

**INNOVATION SCHOOL APPLICATION**  
*Amended*



**West Leadership Academy**  
**November 2011**

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## Overview

Colorado’s Innovation Schools Act is intended to improve student achievement by granting schools a “high degree of autonomy in implementing curriculum, making personnel decisions, organizing the school day, determining the most office use of resources, and generally organizing the delivery of high-quality educational services, thereby empowering each public school to tailor its services most effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of the population of students it services.”

That Act provides schools the opportunity for increased flexibility by providing a clear path to waive certain state statutes, district policies and union contract provisions that may otherwise inhibit a school’s ability to implement strategies and tactics that may produce significant gains in academic performance. For more information on the Innovation Schools Act of 2008, please visit: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdegen/SB130.htm>.

The following document is intended to serve two purposes. First, it is an application for schools to request innovation status from Denver Public School’s (“DPS”) Board of Education and the Colorado State Board of Education. Second, it is a planning guide to support the development of high-quality innovation school plans that will produce significant gains in academic achievement.

To facilitate the development of an organized, carefully planned, and comprehensive innovation application, schools should thoughtfully respond to each component of this application. Schools are also encouraged to be collaborative and transparent when creating their plans by providing staff and members of the broader community meaningful opportunities to engage in the development process.

Completed applications will be reviewed by the Office of School Reform and Innovation (“OSRI”) and an Application Review Team (“ART”). An ART is comprised of 6-10 members, each with expertise in a specific area of school development and management (e.g., teaching and learning, special education, budget, human resources, etc.). The review by OSRI and ART is intended to provide feedback to improve the quality of a plan before conducting a staff vote and before requesting innovation status from DPS’s Board of Education.

Schools that secure the necessary support from staff and their community can submit their innovation plan to DPS’s Board of Education for review. Plans that are approved by DPS are then forwarded to Colorado’s State Board of Education for final review.

Note that Appendix A of this application contains questions that must be answered by applicants who desire to secure district waivers in curriculum, assessments, and/or graduation and promotion policies.

Completed innovation school plans should be submitted to:  
Denver Public Schools  
Office of School Reform and Innovation  
Attention: Lauren Masters  
[Lauren\\_Masters@dpsk12.org](mailto:Lauren_Masters@dpsk12.org)  
900 Grant Street, Room 406  
Denver, CO 80203

## INTRODUCTION

**I. Provide your school's name, contact information, the date this application was submitted, and a brief overview of how the plan was developed.**

**School Name:** West Leadership Academy  
**School Leader:** Teresa Klava, Principal  
**Date of Application:** October 14, 2011

### **Overview:**

In the spring of 2010, Westside community leaders met with leaders of Denver Public Schools (DPS) to discuss the future of West High School. DPS had recently decided to phase out Montbello High School, located at the far northeast corner of Denver, while opening a new school as a part of its turnaround process. The Westside community watched this process and recognized the writing on the wall.

In recent years, West High School experienced declining student achievement and enrollment. In response, the community sought the district's attention in order to proactively address the school's issues. This led to the formation of West Denver Educational Equity Committee (WDEEC), a collaboration between district officials and school board members, designed to guide the future of West High School.

Committee discussions led to the decision to phase out West High School and phase in two new 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade schools co-located within the historic West High School building. The committee researched new academic programs it could use, which led them to College Board Schools and Generations Schools - two programs that had been successful in New York City that had shown strong academic achievement and increased graduation rates with diverse urban populations. These new schools were named West Leadership Academy and West Generations School.

Leaders for each school were evaluated through a process that included the WDEEC, the district, College Board and Generations schools. By the spring of 2011, leaders for both schools were chosen and given a year to develop their plans. The goal: to open both schools during the fall of 2012 with inaugural 6th and 9th grade classes. The existing West High program, now known as West Legacy School, would be phased out accepting only 10th, 11th and 12th grades starting in the fall of 2012.

This type of reform is unprecedented in Denver Public Schools. The community and district met thirty three times to co-create the vision of reform at West High School.

Based on community input, research, and precedent, the principal designed a program that would highlight leadership and college readiness. The College Board program was selected as the base for the West Leadership Academy curriculum due to its academic rigor and student support in their quest to be college ready.

The West Leadership Academy will co-locate with West Generations School and partner to create a schedule and internship program that is both relevant to its target population and financially feasible given its smaller school and class size.

The College Board Schools model is specifically designed to help middle school and high school students in low-income and underrepresented groups enter the pipeline to higher education.

A College Board School features:

- Small, personalized environments
- Extensive training and ongoing professional learning for teachers and other school professionals
- No screening of applicants
- An extended school day
- Advisory programs to support students' academic, social, and emotional development
- Instructional, collaborative leadership
- The use of College Board programs and services to drive academic rigor
- Fully integrated, cutting-edge technology

The culture of a College Board School:

- Fosters an environment of academic rigor with high expectations for all
- Encourages an all-encompassing commitment to learning
- Provides meaningful relationships
- Ensures challenging and engaging teaching and learning
- Reflects knowledgeable and caring relationships with students

Development of the Plan:

Principal Klava convened a steering committee as described in the chart below to provide direction in the development of the new school and innovation plans.

In addition to the steering committee, Principal Klava worked closely with the College Board organization to develop the curriculum and professional development structure. She also worked extensively with the planning team of West Generations School to create a school schedule and internship program.

As a new school, there are no current teachers, staff, administrators, no CSC, nor a parent body. The school principal, along with administrators at the current West High School and the planning team for West Leadership Academy, has done extensive outreach as outlined above, and has included educators, parents, and community members in the steering committee that has advised on the new school and innovation plan.

<b>Team Members</b>	<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>
<b>Primary Author-</b> Teresa Klava	Responsible for leading an inclusively diverse team to implement the vision of the WDEEC to create a College Board School at the West Campus in collaboration with the Generations School and West High School.
<b>Drafting Team-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judy Jaramillo, Consultant</li> <li>• Lauren Masters, OSRI</li> <li>• Coeylen Berry, Consultant/writer</li> </ul>	Advising, writing and consulting on the key components of the plan.
<b>Steering Committee-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mary G. Martinez Leece, Teacher Effectiveness Coach, DPS</li> <li>• Domic Martinez, Principal, West HS</li> <li>• Kathleen Iseberg, Tech Protech, Park Hill ES</li> <li>• Sheri Klem, Art Teacher, Valverde ES</li> <li>• Feliz Armijo, Parent, Library Pro Tech, WHS</li> <li>• Jeanette Martinez, parent</li> <li>• Matt Santistevan, PE teacher</li> </ul>	Steering Committee members reviewed the plan for consistency with community input and best practices research.
<b>College Board Schools-</b> Marlyn Lawrence, Implementation Manager, CB Schools Kathy Zamora, CB Schools Helen Santiago, Vice President, CB Schools	Guidance on planning and implementation of instructional and cultural structures as a College Board School
<b>Generations Schools West High School</b>	Collaboration regarding systemic structures and co-location strategies

# VISION AND MISSION

## VISION

The school vision is to provide a quality education and college preparation program that supports the development of culturally aware students who will become citizens with the tools to lead in the 21st century.

