



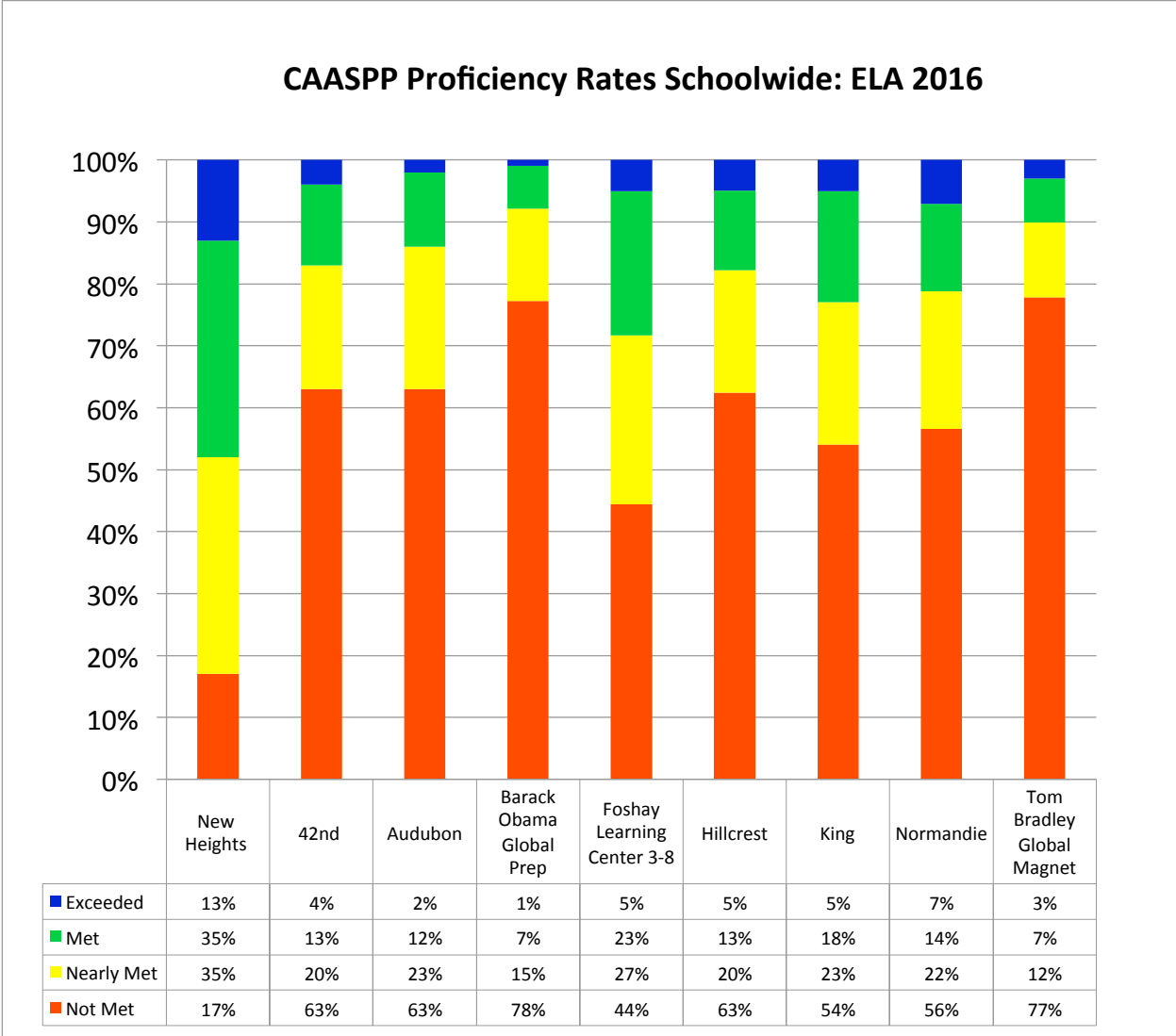
**SCHOOLWIDE TITLE I PLAN**

Updated November 2016

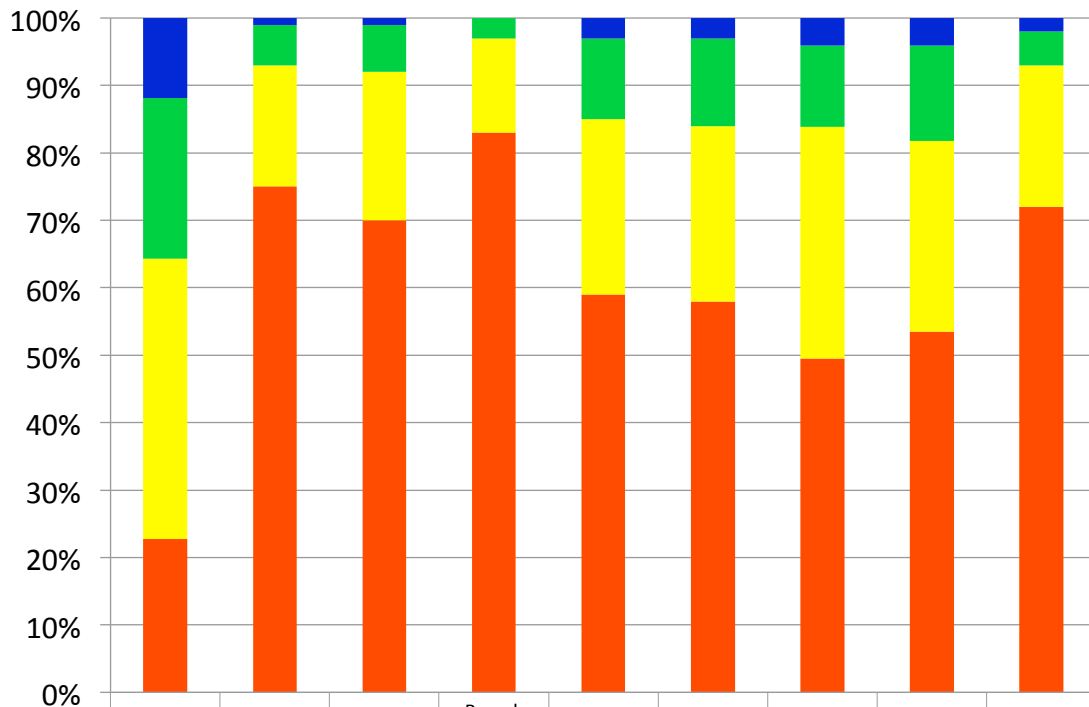
# Comprehensive Needs Assessment

## ANALYTICAL SUMMARY OF DISAGGREGATED AND INTERPRETED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

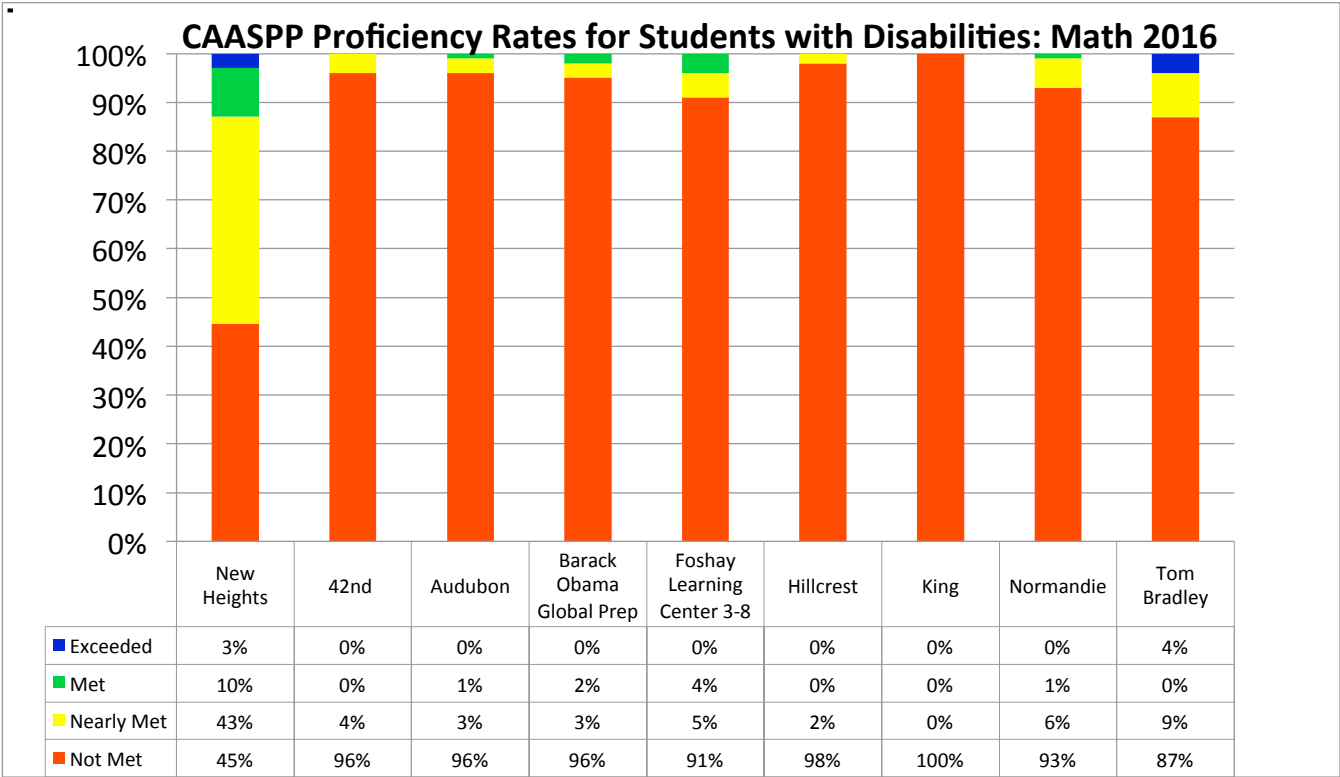
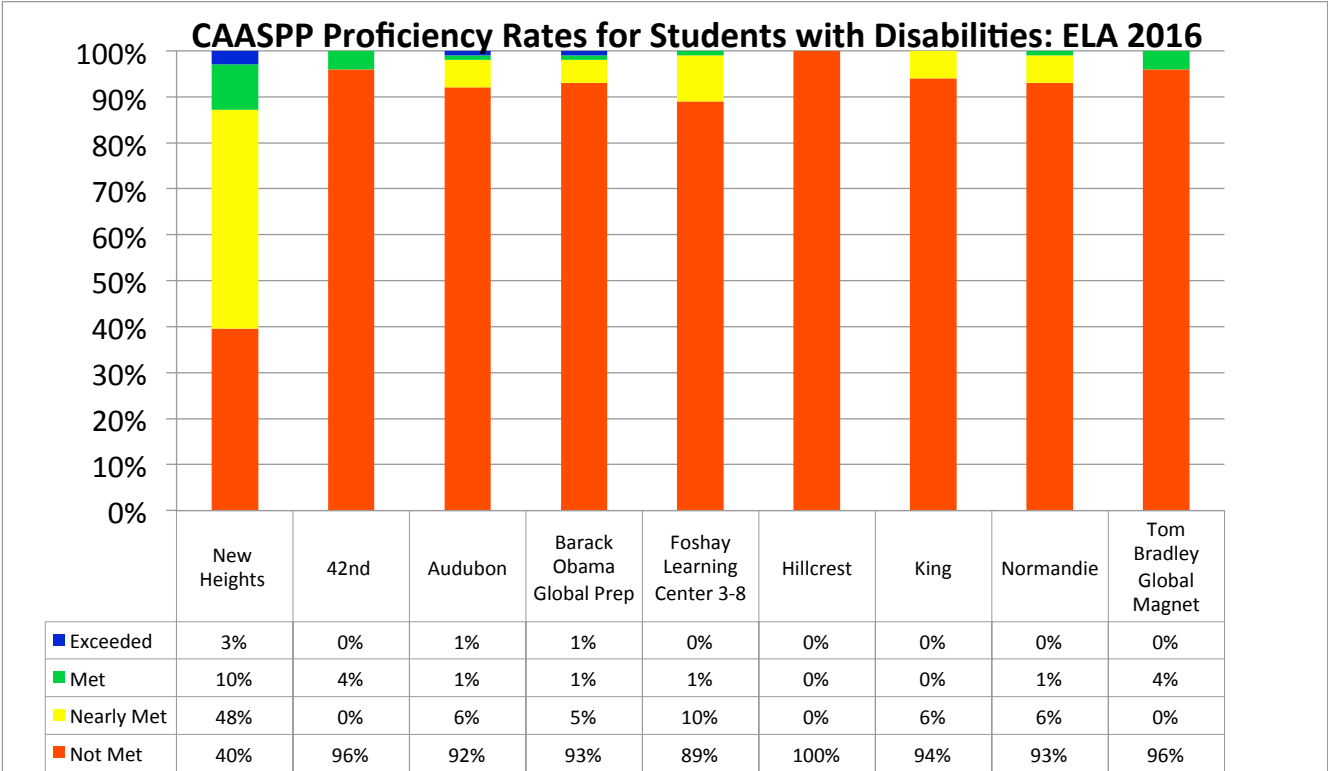
In 2015 and 2016, significantly higher percentages of students at New Heights Met or Exceeded state standards in ELA and Math than the eight primary resident schools our students would otherwise attend, and significantly fewer students at NHCS were in the “Not Met” category. The following data was taken from the CAASP website:

