to ensure all interested parties may observe the lottery.



### 13. Element I: Financial Audit

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

#### **Fiscal Controls**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will be a fiscally independent, direct funded charter school. The Board of Directors takes seriously its fiduciary responsibility to oversee the management of public funds. As such, a system of internal fiscal controls will be instituted. See Appendix 9 for board approved fiscal policies and procedures.

On-site management of Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter’s finances are the responsibility of the School Leader who will be assisted by the Operations Coordinator.

We have created a proposed budget that reflects operational funding levels including revenues and expenses for our planning year and the first three years of operation. The budget and assumptions can be found in Appendix 10.1 and 10.2.

We will follow financial best practices in establishing investment strategies for cash balances and deposit procedures for all school funds.

If Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter chooses to apply for the Charter School Revolving Loan Fund, we will comply with all obligations pursuant to California Education Code § 41365.

#### **Annual Audit**

An annual independent financial audit of the books and records of the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(b)(5)(l) and 47605(m). The books and records of the school will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and as required by applicable law and the audit will employ generally accepted accounting procedures. The Board of Directors will form an Audit Committee that will annually oversee the selection of an independent auditor who has experience in education finance, and will oversee the completion of an annual audit of Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter’s financial books and records. This audit will be conducted in accordance with the applicable Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller’s K–12 Audit Guide, and will verify the accuracy of the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter’s financial statements

(including its Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Cash Flow Statement), attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and internal controls.

The auditor will have, at a minimum, a CPA and educational institution audit experience and will be approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider. To the extent required by applicable federal law, the scope of this audit will be expanded to include any relevant items or processes identified in applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars. Caliber Schools will provide the internal controls policy, the full general ledger accounting system, and any reports requested to be provided by the school to the auditors. The school will also make available the receivable and disbursement files.

The annual audit will be completed each year and will be forwarded to the District, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the California Department of Education by the 15th of December of each year.

The Audit Committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report recommendations to the Board of Directors of Caliber Schools as to how these have been, or will be, resolved. The Board will act upon these recommendations, and report its actions to the District. Any disagreement by the District concerning the resolution of audit exceptions or deficiencies shall be referred to the dispute resolution process described in Element N, herein. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel (“EAAP”) in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit of Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will be public record, to be provided to the public upon request.

#### **14. Element J: Student Suspension and Expulsion Procedures**

***Governing Law:** The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled from the charter school for disciplinary reasons or otherwise involuntarily removed from the charter school for any reason. These procedures, at a minimum, shall include an explanation of how the charter school will comply with federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements that is consistent with all of the following:*

*(i) For suspensions of fewer than 10 days, provide oral or written notice of the charges against the pupil and, if the pupil denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges and an opportunity for the pupil to present the pupil's side of the story.*

*(ii) For suspensions of 10 days or more and all other expulsions for disciplinary reasons, both of the following:*

*(I) Provide timely, written notice of the charges against the pupil and an explanation of the pupil's basic rights.*

*(II) Provide a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer within a reasonable number of days at which the pupil has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the pupil has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate.*

*(iii) Contain a clear statement that no pupil shall be involuntarily removed by the charter school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the pupil has been provided written notice of intent to remove the pupil no less than five school days before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian or, if the pupil is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the pupil's educational rights holder, and shall inform the pupil, the pupil's parent or guardian, or the pupil's educational rights holder of the right to initiate the procedures specified in clause (ii) before the effective date of the action. If the pupil's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder initiates the procedures specified in clause (ii), the pupil shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. For purposes of this clause, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions specified in clauses (i) and (ii). — California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J).*

#### **Introduction**

This Student Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students at Caliber Schools ("Charter School"). In creating this policy, Caliber Schools has reviewed Education Code Section 48900 et seq. which describes the noncharter schools' list of offenses and procedures to establish its list of offenses and procedures for suspensions and expulsions. The language that follows closely mirrors the language of Education Code Section 48900 et seq. Caliber Schools is committed to annual review of policies and procedures surrounding suspensions

and expulsions and, as necessary, modification of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion.

When the Policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy shall serve as the Charter School's policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements. Charter School staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students.