We will achieve this vision through the integration of strategic, purposeful instruction and service-learning experiences.

We will nurture the social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth of students so that they can surpass academic standards and become caring and socially conscious citizens who respect linguistic and cultural diversity. We will support student development through rigorous implementation of an Advisory Program, expert college counseling, and goal setting.

## MISSION

The mission of the West Leadership Academy is to empower students, through a purposeful pre-collegiate education, to be agents of positive change in an increasingly diverse and multicultural society.

### **West Leadership Academy will uphold the following core values:**

#### *Citizenship*

West Leadership Academy believes that students should engage in studying the world's cultural heritage through service learning opportunities, fostering a commitment to improve their local and global communities.

#### *Scholarship*

West Leadership Academy commits to prepare our students for success in post-secondary education and to become life-long learners that strive to reach their maximum potential.

#### *Integrity*

West Leadership Academy encourages students to be guided by the values of being truthful and ethical and to be accountable for their actions.

These three values reflect our school community's commitment to our mission and are grounded on the premise that our students will be future leaders who will influence their communities and the world at large.

## **ALIGNMENT OF WEST LEADERSHIP ACADEMY AND DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Denver Public Schools' mission is to provide all students the opportunity to achieve the knowledge and skills necessary to become contributing citizens in our society.

By providing the West Denver neighborhood and the greater DPS community a rigorous college preparatory school, West Leadership Academy will create a community of students who maintain high standards and strive to succeed in the college setting and beyond.

West Leadership Academy will provide the youth of the neighborhood with the knowledge and skills to become valuable, contributing citizens in our society. Our core beliefs along with our mission and vision align to DPS' mission, vision and core beliefs as articulated in the 2010 Denver Plan.

The West Leadership Academy has worked closely with the West Denver community to create a strategic vision and approach that is closely aligned with the needs of the community.

## **TARGET POPULATION**

West Leadership Academy is designed to serve the needs of the population of the west Denver metro area. This is a population that is 95% minorities, 90% Free and Reduced Lunch and 55%-65% English Language Learners. Historically they have had low graduation rates and relatively low achievement data. West Leadership Academy is designed to meet the needs of this target population.

## **SPECIFIC BARRIERS**

West High School and Manny Martinez Middle School are schools that are failing to successfully educate the majority of their student populations. Both schools fall into the low growth/low achievement quartile for the Colorado Growth Model and, currently, only 52% of West students are graduating from high school.

West Leadership Academy has a great opportunity to change the trajectory of hundreds of student's lives. The College Board curriculum offers programs that support to prepare for college from an early age. We begin assessing student performance during their middle school years to determine which skill areas students need to develop in order to succeed in high school and, eventually, in college. We know that students at Manny and West can and will excel when provided with the right opportunities and supports.

West Leadership Academy will be sharing a campus with West Generations School which is a new school that will be opening its doors at the same time as WLA. This co-location offers a unique opportunity for collaboration between these new schools. We have set up a strategic partnership with West Generations School which will allow us to share resources in area such as internships and specific staff, such as band, chorus, and athletics, while still offering a unique program. This partnership means that both schools will benefit from one another from an operational perspective but given our separate academic programs we will better be able to serve the diverse population of the West Denver neighborhood.

Given the unique setting in which West Leadership Academy will exist; we will need innovation status to overcome the current barriers to student success. Innovation status will allow WLA to implement longer school days and a longer school year, providing students with world-class instruction and programming that meets students where they are and supports them as they develop into life-long learners. Specifically, the current restrictions of the DPS system require that we ask for innovations in the following areas:



## **Program**

In order to implement the College Board program, West Leadership Academy will replace the DPS math curriculum with SpringBoard in grades 9-12 only (pending approval for the curriculum waiver by the CAO's office). Given the anticipated ELL population, West Leadership Academy believes the use of the DPS math curriculum in grades 6-8 will best meet the needs of our target student population. West Leadership Academy will not seek waivers in Language Arts, since SpringBoard is the curriculum DPS uses in this content area and is thus aligned with the College Board program. West Leadership Academy also believes the DPS approved curricula in science and social studies will meet the needs of its students.

## **Time**

In order to prepare students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and beyond, West Leadership Academy will offer an additional hour of instruction each day and an additional 10-20 days of instruction during its first three years of innovation. West Leadership Academy will contract with the Generations Schools network to design and manage teacher schedules. The Generations Schools network has a unique schedule that has been proven successful with the target population and will enable students to have more academic time while adhering to teacher contractual regulations. Furthermore, a unified schedule will allow for maximum collaboration between the co-located schools.

After three years, the West Leadership Academy leadership team will gather student performance data and input from students and stakeholders to determine whether or not we will implement the extended year for the next three years of our innovation cycle.

In order to support our students' college and career preparation, West Leadership Academy will offer an advising period each day. Finally, WLA will extend its daily schedule in order to provide robust opportunities for teacher collaboration, professional development, and planning to occur within the school day. We believe that providing additional time for student exploration and remediation of skills, in addition to teacher professional development, is critical to creating a learning-centered culture that is focused on increased achievement and student and teacher growth.

## **Budget**

Developing a sustainable school model that integrates the rigorous College Board curriculum requires that WLA use funding in a unique way. The support from the College Board organization, which includes extensive professional development and assistance with student assessment, will require significant funds. Additionally, WLA plans to develop a robust English Language Learning program and extensive opportunities for World Language Courses, which will require additional resources as well as professional development.

In order to meet this unique financial burden WLA will require innovation status to allow us to create a budget that meets our specific needs. During our first year of operations, WLA will conduct a thorough analysis of all services provided by DPS in order to determine whether or not the services support the WLA mission and vision. WLA may choose to fund those services directly in future years to ensure that the school receives the highest quality of service for the lowest cost, maximizing the impact of resources.

## **Professional Development**

As part of its partnership, College Board will provide West Leadership Academy intense professional development support to implement its program. West Leadership Academy will

need the maximum flexibility over its professional development to ensure staff and leadership participate in professional development opportunities that align with the unique West Leadership Academy education program. WLA believes that professional development should be an ongoing process that is embedded into every day practice. Teachers will participate in professional development as part of a cohort, which will be determined at the beginning of each school year. These cohorts will create a sense of community across the school and form networks and share best practices with one another and other College Board schools.