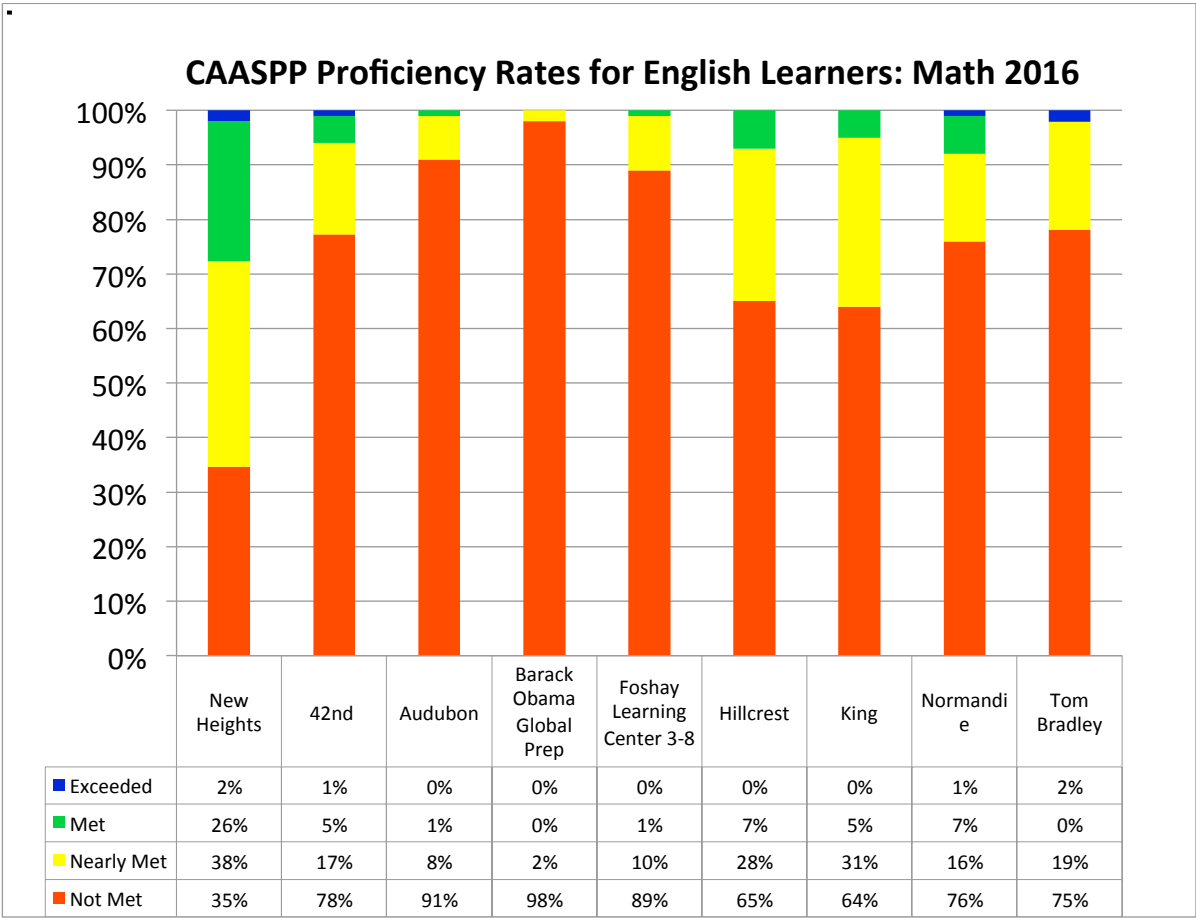
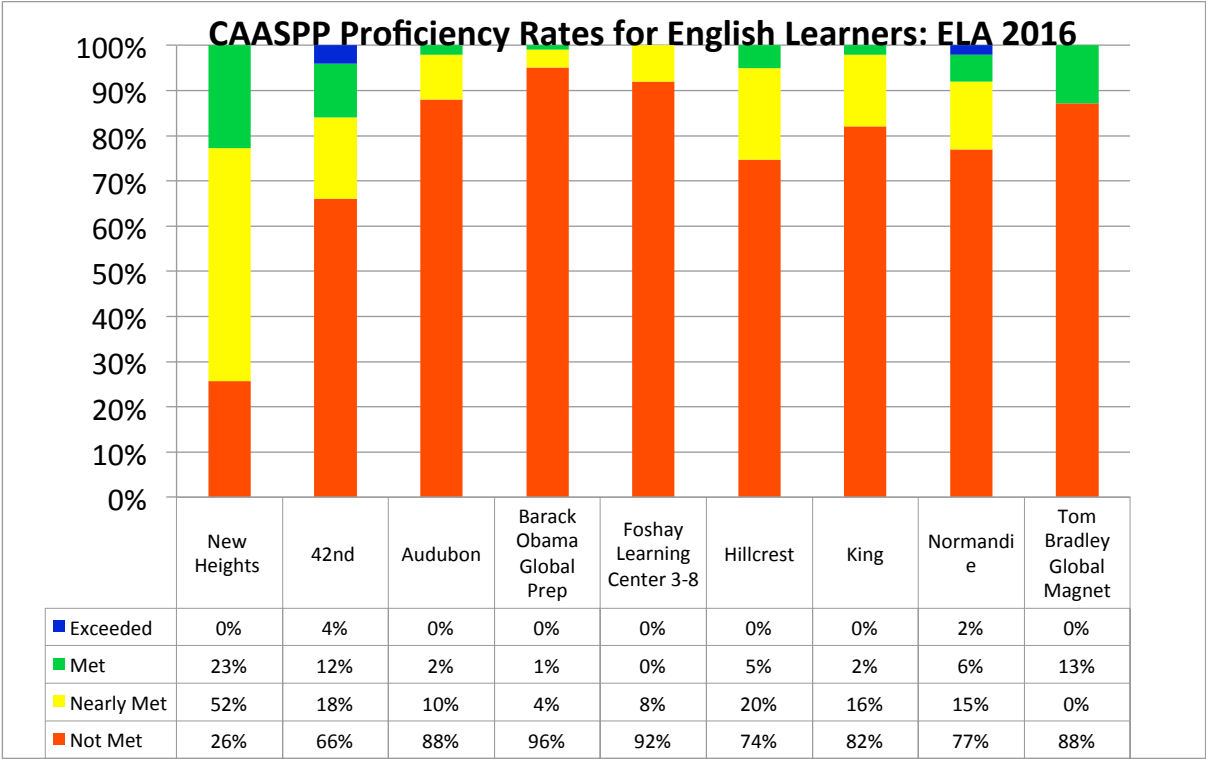