This policy and its procedures will be printed and distributed as part of the Family Handbook and will clearly describe discipline expectations. Caliber shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice shall state that these policy and administrative procedures are available on request at the school office.

**Discipline** includes but is not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion.

**Corporal** punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

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

**A student identified as an individual with disabilities** or for whom Caliber has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("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 general education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. Caliber Schools will follow all applicable federal and state laws including but not limited to the California Education Code, when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Caliber Schools 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.

No student shall be involuntarily removed by the Charter School for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the student's educational rights holder, and shall inform him or her of the basis for which the pupil is being involuntarily removed and his or her right to request a hearing to challenge the involuntary removal. If a parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the Charter School shall utilize the same hearing procedures specified below for expulsions, before the effective date of the action to involuntarily remove the student. If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder requests a hearing, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the Charter School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include removals for misconduct which may be grounds for suspension or expulsion as enumerated below.

**A. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students**

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at any time including but not limited to: 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.

**B. Enumerated Offenses**

1. Discretionary Suspension Offenses: Students may be suspended for any of the following acts when it is determined the student:
  - a) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
  - b) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
  - c) Unlawfully possessed, used, or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053- 11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
  - d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.

- e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5
- k) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- l) Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- m) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- n) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- o) Engaged in or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or pre- initiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, "hazing" does not include

athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

- p) Made terroristic threats against school officials and/or school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
- q) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- r) Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- s) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated school personnel or volunteers and/or a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading the rights of either school personnel or volunteers and/or student(s) by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- t) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.
- 1) "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to

have the effect of one or more of the following:

- a) Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
  - b) Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
  - c) Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
  - d) Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by Caliber Schools.
- 2) "Electronic Act" means the creation or transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
- a) A message, text, sound, video, or image.
  - b) A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
    - i. Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
    - ii. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
    - iii. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
  - d) An act of cyber sexual bullying.
    - i. For purposes of this clause, "cyber sexual bullying" means the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in subparagraphs (i) to (iv), inclusive, of paragraph (1). A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.

- ii. For purposes of this clause, “cyber sexual bullying” does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.
- c) Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
  
- v) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1)(a)-(b).
  
- w) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the School Leader or designee’s concurrence.

**2. Non-Discretionary Suspension Offenses:** Students must be suspended and recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the student:

- a) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the School Leader or designee concurrence.
- b) Brandishing a knife at another person.
- c) Unlawfully selling a controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code Section 11053, et seq.
- d) Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900(n).

**3. Discretionary Expellable Offenses:** Students may be recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the student:

- a) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- b) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
- c) Unlawfully possessed, used, or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of

any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.

- d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
- e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5.
- k) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases.
- l) Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- m) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- n) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.

- o) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, “hazing” means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
  
- p) Made terroristic threats against school officials and/or school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases. For purposes of this section, “terroristic threat” shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family’s safety, or for the protection of school property, which includes but is not limited to, electronic files and databases, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
  
- q) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual’s academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
  
- r) Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
  
- s) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated school personnel or volunteers and/or a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading the rights of either school personnel or volunteers and/or student(s) by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
  
- t) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.

- 1) “Bullying” means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
  - i. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student’s or those students’ person or property.
  - ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
  - iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
  - iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.
  
- 2) “Electronic Act” means the creation or transmission originated on or off the schoolsite, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
  - i. A message, text, sound, video, or image.
  - ii. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
    - i. Posting to or creating a burn page. A “burn page” means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
    - ii. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. “Credible impersonation” means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
    - iii. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. “False profile” means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
  - iii. An act of cyber sexual bullying.
    - i. For purposes of this clause, “cyber sexual bullying” means the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a pupil to another pupil or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described in subparagraphs (i) to (iv), inclusive, of paragraph (1). A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction

of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.

- ii. For purposes of this clause, “cyber sexual bullying” does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.
3. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
    - w) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (3)(a)-(b).
    - x) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the School Leader or designee’s concurrence.
  4. Non-Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students must be recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined pursuant to the procedures below that the student:
    - a) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the School Leader or designee’s concurrence.
    - b) Brandishing a knife at another person.
    - c) Unlawfully selling a controlled substance listed in Health and Safety Code Section 11053, et seq.
    - d) Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900(n).