### **Hiring and Staffing**

The rigorous nature of the West Leadership Academy curriculum and vision requires a unique community of educators who are committed to the academic and social-emotional well being of every student. The educators hired must also be dedicated to making meaningful connections with parents and community. In order to maintain the integrity of the level of services and supports we expect to provide, we require the autonomy to hire outside of the established district cycles and processes, develop specialized roles and responsibilities, and dispute resolutions.

The DPS direct placement process does not allow our school to ensure that every staff member is reflective of our vision and mission. We request the flexibility to access the open market and hire as needed. Additionally, due to the unique structure of our program, we may choose to designate specialized duties or roles for teachers related to language or leadership abilities.

Teachers who meet NCLB highly qualified criteria will teach all core classes at West Leadership Academy. In addition, WLA will participate in LEAP in the 2012-2013 school year. Should the school determine that it wishes to propose a teacher evaluation system different than LEAP, the school will demonstrate that its plan is appropriate and superior to LEAP, meets the requirements of SB 191, and will seek approval from the District.

### **SCHOOL CULTURE**

The West Leadership Academy, as a College Board School, will create a positive culture that will support the social and emotional needs of its diverse population. Through innovation status, WLA will be able to establish and sustain a culture based on excellence and accessibility to the highly rigorous College Board curricula.

Specifically, we will create a culture that:

- Fosters an environment of academic rigor with high expectations
- Encourages an all-encompassing commitment to learning
- Provides meaningful relationships
- Ensures challenging and engaging teaching and learning
- Reflects knowledgeable and caring relationships with students

West Leadership Academy will establish a variety of systems to foster a positive school culture.

### **Advisory Groups**

All students will be part of an advisory group. Groups will meet frequently to support other students and check that they are on track. Advisors will help students develop a personalized plan to prepare for success in a post-secondary institution. The faculty advisor will ensure additional time will be given to support student's academic and emotional needs. The advisory

program will use the College Board Advisory Guides and College ED, College Board curriculums to guide the program.

Advisory sessions will focus on creating a safe and supportive environment for all students. The College Board program provides a guide to advisory sessions that cover issues such as “Creating a safe space” and “Conflict resolution.” Students will also be taught social skills such as “team building”, “time management” and “understanding stress.”

### **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports**

At WLA we will use PBIS as a school wide support system. This will create a positive learning environment for all students. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a framework or approach comprised of intervention practices and organizational systems for establishing the social culture, learning and teaching environment, and individual behavior supports needed to achieve academic and social success for all students. PBIS is not a specific “model” but a compilation of effective practices, interventions, and systems change strategies that have a long history of empirical support and development and individually have been demonstrated to be empirically effective. Decades of converging research have consistently demonstrated that these strategies are individually and collectively effective and efficient. In addition, PBIS has relevant applications to educating all students in schools, not just students with disabilities.

### **Morning Meetings**

Morning meetings will take place each day during first period. The purpose of the morning meeting will be to make sure all students are aware of any special activities throughout the day and to provide a forum for addressing any issues that face the community.

### **Common Grade Level Planning**

Teachers will participate in common grade level planning on a daily basis. This will enable teachers to share insights on students and ensure that all students are getting the best possible instruction for their level of study. The common grade level planning will be possible because of the extended school day and unique programming.

### **Summer Professional Development**

All teachers will participate in summer Professional Development that will be supported by the College Board Organization. This will serve as an opportunity to develop strong cultural norms as well as ensure that all teachers are comfortable and competent with all components of the College Board academic and structural culture.

### **On-going Professional Development**

West Leadership Academy will have on-going professional development model, which will allow teachers to work in cohorts and develop strong community within each grade level.

### **Student Leadership Opportunities**

Leadership is a central component of the WLA mission. WLA students will have a variety of opportunities to take on leadership roles both on and off campus. These opportunities include but are not limited to:

- Student lead advisories
- Student roles in school governance
- Intensive courses in leadership
- Student driven service learning
- Internships

### **Support for All Learners**

West Leadership Academy will create a culture based on equity and respect.

It will align policies and instructional assessment practices to serve the needs of English Language Learners, Special Education students and At-Risk students.

Our goal is to facilitate learning so that all students can master the challenges of a rigorous curriculum that will guide them to college entrance and success. Internships along with service learning experiences will also serve as an authentic opportunity for students to develop their skills as leadership both on campus and in their community.

## **EDUCATIONAL PLAN**

### **RESEARCH-BASED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW:**

West Leadership Academy is designed to provide quality education and college preparation to economically disadvantaged students in the West Denver community - to prepare them to become leaders in a multi-cultural society.

According to the education attainment profile of this community, it is evident that there are a large percentage of students that have dropped out and have not completed any formal education. For this reason we have selected two research based education programs, College Board and Generations Schools that have a track record of success with our target population.

The College Board program will provide a rigorous college preparatory academic, advisory and professional development programs that have proven successful with underserved populations similar to our target audience. The programs will support our students by providing rigorous standards with adequate support and opportunity to personalize the curriculum to ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed.

The Generation Schools network will provide scheduling and Intensives support based on the proven model from established schools in New York City. This model provides for an extended school day with more student – teacher contact time to help underperforming students increase achievement levels and thrive.

### **COLLEGE BOARD:**

Our intermediary partner, the College Board ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)), is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunities beyond. Each year, the College Board serves over three million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,500 colleges through major programs and services in college admissions, guidance, assessment, financial aid, enrollment, and teaching and learning.

College Board has demonstrated success with low-income and traditionally underserved populations. The current College Board schools have the following profile:

<b>Data Element</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
<b>Number of Schools</b>	<b>17</b>	
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>7,328</b>	
<b>Total Free and Reduced Lunch</b>	<b>5,514</b>	<b>75.2%</b>

An independent study by the American Institute of Research found the following:

“Students in CB Schools were more likely than matched comparison students to graduate, stay in the same school from sixth through eighth grade, and participate in AP Exams, SAT tests, and PSAT/NMSQT tests.

On the high school state assessment tests as well as on the AP Exams, treatment students [College Board students] appear to have outperformed the comparison students. Treatment students were more likely to pass the high school assessment tests with a 65 or higher. Similarly, statistically significantly more treatment students scored a 2 or higher on at least one AP Exam, relative to comparison students.”

Based on this study it is clear that the College Board program offers a program that will support West Leadership Academy to increase student achievement and graduation rates.

The SpringBoard program has also show success with low-income and traditionally underserved populations.

ACCORDING TO A COLLEGE BOARD STUDY:

→ Over a four-year period, high schools that purchased SpringBoard had a 109% and 52% gain in the number of black and Hispanic students, respectively, enrolled in AP courses. Students from high schools not purchasing SpringBoard had a 37% gain each for black and Hispanic students enrolled in AP courses.

