MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMY INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION

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Ondrea Reed, M.Ed.

Deputy Superintendent, Education Services

WHAT ARE LOS AL UNIFIED ACADEMY PROGRAMS?

LAUSD Academies are **intentional learning pathways** designed to help students thrive academically and personally as they transition from elementary school, to middle school, to high school and beyond.

Academy programs are built to support the **4 A's**:

- **Academics**
- **Athletics**
- **Activities**
- **Arts**

Each Academy pathway has a **clear focus**, while still supporting students' involvement in all areas of school life.

Middle school Academies are designed to **prepare students early** for success in LAHS pathways, college readiness, and career exploration.

MEET THE TEAM...

LOS ALAMITOS UNIFIED
ACADEMY PROGRAMS
EST. 2026

MIDDLE SCHOOL LAUNCHING ACADEMY PROGRAMS

MCAULIFE MIDDLE SCHOOL
EAGLE ACADEMY

OAK MIDDLE SCHOOL
LION ACADEMY

Middle School as a Launch Point

- Middle school is a critical window where:
  - Academic habits are formed
  - Gaps in foundational skills can either widen or close
  - Confidence as a learner is established

- LAUSD Academy programs are proactive, not reactive, designed to:
  - Strengthen core academic skills **before** high school
  - Build the habits students need to manage increasing academic demands
  - Ensure students enter high school positioned for success, not remediation

INTRODUCING EAGLE & LION ACADEMIES

Academics-Focused Academy Pathways

- **Lion Academy** – Oak Middle School
- **Eagle Academy** – McAuliffe Middle School
- Both Academies are part of LAUSD's **"A-Academics" pathway**
- Designed for students who:
  - Are "close to/at proficiency" in ELA and/or Math, or
  - Would benefit from a highly structured, supportive directed learning environment
  - Benefit from targeted instruction on high-impact standards
  - Benefit from explicit instruction in executive functioning skills

VISION & FOCUS OF EAGLE & LION ACADEMIES

OUR VISION

- Ensure students master essential ELA and Math standards
- Build strong executive functioning skills that transfer across all classes
- Increase student confidence, ownership, and academic identity
- Prepare students to enter high school at or above proficiency

ACADEMIC FOCUS AREA

- Reading comprehension and academic vocabulary
- Writing stamina and organization
- Mathematical reasoning, procedural operations and problem solving
- Application and remediation of skills as test preparation

WHO IS TEACHING ACADEMY COURSES?



Highly Qualified, Highly Supported Teachers - Acting as Coaches & Mentors

- Academy classes are taught by:
  - Credentialed LAUSD middle school teachers
  - Teachers selected for their:
    - Strong instructional practice
    - Experience supporting diverse learners
    - Commitment to student growth
- Teachers are supported by:
  - Middle School TOSAs
  - Research-based curriculum and lesson scripts
  - Ongoing collaboration and planning

WHY THIS WORKS - RESEARCH & READINESS



Academic Proficiency by 9th Grade Matters…

Research consistently shows that:

- Students entering high school **<u>at or above proficiency</u>** in ELA and Math are:
  - More likely to pass high school courses and take honors/AP courses
  - Less likely to require intervention or remediation
  - More likely to pursue post-secondary education options
- Early academic confidence leads to:
  - Higher engagement
  - Greater persistence through challenges
  - Stronger post-secondary outcomes

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING - A CRITICAL SKILL SET



What Are Executive Functioning Skills?

Executive functioning includes:

- Organization and planning
- Time management and study skills
- Goal setting and self-monitoring
- Task initiation and completion
- Reflection and adjustment

Why It Matters

- These skills predict success **beyond academics**
- High school, college, and careers require students to:
  - Manage multiple deadlines
  - Advocate for themselves
  - Monitor progress and adjust strategies

ACADEMY PROGRAM STRUCTURE & LOGISTICS



How the Program Works

- **Academy is a <u>zero-period class</u>:**
  - Meets Monday–Friday
  - Functions as a full academic class
- **Attendance and tardies:**
  - Count just like any other course
- **No homework:**
  - All learning happens during the Academy period
- **Curriculum:**
  - 80% common, research-based curriculum
  - 20% customized instruction based on student needs

GRADING & ACCOUNTABILITY



Clear Expectations, Meaningful Feedback

- Academy courses are graded
  - Grade is based on effort, completion of in-class tasks, and regular attendance *(Academy is structured for students to receive an "A" if they maximize their potential and control the variables they have the ability to directly impact.*
- Students receive:
  - Regular feedback on skill mastery
  - Support to reflect on progress
  - Coaching around effort, habits, and growth
- Focus is on:
  - Mastery of essential standards
  - Growth over time
  - Building independence as learners

INSIDE THE ACADEMY - THE MORNING HUDDLE

How We Start Every Academy Day with Purpose

Morning Huddle is a daily, intentional opening routine that anchors every Academy class. It is a short, highly structured practice designed to prepare students, academically and mentally, for learning.

What Happens During Morning Huddle?

- Students engage in a consistent routine that includes:
  - A clear agenda and learning focus for the day
  - Explicit modeling of academic and executive functioning habits
  - Brief reflection, discussion, or skill practice tied to:
    - Organization
    - Goal setting
    - Self-monitoring
    - Perseverance and academic mindset

Teachers create a calm, focused, and predictable start to the day.

INSIDE THE ACADEMY - THE MORNING HUDDLE

Why Morning Huddle Matters

- Research shows students learn best when: (1) expectations are clear, (2) routines are predictable, (3) they feel connected and supported
- Morning Huddle:
  - Reduces anxiety and cognitive overload
  - Builds consistency and structure - especially important in middle school
  - Helps students transition into learning mode before the academic demands of the day begin
- It reinforces the habits students need not just in Academy, but in all classes, high school, college, and future careers

The Outcome

- Students arrive ready to learn
- Students understand *why* they are learning and *how* to be successful
- Over time, students internalize routines and strategies and begin using them independently

BEYOND THE ACADEMY - AFTER STATE TESTING



Post-Testing Enrichment & Connections

- After state testing, Academy students will have opportunities to:
  - Visit Los Alamitos High School
  - Learn about high school pathways and expectations
  - Build early college and career awareness
- Activities may include:
  - Campus visits
  - Guest speakers
  - Career exposure experiences
- ***Goal: Help students see themselves as successful future high school and college learners***

BEYOND THE ACADEMY - AFTER STATE TESTING





What's Next?

- Complete the Academy interest form
- No interviews required
- Academy courses begin: **January 20, 2026**

Students will notified if they were selected as early as December 19 - Beginning of January…

Once selected students and parents will complete an Academy Commitment Contract.

We're excited to partner with you to support your child's success in middle school, high school, and beyond.

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QUESTIONS