If it is determined by the Administrative Panel and/or Board of Directors that a student has brought a firearm or destructive device, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, on to campus or to have possessed a firearm or dangerous device on campus, the student shall be expelled for one year, pursuant to the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994. In such instances, the student shall be provided due process rights of notice and a hearing as required in this policy.

The term “firearm” means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.

The term “destructive device” means (A) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, including but not limited to: (i) bomb, (ii) grenade, (iii) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces,

(iv) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, (v) mine, or

(vi) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses.

### **C. Suspension Procedure**

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

#### **1. Conference**

Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the School Leader or the School Leader designee with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or Charter School employee who referred the student to the School Leader or designee.

The conference may be omitted if the School Leader or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An emergency situation involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or Charter School personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

At the conference, the student shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense, in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J)(i). This conference shall be held within two (2) school days, unless the student waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization.

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

**2. Notice to Parents/Guardians**

At the time of the suspension, the School Leader or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school. If Charter School officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

**3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion**

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension.

Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the School Leader or School Leader's designee, the student and the student's parent/guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the student should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. In such instances when the Charter School has determined a suspension period shall be extended, such extension shall be made only after a conference is held with the student or the student's parents, unless the student and the student's parents fail to attend the conference.

This determination will be made by the School Leader or designee upon either of the following: 1) the student's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the student poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

**D. Authority to Expel**

As required by Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J)(ii), students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer to determine whether

the student should be expelled. The procedures herein provide for such a hearing and the notice of said hearing, as required by law.

A student may be expelled either by the neutral and impartial Charter School Board of Directors following a hearing before it or by the Charter School Board of Directors upon the recommendation of a neutral and impartial Administrative Panel, to be assigned by the Board of Directors as needed. The Administrative Panel shall consist of at least three members who are certificated and neither a teacher of the student nor a member of the Charter School Board of Directors. Each entity shall be presided over by a designated neutral hearing chairperson. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an expellable offense, and the Board of Directors shall make the final determination.

**E. Expulsion Procedures**

Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the School Leader or designee determines that the student has committed an expellable offense.

In the event an Administrative Panel hears the case, it will make a recommendation to the Board for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session (complying with all student confidentiality rules under FERPA) unless the student makes a written request for a public hearing in open session three (3) days prior to the date of the scheduled hearing.

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

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
2. A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
3. A copy of Caliber School's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
4. Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the Charter School to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;

5. The opportunity for the student and/or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

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

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

1. The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
2. Caliber Schools must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the entity conducting the expulsion hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.
4. The entity conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.

5. The entity conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.
6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the entity presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The entity conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.
7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, Caliber Schools must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to Caliber Schools. The entity presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons **not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way.** Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.
8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.
9. Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in public at the request of the student being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by means of closed-circuit television.
10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstance can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person.

Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

**G. Record of Hearing**

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

**H. Presentation of Evidence**

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

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

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

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

If the Administrative Panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the student shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

**I. Written Notice to Expel**

The School Leader or designee following a decision of the Board of Directors to expel shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Board of Directors adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall also include the following:

1. Notice of the specific offense committed by the student; and
2. Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with Caliber Schools.

The School Leader or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the authorizer.

This notice shall include the following:

- a) The student's name; and
- b) The specific expellable offense committed by the student

**J. Disciplinary Records**

Caliber Schools shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at Caliber Schools. Such records shall be made available to the authorizer upon request.

**K. No Right to Appeal**

The student shall have no right of appeal from expulsion from the Charter School as the Charter School Board of Directors' decision to expel shall be final.

**L. Expelled Students/Alternative Education**

Parents/guardians of students who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the County or their school district of residence. The Charter School shall work cooperatively with parents/guardians as requested by parents/guardians or by the school district of residence to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion.

**M. Rehabilitation Plans**

Students who are expelled from the Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Board of Directors at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one year from the date of expulsion when the student may reapply to Caliber Schools for readmission.

**N. Readmission**

The decision to readmit a student or to admit a previously expelled student from another school, district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Board of Directors following a meeting with the School Leader or designee and the student and parent/guardian or representative to determine whether the student has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the student poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The School Leader or designee shall make a recommendation to the Board of Directors following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The Board shall then make a final decision regarding readmission during the closed session of a public meeting, reporting out any action taken during closed session consistent with the requirements of the Brown Act. The student's readmission is also contingent upon the Charter School's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

**O. Notice to Teachers**

The Charter School shall notify teachers of each pupil who has engaged in or is reasonably suspected to have engaged in any of the acts listed in Education Code Section 49079 and the corresponding enumerated offenses set forth above.