→ Over the same four-year period, high schools that purchased SpringBoard had a 34% and 30% gain in the number of black and Hispanic students, respectively, scoring a 3 on at least one AP Exam. Students from high schools not purchasing SpringBoard had a 27% and 26% gain for black and Hispanic students, respectively, scoring a 3 on at least one AP Exam.

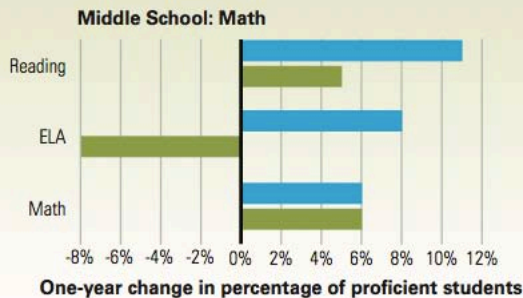
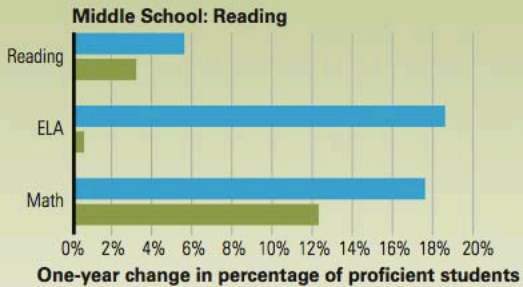
Schools with similar low-income demographics to West Leadership Academy have shown significant improvement in performance using SpringBoard. For example, the Orange County Public School Board (an area that has over 50% of students on Free and Reduced Lunch) began an initiative to build the district’s advanced studies program. The district’s goals were to increase diversity in Advanced Placement Program courses and to raise student achievement on the state’s FCAT measures overall. District leadership selected the SpringBoard program because of its alignment with rigorous standards and because its system of strategies is designed to move all students to higher levels of achievement. The results are as follows:



## THE RESULTS

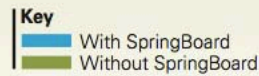
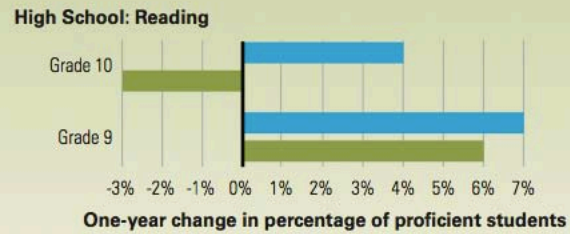
### Middle School

Greater gains in the percentage of students achieving proficiency in middle school reading and mathematics among students in SpringBoard schools than students in non-SpringBoard schools.



### High School

- ▶ Positive gains in grades 9 and 10 FCAT Reading scores among students in SpringBoard schools when compared with students in non-SpringBoard schools.
- ▶ Improvement in the percentage of students meeting state standards on grade 10 FCAT Writing at SpringBoard schools ranged from 4 percent to 14 percent and exceeded gains at non-SpringBoard schools.



Data provided by Orange County School Board and Florida Department of Education School Accountability Reports

College Board programs will be an integral part of the teaching and learning in the school. These programs/resources include Spring Board, the Advanced Placement program, PSAT/NMSQT, MyRoad and the SAT Readiness Program.

### SpringBoard®:

Written and field tested by teachers who understand the challenges of today's diverse classrooms. The SpringBoard program takes advantage of years of research in cognitive science to support the design of an instructional program in mathematics and English language arts that successfully engages all students in challenging learning experiences. The program succeeds based on the following strategies:

- Rigorous content, aligned to standards that builds knowledge and skills incrementally from sixth grade through twelfth grade in both English language arts and mathematics. The content is mapped to standards that prepare students, upon completion of the six-year sequence, with the level of knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for success in Advanced Placement Program® courses and college.
- Each lesson has numerous opportunities embedded to introduce, model, and then practice and evaluate the application of research-based strategies in reading, writing, oral proficiency, collaboration, and problem solving. The strategies can be revisited and practiced throughout the entire articulated sequence across the grade levels, and the teacher version of the instructional materials signals which strategic approaches might be most appropriate for the task at hand, given the amount of student preparation and differences in learning styles.
- The instructional materials are grounded in real-world situations and are designed to be engaging and interactive, offering students the opportunity to master knowledge and skills in

manageable steps, with tasks that require reading, writing, discussion, problem solving, collaboration, questioning, and elaboration.

- Standardized formative assessments with scoring rubrics are embedded in each lesson and, in addition, teachers have numerous opportunities to review student work, monitor student talk, and observe cognitive organization in action. Computer-based diagnostic assessments are available and can be used as is or can be customized by the teacher. The diagnostic assessment reports offer explanations for each incorrect response.

Teachers are trained in the use of the model instructional units and strategies at professional development institutes and workshops that are designed to exemplify the strategic learning framework diagramed above. The program provides 24-hour access to materials, exemplary student work, as well as coaching and mentoring through a supporting online system.

A well-developed professional development program supports the SpringBoard program. Teachers are introduced to the strategies during the professional development institutes and workshops. SpringBoard staff developers model instruction using a subset of the lessons and units contained in the SpringBoard materials. The units used in training are selected in order to provide teachers with exposure to the variety of strategies that are embedded throughout the six levels of SpringBoard. The training is based on the same principles of strategic learning that make the instructional program powerful in the classroom. Prior knowledge is activated as the strategies are explained and then modeled for the participants. Teachers are given an opportunity to practice using the strategies as a component of the lessons being used as illustrations, while the staff developers coach and offer feedback.

The subject matter of each unit is academically rigorous and challenging, yet students of all ability levels are able to engage with and then master the content successfully through the utilization of the various strategies offered by the program. Each of the SpringBoard strategies has been chosen from the most effective classroom practices that have been time-tested by educators in instructional situations. Many of the strategic approaches have been researched through empirical and experimental studies as well.

### **SpringBoard Math:**

In addition to the strategies in all of the areas above, SpringBoard offers teachers of mathematics particular assistance in the area of mathematical problem solving. Much of the research in this area makes reference to the seminal work of Polya (2004), whose book *How to Solve It* was published originally in 1945. Subsequent researchers and theorists have built upon the foundation proposed in his original work, but the four-step problem-solving process he proposed has remained recognizable throughout:

1. Read and understand the problem
2. Develop a strategy for solving the problem (a heuristic)
3. Carry out the strategy or plan. Show your work. Justify your answer.
4. Look back and check to see that the solution seems reasonable.