## CAASPP Proficiency Rates Schoolwide: Math 2016



	New Heights	42nd	Audubon	Barack Obama Global Prep	Foshay Learning Center 3-8	Hillcrest	King	Normandie	Tom Bradley
■ Exceeded	12%	1%	1%	0%	3%	3%	4%	4%	2%
■ Met	24%	6%	7%	3%	12%	13%	12%	14%	5%
■ Nearly Met	42%	18%	22%	14%	26%	26%	34%	28%	21%
■ Not Met	23%	75%	70%	83%	59%	58%	49%	53%	72%





<b>WASC ACTION PLAN GOALS</b>	
<b>Area for Improvement #1</b>	<b>LCAP Goal</b>
IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN READING, FOCUSED SPECIFICALLY ON READING COMPREHENSION.	Increase percent of students who are able to comprehend grade-level text (fiction and non-fiction) by 2% schoolwide, 1% for ELL, .5% for Special Ed.
<b>Area for Improvement #2</b>	<b>LCAP Goal</b>
FOCUS ON MATH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, IN ORDER TO INCREASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN MATH, ESPECIALLY FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS.	Increase the percent of students who are achieving math common core standards at grade level by 2% schoolwide, 1% for ELL, .5% for Special Ed, and 1% African American students.
<b>Area for Improvement #3</b>	<b>LCAP Goal</b>
INCREASE PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND UNDERSTANDING IN ORDER TO SUPPORT STUDENTS' SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND ACADEMIC WELL-BEING AS WELL AS THEIR ATTENDANCE	Increase student and parent engagement and understanding of the demands of the Common Core as it relates to critical thinking, thoughtful speech, and thoughtful listening. 95% attendance schoolwide, habitual truancy 30%, and chronic truancy 3% or less. Expulsion at less than 1%, suspension less than 2%. Increase parent participation in two or more school events by 1-2% annually.
<b>Area for Improvement #4</b>	<b>LCAP Goal</b>
IMPROVE STUDENTS ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT, ESPECIALLY FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS	Increase percent of students who are able to comprehend grade-level text (fiction and non-fiction). <i>Increase students' oral language development based on a teacher-designed rubric with the following categories: creating ideas, clarifying ideas, supporting ideas, and evaluating ideas.</i>
<b>AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT #5</b>	
EXPAND THE USE OF DATA /DATA SYSTEMS IN ORDER TO TRACK SCHOOLWIDE BEST PRACTICES	Attendance Tracking Parent Participation Tracking Reading levels five times a year. <i>Math interim tests 4 times a year</i> <i>Oral Language Rubrics used 3 times a year</i> <i>Writing Rubrics used 3 times a year (narrative, information, argument)</i>

### **Area for Improvement #1**

IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN READING, FOCUSED SPECIFICALLY ON READING COMPREHENSION.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

1. TOOLS FOR HELPING STUDENTS USE AND REMEMBER STRATEGIES IN READING AND WRITING: EXAMPLES: CHARTS, DEMONSTRATION NOTEBOOKS, AND MICRO-PROGRESSIONS USING DIY LITERACY
2. REORGANIZATION/INTEGRATION/INTENTIONAL CLUMPING OF STRATEGIES BASED ON ESSENTIAL SKILLS OF ALL MINI LESSONS/ UNITS OF STUDY (USING BIG BOOK OF DETAILS FORMAT AND CONTENT INTEGRATION)
  - FOCUS ON ELABORATION IN WRITING (AND READING) USING BIG BOOK OF DETAILS
  - CONTINUED FOCUS ON READING STRATEGIES USING READING STRATEGIES BOOK
  - INTEGRATION OF READING AND WRITING UNITS OF STUDY WITH SOCIAL STUDIES AND SCIENCE CONTENT
3. MAKE CONCRETE PLANS FOR TEACHING GRAMMAR, WORD WORK AND VOCABULARY

### **Area for Improvement #2**

FOCUS ON MATH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, IN ORDER TO INCREASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN MATH, ESPECIALLY FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS.

1. INCREASE MATH TALK (NUMBER TALKS AND OTHER INTENTIONAL TALK STRATEGIES) TO DEEPEN STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF MATH CONCEPTS AND OPERATIONAL SKILLS FROM INTENTIONAL TALK.
2. INCREASE PERSONALIZATION/DIFFERENTIATION THROUGH BLENDED LEARNING
3. INCREASE USE OF MATHEMATICAL PRACTICES

### **Area for Improvement #3**

INCREASE PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND UNDERSTANDING IN ORDER TO SUPPORT STUDENTS' SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND ACADEMIC WELL-BEING AS WELL AS THEIR ATTENDANCE

1. INCREASE TEACHER-PARENT CONTACTS AND PARENT PARTICIPATION IN CLASSROOM EVENTS
2. INCREASE TRACKING AND FOLLOW-UP FOR STUDENT ABSENCES/TARDIES
3. USE WEBSITE TO INFORM PARENT OF CLASS EVENTS

### **Area for Improvement #4**

IMPROVE STUDENTS ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT, ESPECIALLY FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

1. DEVELOP/PLAN ORAL LANGUAGE CURRICULUM FOR MORNING MEETING (AND/OR OTHER TALK TIMES) USING FRAMEWORK: *Creating ideas, clarifying ideas, supporting ideas, and evaluating ideas.*
2. USE ORAL LANGUAGE RUBRIC TO ASSESS STUDENTS' PROGRESS AND TARGET FUTURE INSTRUCTION
3. INTEGRATE ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT INTO MORNING MEETING, LITERACY, MATH, SCIENCE, SOCIAL STUDIES
4. INTEGRATE SERVICE LEARNING FOR STUDENTS TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNICATION WITH AUTHENTIC AUDIENCES

### **AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT #5**

EXPAND THE USE OF DATA /DATA SYSTEMS IN ORDER TO TRACK SCHOOLWIDE BEST PRACTICES

DESIGN PERFORMANCE TASKS TO MIRROR SBAC, IMPLEMENT ASSESSMENTS IN SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES

INTEGRATE DIFFERENTIATED TEST PREP THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL YEAR AND CONTINUE/IMPROVE BOOT CAMPS

Attendance Tracking

Parent Participation Tracking

Reading levels five times a year.

*Math interim tests 4 times a year*

*Oral Language Rubrics used 3 times a year*

*Writing Rubrics used 3 times a year (narrative, information, argument)*

## STATUS OF THE SCHOOL WITH RESPECT TO GOVERNING AUTHORITY EXPECTATIONS

New Heights Charter School continues to meet governing authority expectations for clean audits.

New Heights exceeded the performance of surrounding schools in both 2015 and 2016.