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

**1. Notification of SELPA**

Caliber Schools shall immediately notify the SELPA and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the SELPA of the discipline of any student with a disability or student who Caliber Schools or the SELPA would be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability.

**2. Services During Suspension**

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting (which could constitute a change of placement and the student's IEP would reflect this change), and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP/504 Plan; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

### **3. Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination**

Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP/504 Plan, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:

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

If Caliber Schools, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If Caliber Schools, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP/504 Team shall:

- a) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the Charter School had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;
- b) If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and;
- c) Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the Charter School agree to a change of placement as part of the

modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and that the conduct in question was not a direct result of the failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan, then the Charter School may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

#### **4. Due Process Appeals**

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or the Charter School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings or by utilizing the dispute provisions of the 504 Policy and Procedures.

When an appeal relating to the placement of the student or the manifestation determination has been requested by either the parent or the Charter School, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer in accordance with state and federal law, including 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(k), until the expiration of the forty-five (45) day time period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, unless the parent and the Charter School agree otherwise.

In accordance with 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(k)(3), if a parent/guardian disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or if the Charter School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, the parent/guardian or Charter School may request a hearing.

In such an appeal, a hearing officer may: (1) return a child with a disability to the placement from which the child was removed; or (2) order a change in placement of a child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement of such child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

#### **5. Special Circumstances**

Charter School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

The School Leader or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student:

- a) Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 U.S.C. Section 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- b) Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function;  
or
- c) Has inflicted serious bodily injury, as defined by 20 U.S.C. Section 1415(k)(7)(D), upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

#### **6. Interim Alternative Educational Setting**

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP/504 Team.

#### **7. Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services**

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEA and who has violated the Charter School's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if the Charter School had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

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

- I. The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to Caliber Schools supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of

- special education or related services.
- II. The parent has requested an evaluation of the child.
  - III. The child's teacher, or other Caliber Schools personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the director of special education or to other Caliber Schools supervisory personnel.

If the Charter School knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the protections available to IDEA-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put.

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

Caliber Schools shall not be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if the parent has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

## 15. Element K: Staff Retirement System

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

Caliber Schools will make all contributions legally required of employers in California such as Medicare, workers compensation, Social Security, and unemployment insurance. In compliance with Education Code § 47611, we will inform all applicants for positions within the school about their retirement options and transferability, or lack thereof, of retirement programs in which they currently participate. The Chief Operating Officer or designated staff of Caliber Schools shall be responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for retirement coverage have been made.

All full time staff participate in a 401(k) retirement savings plan sponsored by Caliber Schools. Currently, Caliber Schools contributes 3% of each eligible staff member's annual salary or wages in a 401(k) program that will vest over three years. Staff may contribute additional funds. Policies may change during the term of the charter. Caliber Schools will routinely review potential retirement options for its faculty and staff, and will provide the most valuable and convenient options to its employees that the organization can sustain.

## **16. Element L: Attendance Alternatives**

*Governing Law: The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools. —California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(L).*

No student shall be required to attend Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter. The parent or guardian of each pupil enrolled in the school shall be informed on admissions forms that the pupils have no right to admission to a particular school of any local education agency (or program of any local education agency) as a consequence of enrollment in the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter, except to the extent that such right is extended by the local education agency. A student who chooses not to attend the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter, or whose conduct requires that student’s involuntary transfer from the school, may attend either a local public school to which s/he is assigned or chooses. In addition, s/he can pursue an inter district transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of VCUSD.



## **17. Element M: Description of Employee Rights**

*Governing Law: The rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school. — California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(M).*

No public school district employee shall be required to work at the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter. Permanent employees of the VCUSD who leave their positions to work at Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment by the school unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement. Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter's employees shall have any right upon leaving the District to work in the school that the District may specify, any rights of return to employment in a school district after employment at Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter that the District may specify, and any other rights upon leaving employment to work in the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter that the District determines to be reasonable and not in conflict with any law. To the extent that it is consistent with the District's policies, as well as Caliber Schools: K-8 Charters' adopted personnel policies, such employees may opt to purchase employee benefits from the District, or have the school purchase employee benefits on their behalf.