Step one is dependent on mathematical literacy in reading and comprehension—a justification for incorporating techniques for building proficiency in all aspects of language. Most of the problem-solving strategies that are offered by the SpringBoard program fit into steps two and three above. Researchers have studied the effect of teaching the problem-solving strategies to students and found significant improvements in their mathematical achievement (Collins, Brown, and Holum, 1991; Eshel and Kohavi, 2003; Ives and Hoy, 2003; King, 1991; Kroesbergen and Van Luit, 2003; Ostad, 1998; Pape, Bell, and Yetkin, 2003; Pugalee, 2004).

### **Advanced Placement Program:**

In addition to the SpringBoard Program, all West Leadership Academy students will be required to complete at least two Advanced Placement classes.

The Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) offers high school students the opportunity to take advanced-level course work while still in high school and to demonstrate proficiency by taking the corresponding end-of-course AP Examination. Numerous research studies have been conducted to inform various aspects of the AP Program throughout its history. One study about the role of AP teachers in helping minorities succeed by (Burton, Whitman Burgess, Yepes-Baraya, Cline, and Kim, 2002)<sup>1</sup> highlights the value of the program to the WLA target audience. They state that the AP programs can be used as a way of improving the standards for the entire high school curriculum. Many minority-dominant schools, are using AP classes to encourage students to consider college and to help them prepare for college.

Preparing students for college is central to the mission of West Leadership Academy and thus the AP program is very relevant to our target population.

### **MyRoad™:**

MyRoad™ is a Web-based tool that enables students to explore majors, careers and colleges. It can be used to support the advisory program. MyRoad also includes a personality profiler that identifies students' strengths, learning preferences, motivators and development opportunities, and helps counselors connect with students. Other features include profiles of more than 175 college majors, the latest information on more than 3,800 institutions (including 2,800 four-year colleges and universities), fascinating articles covering 450 careers, and an online magazine.

### **PSAT/NMSQT®:**

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®) is a program cosponsored by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Each year, millions of students worldwide take the PSAT/NMSQT to enter scholarship competitions, prepare for the SAT®, and gain access to valuable college and career planning tools. The test measures critical thinking skills that are important for college success and assesses three basic academic areas: critical reading, mathematics and writing skills.

### **SAT Readiness Program™:**

The SAT Readiness Program™ is the College Board's collection of online, print and professional development resources that help students get ready for the SAT and the SAT Subject Tests™.

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<sup>1</sup> Burton, N. W., Whitman Burgess, N., Yepes-Baraya, M., Cline, F., & Kim, R. M-i. (2002). *Minority student success: The role of teachers in Advanced Placement Program (AP) Courses*. (College Board Research Report No. 2002-8). New York: The College Board.



**Implementation of College Board Programs by Year and Grade**

Contract Year	Grade							
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
1								
2	SpringBoard Advisory			SpringBoard Advisory ReadiStep				
3	SpringBoard Advisory →			SpringBoard Advisory → ReadiStep →		PSAT/NMSQT		
4	SpringBoard Advisory →		ReadiStep →		PSAT/NMSQT →	AP Accuplacer SAT Readiness SAT →		
5	SpringBoard Advisory →		ReadiStep →		PSAT/NMSQT →	AP → Accuplacer → SAT Readiness → SAT →	SAT Subject Tests	

**GENERATIONS AND THE WEST LEADERSHIP ACADEMY MODEL**

By adopting the Generations School schedule and Intensives, WLA’s comprehensive model creates the opportunity – and expectation – for multi-dimensional and differentiated instruction that actively engages all students, including students with special needs or limited English proficiency. Our expanded day and year are organized to accomplish this by providing students with approximately 30% more learning time annually. The credit-rich model helps students stay on-track for on-time graduation. All students participate in Core Courses (Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science, World Language), Studio Courses (Academic Electives) as well as Advisory and Intensive Courses.

By having the majority of faculty serve strategic, dual roles – teaching Core Courses in the morning and a Studio Course later in the day – we can offer a much wider variety of courses than a conventional school of similar size.

Core Courses – daily

Studio Courses – every afternoon, A/B Schedule

Intensive Courses – twice per year, 4 weeks at a time

Advisories – daily

All students will take Math and Language Arts during two 75-minute Core Courses daily. Social Studies, Science and World Language will be 75 minute courses taught every other day. As a College Board School, WLA students will be required to take at least two Advanced Placement courses which will be a part of our instructional program. These year-long courses will prepare all students for the CSAP, AP testing, college entrance exams, and success in college and beyond.

Core Courses will be taught by a team of up to five teachers, depending upon the number of students per grade level. We will recruit and train teachers for this highest priority role first and foremost. By focusing the vast majority of our teachers on teaching these core skills – in an “all hands on deck” mindset – the classes will average between 18 and 22 students at full school enrollment.

With increased time focused on far fewer students, all Core teachers will be able to customize instruction substantially. Focused small-group settings will enable teachers to know their students well and attend to individual learning needs and modalities. Students can build positive relationships over time with caring adults who will be dedicated to their success, and who help them set and maintain high expectations. The Core Course teams will include experts in the content area, and in special needs or ELL instruction, based on class group composition.

Every student will also attend three 75-minute Studio Courses daily. These include additional required core courses, mandated services and electives from arts and music, languages and fitness. Studio courses also include advanced sciences and technology, remediation, enrichment, credit recovery and counseling. For scores of students nationwide, youth development and enrichment programs are exactly what motivate them to stay in school.

Studio Courses will be scheduled per trimester and meet daily, or on an A-Day/B-Day alternating schedule, depending on the course. This will allow students to take many types of courses each year; it will also enable the staff to plan courses that adapt to students’ needs and interests. As the school year unfolds, the faculty will review student data during each trimester to determine which courses will best meet student needs.

Studio Courses will usually be larger than Core Courses, with approximately 22-32 students, and will offer a chance for middle-school students to spread their wings on the path to discovery while closing content gaps in time for ninth grade. For high school students, Studios offer an

opportunity to fill-in learning gaps and recover incomplete credits while exploring interests and preparing for college and career paths.

Intensive courses provide students the opportunity to experiment as they begin to create an identity in the arts, wellness, and academic content areas. Some courses, such as *Blog Production*, provide accelerated students the 21st century skills to integrate graphic design and persuasive writing with engaging subjects, preparing them for college, employment and the world beyond. Through college partnerships, dual credit courses can also be accessed either on or off campus as well as honors/AP courses on campus.

*Advisory Groups* will ensure that all students are known well through an enduring relationship with a key adult. Advisors help students navigate peer relationships and remain future focused. An all-hands-on-deck approach keeps advisories at 8-10 students. Advisories meet twice daily five minute Morning Meetings set a positive tone for the day while 25-minute mid-day sessions enable Advisories to re-connect. Longer advisory sessions are scheduled throughout the year. The College Board Advisory Guides materials will provide the base for our curricula and training.