## 2. SCHOOLWIDE REFORM STRATEGIES

**a) Opportunities for all Children:** Through active inquiry and in-depth learning, New Heights instills students with the following competencies necessary for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:

- The ability to read, write, speak, calculate, experiment, and reason with clarity and precision and to creatively express oneself through the arts.
- The ability to participate thoughtfully and responsibly with concern for the common good.

The educational philosophy of New Heights supports students' academic achievement as well as their ability to become self-motivated, competent, lifelong learners. To do this, New Heights' educational program is based on knowledge of how to support students' intrinsic motivation to learn and how to organize learning to promote understanding.

New Heights is a small, caring learning community, with a personalized structure that supports meaningful relationships among students, teachers, administrators, and parents. New Heights strives to ensure that all students meet the Common Core standards with the supports they need to be successful. New Heights fosters success in the classroom as well as the community. To this end, the school will set forth the following program goals:

1. Prepare students to learn to use their minds well.
2. Prepare students to become active democratic citizens.
3. Develop students' social, emotional, and physical health.

Our philosophies about how learning best occurs are based on cognitive research and the implications for teaching and learning. The target population of New Heights Charter School, low-income students of diverse backgrounds, thrives in a learning environment that addresses



their individual needs as learners academically, socially, and emotionally. New Heights strives to be:

1. **Learner-centered:** Learner-centered environments pay careful attention to the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs that learners bring to the educational setting. Teachers must realize that new knowledge is built on existing knowledge—students are not blank slates. Therefore, **teachers need to uncover the incomplete understandings, false beliefs and naïve renditions of concepts that students have when they begin a course.** If these are ignored, students may develop understandings very different from what the teacher intends them to gain.
2. **Knowledge-centered:** Knowledge-centered environments take seriously the need to help students learn the well-organized bodies of knowledge that support understanding and adaptive expertise. **Teachers are wise to point their students directly toward clear learning goals—to tell students exactly what knowledge they will be gaining, and how they can use that knowledge.** In addition, a strong foundational structure of basic concepts will give students a solid base on which to build further learning.
3. **Assessment-centered:** Assessment-centered environments provide frequent formal and informal opportunities for feedback focused on understanding, not memorization, to encourage and reward meaningful learning. Feedback is fundamental to learning, but feedback opportunities are often too scarce in classrooms. Students may receive grades on tests and essays, but these are summative assessments that occur at the end of projects. **What are needed are formative assessments that provide students with opportunities to revise and improve the quality of their thinking and understanding.** The goal is for students to gain meta-cognitive abilities to self-assess, reflect and rethink for better understanding.
4. **Community-centered:** Community-centered environments foster norms for **people learning from one another, and continually attempting to improve.** In such a community, students are encouraged to be active, constructive participants. Further, they are encouraged to make—and then learn from—mistakes. Intellectual camaraderie fosters support, challenge and collaboration.

**b) Effective Methods and Instructional Strategies:** New Heights supports students’ academic achievement as well as their ability to become self-motivated, competent, lifelong learners, through an academically rich program incorporating the following characteristics. New Heights has a **rigorous, standards-based curriculum.**

**INTRINSIC MOTIVATION:** We have designed New Heights’ education program in recognition that children’s academic, ethical, social, and emotional development are inter-related and interdependent. Students who feel connected to their school tend to have higher academic motivation and perform better academically, while being more unlikely to engage in problem behaviors such as violence and drug use (Blum, McNeely, & Rinehart, 2002; Resnick et al., 1997

*Key Evidence: Teachers are trained annually in Responsive Classroom (TK-5) and Developmental Design (6-8) approaches to supporting students overall growth, with a focus on teacher language, developmental appropriate practices, respectful, relevant, and related consequences, morning meetings, and collaborative problem-solving. Teachers use this training to implement RC and DD in the classroom on a daily basis.*

STUDENT UNDERSTANDING: New Heights prepares students to transfer what they learn in school to their lives outside of school. Students learn how to be readers, writers, mathematicians, scientists, and artists. Teachers use a workshop approach to actively engage students and build their understanding. Teachers learn to clarify learning goals, focus on the “big ideas” of a subject, devise revealing assessments of student understanding, and craft effective and engaging learning activities.

*Key Evidence: Teachers receive training and support to design units of study based on the big ideas of a subject, planning backwards from authentic performance tasks to ensure lessons lead students to mastery and understanding. Teachers design assessments to match their units of study, and use these assessments to guide future instruction and differentiate based on students' needs.*

As a K-8 school, New Heights is designed to meet the social and academic needs of students at all grade levels. This design is aligned with the current thinking about adolescent development as described in the National Forum for middle grades reform. High-performing schools with middle grades challenge all students to use their minds well, providing them with the curriculum, instruction, assessment, support, and time they need to meet rigorous academic standards. They recognize that early adolescence is characterized by dramatic cognitive growth, which enables students to think in more abstract and complex ways. The curriculum and extra-curricular programs in such schools are challenging and engaging, tapping young adolescents' boundless energy, interests, and curiosity. Adults in these schools maintain a rich academic environment by working with colleagues in their schools and communities to deepen their own knowledge and improve their practice.

High-performing schools with middle grades are developmentally responsive. Such schools create small learning communities of adults and students in which stable, close, and mutually respectful relationships support all students' intellectual, ethical, and social growth. They provide comprehensive services to foster healthy physical and emotional development. Students have opportunity for both independent inquiry and learning in cooperation with others.

## **Instructional Program**

Teachers at New Heights use a variety of strategies and resources to actively engage students and teach CA Common Core Standards, based on our philosophies about how learning best occurs, our instructional philosophies and our goals in developing 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. Teachers have current knowledge about the most effective kinds of instructional practices for our students. In addition to specific strategies already discussed throughout Element 1, the following practices are utilized by our faculty:

## **Learner-Centered**

1. *Active engagement to meet the needs of all learners:* With the learning expectations and assessments determined, teachers work together to determine the most effective teaching methods and select the appropriate materials and resources to achieve their goals with all of their students. Teachers design innovative instructional strategies by differentiating or scaffolding in order to provide equal access for all learners (including English Learners and students with special needs). Teachers utilize a repertoire of research-based instructional strategies to increase student achievement.