All employees of the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will be considered the exclusive employees of Caliber Schools and not of the District, unless otherwise mutually agreed in writing. Sick or vacation leave or years of service credit at the District or any other school district will not be transferred to Caliber Schools. Employment by Caliber Schools provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of the school.



## **18. Element N: Dispute Resolution Process**

*Governing Law: The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the chartering authority to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter. — California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(N).*

The following provisions are intended to define a mechanism for: (a) the resolution of any disputes between Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter and the District pursuant to their policies and; (b) ensuring the high operational standards of the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter while minimizing the oversight burdens on the District. With respect to each of these procedures, it is Caliber Schools’ intention that all public commentary be withheld pending full resolution.

Caliber Schools’ Uniform Complaint Process can be found in Appendix 12.

### **Disputes between Caliber Schools or Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter and the District**

The Charter School recognizes that it cannot bind the District to a dispute resolution procedure to which the District does not agree. The policy below is intended as a starting point for a discussion of dispute resolution procedures. The Charter School is willing to consider changes to the process outlined below as suggested by the District.

The Charter School and the District will be encouraged to attempt to resolve any disputes with the District amicably and reasonably without resorting to formal procedures.

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter and VCUSD will be encouraged to attempt to resolve any disputes with VCUSD amicably and reasonably without resorting to formal procedures. The Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter acknowledge the District’s ongoing right to inspect or observe the school under Education Code Section 47607, et seq., and such inspection and observation is not subject to this dispute resolution mechanism.

In the event of a dispute between Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter and VCUSD, the staff, employees, and Board members of Caliber Schools, and VCUSD agree to first frame the issue in written format (“dispute statement”) and refer the issue to the Superintendent and the School Leader of the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter. In the event that VCUSD’s Board of Directors believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter in accordance with Education Code Section 47607, this shall be noted in the written dispute statement. However, participation in the dispute resolution procedures outlined in this section shall not be interpreted to impede or as a pre requisite to the VCUSD’s ability to proceed with revocation in accordance with Education Code Section 47607.

The School Leader of the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter, leadership of Caliber Schools, and Superintendent of VCUSD shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute, not later than 5 business days from receipt of the dispute statement. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, both parties shall identify two Board members from their respective boards who shall jointly meet with the Superintendent, the School Leader of Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter, and leadership of Caliber Schools, and attempt to resolve the dispute within 15 business days from receipt of the dispute statement. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent, leadership from Caliber Schools, and School Leader shall meet to jointly identify a neutral third party mediator to engage the Parties in a mediation session designed to facilitate resolution of the dispute.

The format of the mediation session shall be developed jointly by the District Superintendent and Caliber Schools leadership. Mediation shall be held within sixty business days of receipt of the dispute statement. The costs of the mediator shall be split equally between VCUSD and the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter. If mediation does not resolve the dispute either party may pursue any other remedy available under the law. All timelines and procedures in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement of VCUSD and Caliber Schools.





## 19. Element O: Closure of the Charter School

*Governing Law: The procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the charter school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records. —California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O).*

Should Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter cease operation, Caliber Schools shall comply with all portions of Education Code section 47605, subdivision (b)(5)(O) and Title 5, California Code of Regulations, section 11962 regarding the closure of the School. The entity responsible for conducting closure related activities shall be Caliber Schools. Closure of the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter shall be documented by official action of the Board of Directors of Caliber Schools. The action will identify the reason for closure. The District will work cooperatively to assist Caliber Schools in closure related activities.