Innovation status will enable West Leadership Academy to design a program that expands the school day and school year to provide for rich academic, linguistic, intervention, and enrichment opportunities for all students. By sharing the Generations Schools schedule, our campus will be in alignment, therefore providing a consistent school day and school year which will add to the value of a unified and equitable West Campus learning environment.

## LEADERSHIP AT WLA

At WLA, our goal will be to provide strong leadership and language building opportunities.

Negotiating, communicating, facilitating, debating, problem solving, project managing, innovating, and budgeting are all essential workplace (and societal) skills that require people to read, write, speak and listen successfully, to utilize math skills and principles successfully, and to evaluate, synthesize and organize information successfully. These skills are essential to most well-paid professions. In addition, these skills are precisely the type of skills needed to address most of the world's challenges.

Through the Intensive courses students will participate in activities such as service learning projects, designed to enhance their understanding of the real world in order to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills, so they may become productive members of society. These courses along with on-campus leadership opportunities will provide students with authentic experiences to develop as leaders. We will involve community partners in the daily activities of our school in the following areas:

- Academic – We will partner with local universities – such as University of Colorado and the Community College of Denver – to ensure that our students are exposed to different college campuses, faculty, and student bodies of institutions of higher education to help them prepare for college,
- Private Sector businesses – such as the JP Morgan chase West Community Partners – to provide ample opportunity for students to participate in mentoring and internship programs.

- Government and non-profit organizations – such as Challenge Denver and the Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition – to ensure that students understand how their school’s theme can be used to initiate positive change and be informed about the world’s cultural heritage

## **CLASS SIZE AND STRUCTURE**

West Leadership Academy will share with Generations Schools the structure of the school day while implementing the College Board education program. Our school plan is organized on every level to maximize teaching effectiveness and student engagement. Our theory of action is driven by our recognition that student achievement will improve dramatically when effective teachers are able to focus more time with fewer students, pursuing instruction that is relevant to students. WLA is designed to provide a safe, rigorous, customized and future-focused educational environment for middle and high school students. Without increasing public school costs, the WLA and West Generation School will work together to:

- Expand learning time for all students without increasing the teacher work year through creative scheduling.
- Reduce core class size by 30-50% for all students,
- Transform college- and career-readiness expectations, continuously linking learning to life for all students,
- Create substantial blended-learning opportunities that leverage emerging technologies,
- Greatly increase common planning and training time for teachers, and
- Provide the ideal infrastructure for new-teacher residencies and master-teacher mentoring.

## **SUPPORT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

The core values of West Leadership Academy are designed to address the needs of all students. We worked closely with the community to develop an academic plan that meets the needs expressed by the community. The new feeder pattern reflects a high population of ELA students that will potentially be attending WLA. The needs of the students will be met through an intentional, purposeful ELA program that values students’ native language.

As part of the registration process, all students’ parents/guardians will complete a Home Language Questionnaire to identify those whose Primary or Home Language is Other Than English. If the parent/guardian indicates on the form that the student speaks/understands a language other than English, the student will be tested on the CELA Placement Test within ten days of enrolling at WLA. The parent/guardian will promptly be notified of the test results. If the student qualifies for ELA services, he or she will receive 75 minutes of direct ELD instruction each day during the studio course time and the ELA staff will closely monitor his or her progress. During the ELD block, students will use the approved district curriculum Shining Star. WLA will seek to pilot the Edge curriculum as it becomes available. The parents/guardians of qualifying students will have the opportunity to decline participation for their student in receiving ELA services.

West Leadership Academy's Instructional Services Advisory Team (ISAT) made up of an administrator, an ELA teacher representative from each Core Course, as well as a representative from the Studio Courses, that will monitor ELD (English Language Development) at the school to ensure placement, monitoring, classifying and exiting of ELL students.

Key staff members will be available to families that speak Spanish and will be communicating verbally and in writing with all Spanish-speaking families in their native language. Families that speak languages other than English or Spanish will receive communication in their native language verbally via translators or in written documents that have been translated into their native language. WLA will utilize services provided DPS to fulfill these translation and interpretation needs.

West Leadership Academy will use the CELA Pro and Spring CELA results as one indicator (for Speaking, Reading, Writing and Listening) to consider when judging the effectiveness of instruction for our ELL students. In addition to CELA data, student progress will be monitored through Interim Assessments, DRA and EDL data, writing samples and reading scores. We plan to research appropriate ELA researched based data tools to progress monitor.

Students will be exited from ELL services using the criteria set by DPS policy. The school ISAT will collaborate to make decisions about the student's education plan. This group will consider a body of evidence, including the previously mentioned formal assessments, reading scores and writing samples.

Once exited from ELL services, we will continue to formally monitor the student for two years. During this time, the school ISAT will document student academic performance using the ELA monitoring form. If at any time, the student is found to be struggling, the ISAT may request that the student be returned to ELA program services. Though students may be exited from ELA monitoring, students will continue to have Spanish Language instruction through Heritage Spanish as offered through World Language Courses to become biliterate.

WLA will work with the Bueno Center at the University of Colorado to adapt Literacy Squared Strategies to offer an expanded TNLI program by encouraging bi-literacy for English Language Learners and encouraging oral language development of all our students, leading to stronger literacy skills. This program is implemented in all grades in both ELA S and ELA E classrooms. The Literacy Squared Intervention is a project led by Dr. Kathy Escamilla and is both research-based and research-tested through the University of Colorado at Boulder, BUENO Center. Its conceptual framework supports new theory about literacy instruction for bilingual children (Bernhardt, 2003; Grant & Wong 2003.) Literacy Squared has worked predominately with elementary grades, we will be working directly with Dr. Escamilla and her team to adapt the strategies for secondary grades.

West Leadership Academy will embrace excellence in teaching and learning, bi-literacy and 21st century skills. There are also specific benefits to students related to their native language as detailed in the following chart:

The Denver Plan stresses the importance of a strong curriculum for English Language Learners. We believe that the implementation of robust ELA instruction in combination with a strong Heritage Spanish Program utilizing adapted Literacy Squared strategies aligns with and exceeds the high expectations outlined in the Denver Plan.

The Denver Plan provides for native language instruction through an early exit approach, thus students may not reach high levels of proficiency needed for literacy and content in Spanish. This causes lower levels of English acquisition as students don't have the chance to fully develop language or literacy skills in Spanish that can be effectively transferred into English. Therefore, students may struggle with both literacy and academic content at higher grade levels once they have been "transitioned" into all English programs due to the need for more sophisticated language found in content area texts.