2. *Differentiation through blended learning (current focus is math):* Blended learning offers a number of advantages:

- *Differentiated small group learning:* students rotate in small groups, engaging in teacher-led instruction, individualized online instruction, and collaborative problem-solving. Students who are behind grade level can build the core skills they need, while those that are on grade level or above can push ahead.
- *Real-time data:* As students use these programs, data is automatically generated for teachers to see which skills students have mastered, which require more instruction, and so on. These reports are tied directly to CCSS so that summative data shows student mastery of specific standards as well as diagnostic data about areas in need of further development. This allows teachers to more effectively make immediate adjustments during a lesson or in preparation for a lesson to meet students' needs.
- *Student Engagement:* Today's tech-savvy students become engaged and want to participate in their learning when curriculum is provided via highly interactive, engaging games and other online experiences. Because the programs meet students at their levels, students are much less likely to be lost or bored and more likely to feel a sense of accomplishment as they progress through programs.
- *Support for English Learners:* *The visual support of online programs,* provide a scaffold for English Learners. In addition, programs like Zearn, provide students the opportunity to watch "video lessons" multiple times to support understanding.
- *Tech Skills Development, TK-8:* CAASPP online assessments require that students be comfortable with technology; 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs inevitably require tech proficiency. Starting in Transitional Kindergarten, students at NHCS have regular access to technology and start to master the practical technology usage and application skills that are imperative in today's world. Students at NHCS learn specific tech skills and engage in research and creation of presentations with technology. Students learn how to use programs such as Word, PowerPoint, Google Docs, as well as develop their typing and online research skills. To learn cyber safety and cyber citizenship, students participate in Common Sense Media's education programs online each year.

## **Knowledge-Centered**

New Heights teachers organize curriculum, instruction, and assessment around powerful ideas and essential skills. Teachers collaboratively plan units of study using the ‘backward design’ approach described in *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998).

Beginning with the CA Common Core Standards, teachers organize the standards to promote students’ understanding of the big ideas of the discipline. Teachers also consider difficulties students are likely to encounter and think through the progression of skills/concepts students will need to master to reach the desired outcome. Throughout the curriculum, teachers strive to achieve a balance of procedural/skill knowledge and conceptual knowledge, understanding that the two are interdependent.

### **Assessment-Centered**

Teachers integrate assessment into their daily instruction. Teachers use multiple strategies such as checks for understanding during direct instruction, 1:1 conferencing, white board exchanges in math, exit tickets, and “kid-watching” group or partner conversations. Teachers use this formative assessment to help group students, differentiate instruction and refine future lessons based on students’ needs.

Teachers design multiple, varied assessments to help track students’ progress toward the end goal. For example, teachers use mid-unit and end-unit tests in math as well as interim and summative tests that track progress on the content of multiple units. The interim and summative tests are given online to help students get used to the style of test they will encounter on the state tests. In writing, students engage in a pre-unit “on demand” writing task and a post-unit “on demand” writing task.

Teachers also design or refine existing performance tasks to assess students’ ability to integrate their knowledge of multiple content standards. For example, students are given multiple integrated reading/writing performance tasks to assess their learning across different genres.

### **Community-Centered**

Personalization: Teachers spend time, through class meetings and individual conferences to get to know each student individually and deepen their understanding of how to address his or her academic and social needs.

*Responsive Classroom (TK-5th) and Developmental Designs (6th-8th):* These approaches support students’ social/emotional development and build classroom community. Both Responsive Classroom and Developmental Designs include a collection of practices that bring together social/emotional and academic learning. The guiding principles include the understanding that to be successful academically and socially, children need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. Teachers use such practices as Morning Meeting, joint rule creation, interactive modeling, and collaborative problem-solving. Each of the practices seeks to foster a “positive social context” which in turn facilitates academic learning.

### **c. Address the Needs of All Children**

A SCHOOL CLIMATE OF DECENCY AND TRUST. The school is a place that is comfortable and inviting to all. The school cultivates a feeling of respect, trust, and partnership between students, parents, and teachers. Students have opportunities to reflect on their behavior towards others and contribute suggestions for how to improve the climate of the school to support learning.

DEMOCRACY AND EQUITY. The school demonstrates non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It models democratic practices that involve all who are directly affected by the school. Students come to see themselves as vital contributors to the democratic culture of their school community.

SCHOOL-WIDE COMMUNITY BUILDING/CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT. New Heights uses the nationally recognized, research-based *Caring School Community* program, developed by the Development Studies Center, Responsive Classroom, and Developmental Designs. The programs include classroom management, school-wide events to increase the bonds among all stakeholders, literacy-based activities for parents and students to do together at home, and cross-age buddy activities to support learning and build relationships. Evaluation studies have consistently shown that *Caring School Community* has widespread positive effects on urban students, including increased achievement motivation and performance, more positive attitudes toward school, greater trust in and respect for teachers, improved social and ethical attitudes and interpersonal behavior, and reduced involvement in drug use and other problem behaviors.

#### VOCABULARY IS INTEGRAL TO LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Vocabulary is an essential element in the development of each of the language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The development of vocabulary and related skills will be emphasized throughout the curriculum. Whether an ELL student is just beginning to learn English, or is moving toward competency, vocabulary is fundamental to accessing English, as well as to gaining knowledge and understanding in the other academic content areas. New Heights uses *Text Talk* to promote students' vocabulary development, while supporting reading comprehension.

#### ROLE OF ORAL LANGUAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Activities that include oral interaction are used to promote acquisition of academic English and provide critical opportunities for comprehension of academic content. Whenever possible, oral language activities (listening and speaking) will precede reading and writing activities.

#### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND OTHER ACADEMIC SUBJECTS

Academic content learning need not be delayed or weakened while limited English proficient students acquire English since language acquisition is enhanced when integrated into academic instruction and activities.

#### **d) Determining if Needs Have Been Met:**

Through active inquiry and in-depth learning, New Heights will instill students with the following competencies:

- The ability to read, write, speak, calculate, experiment, and reason with clarity and precision and to creatively express and demonstrate understanding through the arts.
- The ability to participate thoughtfully and responsibly in the life of the community with concern for the common good.

New Heights expects its graduates to develop the following skills, knowledge, and attitudes as they progress through the school.

Students demonstrate they can integrate knowledge, skill, and analysis to produce authentic work. Multiple methods of assessment, including standardized test schools (disaggregated to show how various sub groups perform), will be used to understand student performance. Periodic analysis of longitudinal data serves as a guide for programmatic and operational decisions.

### **Methods to Measure Student Outcomes**

New Heights uses the following collection of methods to assess student progress:

STATE STANDARDIZED TESTING is used as required by federal and state requirements. Students are expected to meet or exceed the standard educational benchmarks established by the federal and state departments of education as measured by Smarter Balanced tests of the Common Core.

DIAGNOSTIC AND MASTERY TESTS illuminate students' weaknesses and inform teachers of the areas where students need support. For example, tests are given on a regular basis within the school's reading fluency program, SIPPS, to assess student learning. Students are first assessed on their reading fluency skills with the Test of Basic Phonics and students are grouped according to their decoding-strategy needs. Once in the program, students are tested every 2-4 weeks to determine mastery and to see whether or not they should be regrouped into a higher or lower level. Through these assessments, teachers ensure students receive instruction at their level of need.

UNIT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS AND UNIT TESTS reflect unit objectives and provide opportunities to check progress on students' knowledge and skills development. Performance Task Tests are designed by teachers or taken from content-based instructional materials to provide ongoing analysis of students' ability to integrate and transfer their knowledge to challenging tasks. Unit tests are embedded in the schools' math, science, and social studies programs.