In the event of closure, the following steps are to be implemented:

1. Written notification to parents/guardians/caregivers of the enrolled students of the Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will be issued by the school within 72 hours after the determination of a Closure Action. A sample copy of the language used in the written notification is also to be made to the District within the same time frame.
  - a. The written notification will also include information on assistance in transferring each student to another appropriate school, and a process for the transfer of all student records.
  - b. The process for transferring student records to the receiving schools shall be in accordance with District procedures for students moving from one school to another.
  - c. Parents will also be provided with student information that includes closure notice, grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed coursework and credits that meet graduation requirements.
2. Written notification to VCUSD and other relevant Districts of the list of returning students and their home schools, to be made within 72 hours of the determination of the Closure Action.
3. Transfer of student records, including cumulative files, to the receiving schools, within seven calendar days from the determination of an Action to Close.
4. Written notification to the County Office of Education, California Department of Education, the SELPA, the 401(k) administrator and the federal social security system of the Closure Action shall be made by

Caliber Schools by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action.

5. All written notifications regarding the Closure Action shall include the effective date of the closure; the name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure; the pupils' school districts of residence; and the manner in which parents/guardians may obtain copies of pupil records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements.
6. As applicable, Caliber Schools will provide parents, students and VCUSD with copies of all appropriate student records and will otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. All transfers of student records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") 20 U.S.C. § 1232g. Caliber Schools will ask VCUSD to store original records of the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter students. All student records of the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter shall be transferred to VCUSD upon closure. If VCUSD will not or cannot store the records, Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter shall work with VCUSD to determine a suitable alternative location for storage.
7. All state assessment results, special education records, and personnel records will be transferred to and maintained by Caliber Schools in accordance with applicable law.
8. A financial closeout audit of the school will be paid for by Caliber Schools to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter, including plans for disposing of any net assets. The final audit will include an accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value, an accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable and any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid staff compensation, and an assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter. The assets of the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter shall first be prioritized towards paying any debts of the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter including any overpayment or over apportionment of state funding, and any and all fees or sums owed to VCUSD. All other assets shall be distributed in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations and, to the extent permitted, may be distributed by Caliber Schools to other charter schools operated by Caliber Schools. The final independent audit shall be completed within six months from the last day of student attendance and will be provided to VCUSD promptly upon its completion.
9. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt

incurred by the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter will be the responsibility of Caliber Schools and not VCUSD. Caliber Schools understands and acknowledges that it will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source.

10. Caliber Schools understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused AB 602 funds will be returned to the SELPA, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds. Any VCUSD property that is used by the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter remains District property, is not an asset of Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter, and must be returned to VCUSD when the Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter closes.
11. For six calendar months from the Closure Action or until budget allows, whichever comes first, sufficient staff as deemed appropriate by the Caliber Schools Board, will maintain employment to take care of all necessary tasks and procedures required for a smooth closing of the school and student transfers.
12. The Caliber Schools Board shall adopt a plan for wind up of the school and, if applicable, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code.
13. In addition to a final audit, Caliber Schools will also submit any required year end financial reports and any annual reports required pursuant to Education Code Section 47604.33.
14. As specified by the Budget in Appendix 10.1, the Charter School will utilize the reserve fund to undertake any expenses associated with the closure procedures identified above.



## 20. Business Operations

### **Budgets**

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

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will ensure that it operates using a sound financial model. The pre-opening and three year budget with cash flow and assumptions can be found in Appendix 10.1. These documents are based upon the best data available to the petitioners at this time.

The budget demonstrates that when the School is fully enrolled with 810 students, it expects to be sustainable on public funding.

### **Financial Reporting**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter has drafted a complete set of fiscal control policies and procedures (Appendix 9) for the school's operation. Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter shall comply with all financial reporting requirements of Education Code Section 47604.33 and shall comply fully with Education Code Section 47604.3.

### **Insurance**

Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter will maintain general liability, workers compensation, and other necessary insurance of the types and in the amounts required for an enterprise of its size and nature for the operation of the school. The District Board of Education shall be named as an additional insured on all policies of the Charter School. Prior to opening, the Charter School will provide evidence of the above insurance coverage to the District. Insurance coverage amounts will be based on recommendations provided by the District and the Charter School's insurer.

### **Administrative Services**

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

With the exception of services performed by VCUSD in providing oversight to Caliber Schools: K–8 Charter as defined by Education Code Section 47604.32, all charter-requested services from VCUSD will be on a pay-for-service basis.