The West Leadership Academy's ELA instruction along with Heritage Spanish will allow English Language Learners to become proficient in both languages.

<b>Native Spanish Speakers</b>
Students acquire strong literacy skills in Spanish which can then be applied to the acquisition of English literacy.
Students make better progress in acquiring full proficiency in English versus standard English Language Literacy (ELL) and Native Language Literacy (NLL) programs.
Students achieve at grade-appropriate levels in all domains of academic study in both Spanish and English.
Students fully develop proficiency in their native language which allows maintenance of communication ties with extended family and other social support networks.

West Leadership Academy will assess Spanish speakers in both languages in order to evaluate the language development of the whole child. Using various assessment instruments, we will plan lessons that ensure students are receiving instruction in both languages at their zone of proximal development. Our purpose is for students to become bi-literate better, not faster, while making explicit cross-language connections. The implementation of the Literacy Squared Intervention Strategies listed below would be an integral part of the WLA language delivery model. Literacy Squared consists of four instructional components:

1. **Spanish Literacy-** Students receive daily Spanish literacy instruction in all grades. Teachers implement strategies and techniques that are specific to the

Spanish language and not methods that have been developed in English and translated into Spanish. This will be taught during the Heritage Spanish courses.

2. **Literacy Based ESL-** Students receive formal English literacy instruction. We will assess students to know what they have mastered in Spanish literacy and, therefore, can begin to learn in English. For example, students reading at EDL-6 levels 40, have mastered early literacy skills. They should be held accountable for those skills in English by using texts at a slightly lower level (DRA 30-38). Students will gradually move up the scaffold, developing parallel literacy skills and strategies.
3. **Oral Language Development with a focus on Oracy-** This is a component of Literacy Based ESL and teaches the oral language skills and strategies necessary for a child to become literate in English. These lessons will provide students an opportunity to rehearse language structures and expand their oral language skills.
4. **Explicit Attention to Cross-Language Connections-** Teachers will make explicit cross-language connections for students so they can understand the similarities and differences between Spanish and English.

All instructional strategies of the WLA ELA program that incorporate the adapted Literacy Squared Intervention Strategies will be focused on the improvement of reading and writing scores in Spanish and English, and are aligned with the Denver Plan. We will track students' data on a regular basis to monitor where students are reading in the Bi-literacy Zone as measured by the DRA2 and EDL2 for middle school students. Together with the BUENO Center we will determine appropriate monitoring tools for older students. Reading instruction is designed and targeted for students based on how they are performing in both languages. In addition, at least one professional development session every year will be led by the University, focusing on the analysis of our students' writing in Spanish and English and the implications for instruction. Grade levels will conduct monthly writing prompts to track students' progress in writing. The CU Boulder Literacy Squared Intervention Team will assist WLA in the collection and analysis of our students' data in reading and writing yearly and over time. This data is used to evaluate the success of our proposed goals. Professional developments will be designed based on student data, classroom observations and needs identified by the team while working in our schools

West Leadership Academy teachers will be trained in ELA instruction through the approved district model. WLA will offer additional professional development and support to ensure that all teachers are prepared to work with English Language Learners. Additionally, we will establish a purposeful schedule that allows us to meet the needs of our English Language Learners which will include a data driven English Language Development block integrated into the Springboard Literacy Instruction.



WLA will specifically seek out and give priority when equally qualified teachers have ELA training through the district or through university degree programs. In addition, Math, Science and Technology teachers will be given the opportunity get a Master's degree with a Linguistically Different Endorsement through the BUENO Center at the University of Colorado. WLA will also encourage the entire faculty to become ELA certified within three years.

## **Response to Intervention**

West Leadership Academy will provide a robust program for serving special education students. WLA will implement Response to Intervention (RtI) to meet the needs of all students. RtI will be one of the key processes that drive access to special education services at WLA with the goal that every student will be given the attention they need to succeed. The purpose of RtI is to limit or prevent academic failure for students who are having difficulty learning by providing "scientific research-based interventions" to bring students up to grade level achievement as well as to identify G&T students so they can achieve to their potential.

Although there is no single RtI model, the many variations that are emerging use a two-to-five tiered model. Each tier provides increasingly individualized instruction, continuous monitoring of progress to calculate gains, and criteria for changing interventions and/or tiers through a regularly-scheduled, and systematic team decision-making process. WLA will use a three-tiered system as follows and will follow CDE's school and classroom rubrics to support implementation:

- Tier I - high quality instruction, regular assessment and behavioral supports provided in general education classrooms
- Tier II - small group instruction, intensive specialized interventions provided with consistency by highly trained teachers which includes progress monitoring and assessments presented at students' instructional levels to measure growth towards benchmarks
- Tier III - individualized intervention by specialists and/or referral for special education or gifted programs.

## **SERVING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

### **Identification of SPED Students:**

WLA will follow all district guidelines in working with the needs of students with mild, moderate and severe disabilities, offering students a continuum of services in the least restrictive environment.

For students who do not progress adequately in Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions of the RTI process, DPS special education evaluation protocols will be followed. The Student Intervention Team must have collected a sufficient amount of evidence and attempted a sufficient number of interventions to justify referring a student for a special education evaluation. If the amount of data and the number and variety of failed interventions is sufficient, the special education team will obtain signed permission from the parent. Once granted permission the special education team will evaluate the student to determine whether or not the lack of academic progress is related to a disability and to identify intensive interventions for an IEP.



Parents may also request a referral for their student to be assisted by the RTI process. Any time a parent requests an evaluation for special education the IEP team will move forward with the referral and initial evaluation process. When a parental request is made, the RTI facilitator will contact the family and inform them of the RTI process, its purpose, and the levels of intervention. The student will enter the RTI process at Tier 1. The SIT will identify learning challenges via assessment and observation, interventions will be put in, and evidence will be gathered to determine the student's needs and level of support required.

For students identified as both ELL and SPED, the WLA team will work with the Multilingual Assessment Services Team (MAST) from DPS to ensure students receive adequate services.

### **Research-Based Instructional Programs**

Students with IEPs will benefit from the high-quality instruction, rigorous learning environment, small group instruction and individualized support that will be in place for all students at West Leadership Academy. In addition, students at WLA will receive over 20% more instructional time than students in traditional public middle schools in Colorado.

WLA will use the combination model for special education service delivery. Specifically, WLA will be responsible for providing special education instruction according to the individualized education programs (IEPs) for each student with a disability enrolled at WLA. All students on IEPs will receive specially designed instruction based on need as described in their IEP.

WLA will deliver special education instruction primarily within the regular classroom through placing a SPED qualified teacher on each Foundation's Course team that includes students with IEPs, and will provide "pull-out" services as required by student IEPs as needed during Studio Courses. Within this framework, WLA will provide all necessary accommodations and instructional/curricular modifications as required by student IEPs. WLA recognizes that all students will not thrive in an inclusion program and therefore, we will offer a continuum of services based on student need.