FOUNTAS AND PINNELL BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT SYSTEM FOR READING assesses students' reading comprehension and fluency. All students are formally assessed in the fall, winter, and spring. Some students may be tested more often as needed. The results of this test are used to identify which reading level is appropriate for students. Students are given an independent reading level and an instructional level (books teachers' use small group instruction to challenge students to successfully read at the next level.) Teachers use this fluency and comprehension data to confer one-on-one with students, identify reading strengths and weaknesses, and help move students to the next reading level by teaching specific strategies for them to use while reading.

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT CONFERENCES: During Reading and Writing Workshop, teachers confer individually with students to gauge student progress in reading and writing. This process includes the following steps: 1) Research, 2) Determine areas of strength and weakness, 3) Teach a new strategy for students to learn that addresses their weakness, and 4) Document conference and plan for next conference.

ONLINE ASSESSMENTS, *SUCH AS FASTT MATH, MOBYMAX, AND ZEARN*: These programs have assessments embedded in the software that students use to improve their math skills, deepen conceptual understanding and practice language arts skills. The assessments generate actionable reports that provide critical data for teachers to manage and monitor students' progress while using the software.

ON DEMAND WRITING PROMPTS are given in grades K-8 prior to the teaching of a unit of study and after a writing unit is complete to gauge students' independent writing ability within a specific genre (i.e. narrative, opinion, or information.) The On Demand writing pieces are completed in 1-2 sessions (depending on the grade level) and are graded using the a writing rubric based on Lucy Calkins' K-8 learning progression. While the Publishing Party celebrates what students can accomplish given an extended period of time and extensive teacher feedback, the On Demand piece simulates the writing demanded on state tests.

ILLUMINATE (AND FORMERLY DATA DIRECTOR) is used by New Heights to design student tests to measure progress in English Language Arts and Math. Starting in 2013-14, teachers used the Common Core assessment item data bank to administer Data Director summative tests to students 2 times a year to gauge their progress toward the standards and determine future instruction.

The exams include question types similar to the Smarter Balanced summative assessment: selected response, short constructed response, extended constructed response, and performance tasks. The ELA and Math exam content aligns with the Common Core standards.

The school uses the Smarter Balanced Interim Tests online -- both the Interim Comprehensive Assessment and the Interim Assessment Block options.

The following chart outlines the learning outcomes and assessment methods for New Heights' students:

New Heights staff monitors student and school progress through the collection of the school assessments listed above and school-wide community surveys. This data is analyzed twice a year as part of the school's **Reflection on School-wide Progress Meetings**. In these meetings, the school disaggregates student test data, determines learning priorities, and analyzes effectiveness of strategies used. Each end-year Reflection on School-wide Progress Meeting will include analysis of data compared to prior years' data to determine student progress and the effectiveness of the school curriculum. This information will be used to drive instruction.

#### **e) Consistency**

This plan of action is consistent with our charter petition, LCAP, and with all other improvement efforts at our site. We have reviewed our Local Education Agency plan in order to create this school wide plan and ensure alignment.

### **3. HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS**

All teachers are qualified as defined by California regulations.

Appropriate records of credentials held by New Heights' teachers and supporting documentation will be monitored and maintained by the school administration. Credentials are monitored annually in compliance with state and federal law. In addition to meeting these requirements, teachers must be willing to work collaboratively with the whole school staff, parents, and students.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS: New Heights Charter School recruits teachers that hold either a BCLAD or CLAD credential and can use their bi-cultural training to better serve our ELL students. Teachers are well-versed in Specially Designed Academic Instruction and in English (SDAIE) and English Language Development (ELD) techniques.

### **4. Professional Development**

New Heights is committed to a formalized, ongoing professional development program to support student achievement. A growing body of research shows that the most effective professional development addresses teachers' need for pedagogical content knowledge — a deep understanding of how best to represent the core ideas of a subject to students. Through content-based training teachers build pedagogical content knowledge and assessment knowledge.

Criteria for Professional Development and Practice:

- Teachers utilize a common curriculum design and planning process to facilitate team and school wide dialogue about teaching and learning.
- Teachers develop a system of assessment to facilitate student reflection and commitment to excellence.
- Teacher teams analyze student work and student data on a regular basis to inform instructional decisions.
- Teachers design performance tasks that provide students opportunities to demonstrate what they know and are able to do.
- To develop consistency and community, teachers at all grade levels engage in community-building activities such as class meetings and cross-age buddies.
- Regular sharing and observation of teaching practice provide non-evaluative peer and administrative feedback and assistance aimed at deepening the work of both teachers and students.

Teachers and staff are engaged in continuous learning, which will effectively model for students what it means to be a life-long learner. The processes used for professional development includes: setting norms for collaborative work, use of protocols for review of student work and lesson study, and inclusion of teachers in important educational decisions.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURES**



1. Prior to the start of the school year, all teachers participate in approximately **10 days** of professional development to build understanding of research-based curriculum materials, develop community, and focus on school wide goals.
2. Throughout the school year, teachers continue to engage in a **three-hour block of professional development or team planning time every Tuesday** during student early release time. These sessions include opportunities for teachers to participate in grade level coaching sessions, whole faculty professional development in content areas or classroom management/social-emotional development, grade band Support Study Team discussions to prepare individual students success plans, and individual and grade level planning.
3. The school calendar includes **5 pupil-free days** during the school year for faculty to engage in professional development in the professional development focus area for the year and data analysis.
4. Teachers receive **job-embedded** professional development from the school's Literacy Coaches, Math coaches, Science coaches, and social/emotional coaches. The coaches provide demonstration lessons, co-teaching opportunities, planning support, and teaching labs to improve teachers' instruction in reading and writing. The coaches support teachers with math instruction, English Language Learners, and classroom management.
5. **Data Analysis and Planning:** Teachers determine which student work / test data to collect, grade and sort, norm with colleagues, determine areas of strength and weakness, plan future instruction based on analysis.

## **5. Hiring/Selection Process**

The Executive Director and Program Coordinator review the qualifications of candidates that wish to apply for employment at the school. Individuals that wish to apply for a position will be required to submit a resume and a New Heights employment application. All submissions are reviewed to determine which candidates are best suited for the school based on their qualifications. Interviews with select candidates will be conducted. Candidates that are offered employment will receive a written notice from New Heights.