The District may charge for the actual costs of supervisory oversight of Caliber not to exceed 1% of the charter school's revenue, or the District may charge for the actual costs of supervisory oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 3% if Caliber is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District may charge the maximum supervisory oversight fee allowed under the law as it may change from time to

time. For purposes of this charter, “revenue of the charter school” is defined in Education Code Section 47613(f). Subject to availability, Caliber may request VCUSD services on a pay-for-service basis as agreed in a separate memorandum of understanding with the District.

The school reports daily attendance requirements to VCUSD in a format acceptable to the district and state. Required reports regarding daily attendance are completed and submitted to requesting agencies.

### **Facilities**

*Governing Law: The facilities to be utilized by the charter school. The description of the facilities to be used by the charter school shall specify where the charter school intends to locate. —California Education Code Section 47605(g).*

Caliber will operate within the boundaries of Vallejo City Unified School District. A description of Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter’s anticipated facility requirements for the first year of operation is included in Appendix 10.5.t

Caliber Schools intends to submit an application for use of district facilities under Prop 39. In the event that the legally compliant offer made by VCUSD for a charter facility does not align with our desired location, we are confident we will find a suitable temporary private facility to meet our needs while we continue a dialogue with VCUSD around long-term options. We have engaged real estate brokers Cornish & Carey Newmark Knight Frank to identify suitable private options. In addition we have initiated conversations with the Vallejo City planning department to identify appropriate private sites, and contacted VCUSD to discuss surplus school property that may be for sale. Caliber Schools believes it has sufficient cash and/or access to debt financing to pursue a private option.

### **Transportation**

The school does not anticipate the need to make arrangements for transportation of the students, except as required by law for students with disabilities in accordance with a student’s IEP which shall be handled by Caliber in accordance with SELPA policy and the IDEIA once Caliber becomes an LEA and a member of the SELPA as intended by this charter.

## **21. Impact on the Charter Authorizer**

*Governing Law: Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the charter school and upon the school district. —California Education Code Section 47605(g).*

### **Potential Civil Liability Effects**

#### **Intent**

This statement is intended to fulfill the terms of Education Code Section 47605(g) and provides information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the Charter School on the District.

#### **Civil Liability**

Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter shall be operated by a California non-profit public benefit corporation, Caliber Schools. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701(d).

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(d), the District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of the Charter School, operated by a California non-profit benefit corporation or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the Charter School as long as the District has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. Caliber shall work diligently to assist the District in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other District-requested protocol to ensure the District shall not be liable for the operation of Caliber.

Further, Caliber Schools and the District shall enter into a memorandum of understanding, wherein Caliber shall indemnify the District for the actions of Caliber under this charter.

The corporate bylaws of Caliber Schools shall provide for indemnification of the School's Board, officers, agents, and employees. The School will purchase general liability insurance, Board Members and Officer's insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks.

The District shall be named as an additional insured on the general liability insurance that Caliber Schools maintains for the operation of Caliber Schools: K-8 Charter.

The Board of Caliber Schools will maintain and implement appropriate risk management practices as discussed herein, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for students, and dispute resolution.



## 22. Conclusion

By approving this charter, the Vallejo City Unified School District will be fulfilling the intent of the California Legislature to encourage the establishment of charter schools.

Education Code Section 47601. It is the intent of the Legislature, in enacting this part, to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish all of the following:

- (a) Improve pupil learning.
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.
- (e) Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.
- (f) Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.
- (g) Provide vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools.

### **Pursuant to Education Code §47605:**

Charter law outlines the criteria governing the approval or denial of charter school petitions. The following excerpt is taken from the Charter Schools Act, Education Code §47605. This excerpt delineates charter approval and denial criteria:

A school district governing board shall grant a charter for the operation of a school under this part if it is satisfied that granting the charter is consistent with sound educational practice. The governing board of the school district shall not deny a petition for the establishment of a charter school unless it makes written factual findings, specific to the particular petition, setting forth specific facts to support one or more of the following findings:

(1) The charter school presents an unsound educational program for the pupils to be enrolled in the charter school.

(2) The petitioners are demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program set forth in the petition.

(3) The petition does not contain the number of signatures required.

(4) The petition does not contain an affirmation of each of the conditions described in Education Code §47605(d).

(5) The petition does not contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions of all required charter elements.

Caliber pledges to work cooperatively with the District in its review of this charter as submitted. Approval of the charter shall be governed by the standards and criteria in Education Code Section 47605.