

**SIDE LETTER OF AGREEMENT (SLA)**  
**BETWEEN THE**  
**SAN JUAN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (District)**  
**AND THE**  
**SAN JUAN PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS COALITION (Coalition)**  
*Re: Innovative School Design Process and Workgroup*  
[Updated April 11, 2023](#)

**Background:**

The San Juan Unified School District, (District), San Juan Teachers Association (SJTA), and the San Juan Professional Educators Coalition (Coalition) believe that providing schools with a variety of educational philosophies allows for families to exercise choice and determine which approach best meets the needs of their children. The parties recognize that utilizing best practices in District schools creates a strong educational foundation, while also understanding that innovative approaches lead to “next” practices in education. The parties believe in order to create a well-rounded approach, the process must include diversity in voice and perspective. This dynamic best occurs when the stakeholders work together in partnership.

**Statement of Intent:**

The parties agree to partner in the design of an innovative school, with an anticipated site selection in spring 2023 and launch in the 2024-25 school year , that creates opportunities for students to learn in unique and different ways.

**Agreement:**

The District and Coalition mutually agree to the following:

**1. Workgroup Makeup and Scope of Work:**

- a. A workgroup of practitioners will spend the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school year and the summer of 2023:
  - i. Engaging in design thinking professional development
  - ii. Studying current innovative schools and their approaches
  - iii. Reviewing existing research
  - iv. Developing prototypes, possibilities, and variations
  - v. Gathering feedback from community, families, students, and other stakeholders
  - vi. Recommending an educational model for a San Juan Unified program
  - vii. Engaging staff of selected site, during the 2023-24 school year, in the planning and implementation of recommended model, to launch in the 2024-25 school year

- b. The workgroup will consist of up to eight (8) team members. Seven (7) team members will be SJTA members, and one (1) team member will be an SJPEC member.
  - i. One (1) of these team members will be the workgroup lead.
    - 1. The one (1) workgroup lead shall be an SJTA member.
    - 2. The SJPEC workgroup member will provide administrative perspective on current and future design work.
    - 3. The workgroup lead will be responsible for:
      - a. Meeting and collaborating as needed in addition to design team meetings
      - b. Meeting with the Innovative Schools Leadership Team as needed to share progress
      - c. Potentially working with a consultant or engaging in training related to design work
  - ii. The Innovative Schools Leadership Team (a joint governance group composed of representatives from the District, SJPEC and SJTA) will jointly select the workgroup lead.
    - 1. The Innovative Schools Leadership Team, with input from the workgroup lead, will select the remaining seven (7) workgroup members.

## **2. Workgroup Timeline and Compensation**

- a. Workgroup members will be expected to convene and perform duties and responsibilities outside of meetings during the:
  - i. 2022-23 school year
  - ii. Summer of 2023
  - iii. 2023-24 school year
  - iv. Summer of 2024
- b. All Workgroup members will receive:
  - i. One (1) day a month of release time for the workgroup to convene.
  - ii. A stipend of \$10,000.
  - iii. If a working group member chooses to leave the team during the term of this agreement, they will receive a pro rata share of their stipend.
  - iv. All workgroup team members receiving additional compensation will be paid in quarterly installments beginning October 31, 2022 and through the end of this agreement.

## **3. Selection Process:**

- a. **Leads:** The District, SJPEC and SJTA will jointly develop an application process and will jointly select the lead for this workgroup.

- i. The Innovative Schools Leadership Team may reconsider lead assignments during the term of this agreement.
  - b. **Workgroup members:** The remaining seven (7) Workgroup members will be chosen by the Innovative Schools Leadership Team with input from the selected workgroup lead.
4. **Site Administrator Selection Process for 2023-24:** Once a site is selected in spring 2023 and the design work begins, a process is necessary to select the site administrator for the Innovative School:
  - a. Interested SJPEC members will submit a Letter of Interest to Amberlee Townsend-Snider by April 21, 2023. The letter shall state:
    - i. Their qualifications
    - ii. Their experience
    - iii. Their interest and ability to lead transformative school redesign work.
  - b. To be considered for selection, SJPEC members must be site administrators in good standing. For the purposes of this agreement, “good standing” is defined as:
    - i. The principal’s most recent evaluation is positive (“continuation without reservation”)
    - ii. The principal is not currently on a work plan and does not have documented concerns over the past year.
  - c. The Division of Teaching and Learning (DTL) and the Innovative Schools Leadership Team, with input from the Innovative Schools workgroup, will review letters of interest and determine whether to schedule a meeting to dialogue with representatives from the school site, work group, and leadership team.
  - d. If there is mutual interest between the site and the principal, DTL will schedule a second meeting with the principal to further evaluate the opportunity.
  - e. The Superintendent, upon recommendation from DTL, shall consider information learned during this process when making the site administrator selection.
5. **Site Administrator Supports:** The parties agree that the selected site administrator’s ability to fully engage in the design work and planning during the 2023-24 school year is critical to the successful transformation of the school, and that additional resources will be needed to support this administrator. Those will include:
  - a. The district shall create and fund a one-time, temporary position (at a maximum of 1.0 FTE) to support student behavior management and restorative practices during the 2023-24 school year.
  - b. The selected site administrator shall receive a stipend of \$10,000 in the 2023-24 school year only.

This Side Letter of Agreement is non-precedential and will sunset **on August 10, 2024** . This Side Letter may be revised and/or extended by mutual agreement between the District and Coalition.

*Daniel Thigpen* 4-11-2023

Daniel Thigpen                      Date  
Executive Director  
Labor Relations & Government Affairs  
San Juan Unified School District

*Damon Smith*

4/11/2023

Damon Smith                      Date  
President  
San Juan Professional Educators Coalition