Teachers are selected by the Executive Director on an application and interview basis in consultation with other staff members when appropriate. Selection of teachers is based on their commitment to the school's vision, teaching experience, degree of subject matter expertise, and their ability to demonstrate classroom instructional capabilities. Teachers:

- Design effective and engaging learning experiences that develop students' understanding.
- Design student assessments, including Performance Assessments, which provide evidence of student understanding and skill development.
- Regularly review and analyze student progress, maintain records, and regularly communicate student progress to the Director and parents.
- Create a caring classroom community to facilitate students' academic and social development.
- Engage in faculty collaboration, professional development, growth, and self-assessment.
- Maintain regular communication with parents.
- Maintain regular, punctual attendance.

## **6. Increasing Parental Involvement**

Parents of New Heights' students are actively involved in making decisions that directly affect the creation of a caring school community. Parents have the opportunity to serve on committees, such as the School Site Council, the English Language Learner committee, Health and Wellness, and event planning. Parents, in collaboration with the School Director and Board President, may also choose to create new committees based on needs. Parents are critical members of the school community providing essential input into the assessment, review, and improvement of the school and providing essential support for children's learning.

Parents of New Heights students are encouraged and expected to participate in the educational process of their child(ren). Parents are fully engaged in enhancing their child's development through school wide community-building events as well as support for activities such as independent reading, at-home read-alouds, and at-home math games.

Parents are kept informed regarding their child's progress through regular classroom and school communications. Prior to the first day of school parents/guardians are invited to attend an orientation and sign an agreement indicating they understand the New Heights philosophy and expected outcomes. The agreement includes information regarding parents' participation in New Heights' at-home literacy-based activities, school wide community-building events, and student conferences. The School provides translation services at school wide events and provide translated written materials in the child's home language when needed.

## **7. Plans for Assisting Preschool Children**

New Heights uses a number of strategies to help students transition from preschool or Head Start programs to our TK/kinder program. Parents come to an Orientation Session in the spring prior to the first day of school to learn about the educational programs and policies of our school. Just before the first day of school, parents are invited to learn about the schools procedures and policies from school staff.

In the first six weeks of school, the kinder program focuses on helping students learn about the norms of the classroom and the daily procedures. Students are allowed to take a nap after lunch to help them transition to a full day kinder program. In addition, Kinder and TK students are given an older buddy and start to build a relationship with this student that continues for the full school year.

## **8. Measures to Include Teachers in Decisions Regarding Assessments**

New Heights implements a rigorous and comprehensive assessment system to measure student outcomes, regularly review results, and make targeted adjustments to curriculum and instruction to ensure all students achieve. Regular Reflection on School Wide Progress Meetings provide opportunities for in-depth study of student progress. New Heights' small school structure, educational practices, instructional materials, and assessment system are designed to ensure students meet standards and growth targets.

## **9. Effective, Timely Assistance for Students with Need:**

The New Heights is committed to challenging each student to achieve at his or her greatest potential. Through personalized and differentiated instruction, students are presented with tasks

that are beyond them -- tasks that will challenge them. Students are given the appropriate amount of support to ensure their success.

Students are introduced and given access to the core tasks of each discipline, to “big ideas” that require serious thought, and to performance tasks that require understanding. Through the use of essential questions that get at the “heart” of the discipline, students are challenged to use their minds well to gain understanding. This understanding is demonstrated through multiple measures.

Students with a particular talent or interest are encouraged to develop these interests. In addition to rich academic instruction, New Heights Charter runs an afterschool program for students with enrichment programs following regular school hours for tutoring, recreation/sports, and the arts.

Academically low-achieving students are fully supported to ensure they meet grade-level standards. An active support system fills in the gaps in students’ knowledge and skills and helps them move ahead. The support system includes the following strategies:

- Diagnostic assessment illuminates students’ weaknesses and inform teachers of the areas where students need support.
- Teachers differentiate instruction so that students have the appropriate amount of challenge and a support system to ensure mastery.
- Students receive instruction at their level of development and will be challenged to progress as quickly as possible.
- Teachers adjust the pacing of their instruction to best support student learning.
- Instruction is organized in a flexible manner so that students have multiple opportunities to master skills and content, rather than missing important skills and being forced to move on before they are ready.
- Small group instruction is used to support all critical skill development, such as reading fluency and numeracy.
- Intensive, ongoing assessment in each content area is part of the regular classroom pedagogy, allowing teachers to target specific areas of need.
- Each classroom strives to be a caring community to provide students with a safe learning environment.
- Parents are fully engaged in enhancing their child’s development through at-home collaborative learning activities, support for independent reading and at-home read-alouds, and at-home math games.

Teachers scaffold student learning in the following ways: 1) Teachers design units to know precisely where students need to arrive at the end of a lesson, a unit, and the school year, 2) Teachers know where each student is in relation to the goals and in their own development, and 3) Teachers ensure growth by providing appropriate scaffolds such as using multiple modes of teaching, a wide range of learning strategies, varied materials, and modeling. This type of approach is sustained by a classroom and school-wide learning environment that fully supports student development by creating powerful relationships between teachers and students and effectively balancing seriousness about intellectual work and celebrations of learning.

### **Plan for ensuring students meet standards and growth targets**

Regular, consistent assessment and analysis of student data allows teachers to target the academic needs of each and every student. Diagnostic and mastery tests will illuminate students' weaknesses and inform teachers of the areas where students need support. Mastery tests are given on a regular basis to assess student learning. For example, students are assessed on their decoding and fluency skills every 2-4 weeks through the tests built into the *Systematic Instruction in Phoneme Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words* program. Through these assessments, students are grouped according to their decoding-strategy needs. Teaching is oriented toward mastery, with new material introduced gradually with regular and systematic review and application.

In addition, New Heights has "scaffolds" to support each student struggling to meet state standards. An active support system fills in the gaps in students' knowledge and skills and help them move ahead. The support system includes the following strategies: regular reports to parents so they can support their children's learning, differentiating instruction, and small group instruction within the larger classroom setting, extended day support, and summer school.

### **10. Coordination and Integration of Federal, State, and Local Services**

New Heights has created an integrated program that merges social, emotional, and academic learning for students. All programs are available for all students. The before school and afterschool programs are open to all students and include homework assistance, tutoring, and enrichment. The educational program at New Heights is personalized, and due to our small size, coordination among programs is seamless. The focused vision of New Heights and strong collaborative culture ensures that all efforts are coordinated for the benefit of the students.

### **Homeless Students: Title I Reservation**

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ensures that each homeless student has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as other students. The following paragraph reflects the intent of the reauthorized McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

The Governing Board desires to ensure that homeless students have access to the same free and appropriate public education provided to other students within the district. New Heights Charter School shall provide homeless students with access to education and other services necessary for these students to meet the same challenging academic standards as other students.

The school's local homeless education liaison coordinates and collaborates with school personnel to ensure that services for Title I are coordinated with McKinney-Vento. Staff will work together to ensure that barriers to academic success are addressed through support such as housing assistance, nutrition, counseling, clothing (school uniforms), and backpacks.