The special education plan for each student will be aligned with the school's curriculum for math, social studies, science, language arts and electives. Content and skills will be scaffolded based on pre-assessments that determine students' background knowledge and skills. All students will be placed at their appropriate learning level and will access content and skills that are sufficiently rigorous but not so challenging as to be unreasonable. Students will be allowed to progress at their own pace. Even though the district curricula has pacing guides what WLA will use as guidelines, some students may need more time to achieve proficiency for particular standards while other students may need less time. It is our intention to allow the students to move at a self-determined pace based on performance and demonstration of proficiency. Struggling learners will get the additional time that they need to acquire skills and knowledge while students who have already demonstrated proficiency will be able to move forward.

When needed, students will be taught using district approved research based intervention curriculum such as Language! or Wilson for reading and writing and Navigator for math.

Intervention curriculum will be taught during either the Foundation course or a specific studio course taught by the Special Education teacher.

West Leadership Academy acknowledges and understands that the special education director of the District is responsible for assuring that all special education students attending WLA receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) under the IDEA and the ECEA.

WLA will continue to host the Multi-intensive program that is based on the West Campus.

### **Evaluation of Student Progress**

The special education teacher will monitor progress of students weekly, keeping a record of all time spent and interactions with student, classroom teachers and parents in relation to specifications in IEPs. The special education teacher will organize and run all IEP meetings in conjunction with the family, an administrator or representative, and classroom teachers and other personnel as needed.

Case managers will report out to families on their students' progress related to their IEPs three times a year (when progress reports are sent out).

### **Graduation Requirements for Special Needs Learners:**

WLA will follow DPS policy related to graduation requirements: "Students with severe and profound disabling conditions that interfere with their ability to meet the requirements for either of the above courses of study (referring to DPS graduation requirements) and have satisfied the requirements of an Individualized Education Program shall graduate with a high school diploma".

### **Special Education Teacher Qualifications**

Because WLA is responsible for special education instruction to support students with IEPs, WLA acknowledges and understands that it is not exempt from special education credentialing requirements under the IDEA and the ECEA. WLA will hire special education teachers possessing a Colorado teacher's license with appropriate endorsements as well as supporting all teachers in receiving additional training in SPED.

### **Professional Development for SPED**

The professional development offered to all WLA teachers, including the special education teacher, will include intervention and support strategies that allow teachers to best meet the needs of special education students.

### **Gifted and Talented Students**

West Leadership Academy serve our Gifted and Talented students by ensuring that all students have the opportunity to successfully transition to post secondary educational opportunities and achieve their maximum potential. WLA recognizes that academically gifted students will require a different learning climate and/or an accelerated curriculum. These students learn at a faster rate, with greater depth and intensity, and require a more stimulating curriculum than is often presented in traditional schools.

### **Identification of Gifted and Talented Students**

West Leadership Academy's identified Gifted and Talented teacher representative will work with the GT department at DPS to deliver the screenings for GT identification. Circles tests, Ravens tests and creativity assessments; such as the Circles/Lines, Humor and Divergent Thinking tools, will be administered to students.

When students at WLA are identified as gifted through assessments, WLA will provide these learners with grouping and scheduling that meets their needs by grouping them with other G&T students in Core Courses, utilizing Studio Courses for AP honors or dual credit courses and designing other individual options to meet student needs through ALP planning.

### **Research-Based GT Programs**

West Leadership Academy's RTI model will also include working with students identified as GT. Through inquiry-based learning and student-centered classrooms, WLA will encourage creativity and divergent thinking amongst its students. The school's culture will place an emphasis on fostering creative thinking, high levels of achievement, and embracing challenges.

Specific instructional programs, practices and strategies that West Leadership Academy will employ to build and enhance the abilities of GT students include:

- Strategic grouping of students for instruction
- We will offer enrichment in math, science, literacy or social studies during the extended day and during intensives.
- Accelerated, student-paced learning within a content area or across grade levels.
- DPS GT-sponsored special programs including Destination Imagination, Shakespeare Festival, The Young Author's Conference, Spelling/Semantics Bee, Brain Bowl, Robotics, Mathletics, etc.

### **Assessment of Progress for G&T Students**

Students who are identified as GT or above will have Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs) in place. These will list strength areas and areas to work on each year. The GT teacher will screen students once a year in accordance with district guidelines. CSAP scores and other approved assessments will be added to a student's data portfolio throughout their time at West Leadership Academy.

### **GT Professional Development**

Professional Development will be offered through SpringBoard to help teachers differentiate for advanced and accelerated learners utilizing the SpringBoard curriculum that leads to Advanced Placement opportunities.

Additionally, with the support of the GT department of DPS, all teachers will be trained to support students on an Advanced Learning Plan. As needed we will hire a GT specialist to support any additional needs of the GT students.

The effectiveness of the Gifted and Talented program at WLA will be evaluated on a bi-annual basis. With support from the GT Department at DPS, West Leadership Academy will create an evaluation tool that incorporates student and parental feedback to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our gifted learners. Adjustments to the program will be made based on stakeholder input and data gathered in the evaluation process.

## ASSESSMENT

West Leadership Academy will use the standard DPS assessments along with College Board specific assessments. Formative assessment will occur on an ongoing basis so that students will have a clear idea of how they are performing and what additional supports they will need to succeed.

Starting in eighth grade, students will begin the Readiness assessment program, a flexible, low-stakes, low-cost assessment that provides early feedback, and helps put students on an early path to college success. Developed by College Board professionals in partnership with middle school teachers and other education experts, Readiness helps identify the skills students need to develop, and identifies students who are ready for more challenging course work.

Readiness is the first step on the College Board College Readiness Pathway, an integrated assessment system that includes the PSAT/NMSQT and SAT. Designed to work together, the three feedback tools will help educators identify and close achievement gaps from middle school through high school to ensure that all of our students graduate ready for the rigors of college.

In addition to Readiness and the PSAT/SAT progression, all West Leadership Academy students will be required to take at least two AP courses and complete the corresponding summative assessments. AP Exams are rigorous, multiple-component tests that are administered at high schools each May. High school students can earn college credit, placement, or both for qualifying AP Exam scores. Each AP Exam has a corresponding AP course and provides a standardized measure of what students have learned in the AP classroom.

For more information on the Assessment schedule, see the College Board curriculum overview in the “Research Based Curriculum” section.

### **Measuring Academic Progress**

When students enroll at West Leadership Academy, they will take a benchmarking assessment to determine their academic level when they enroll at the school. Throughout the 7 years that students attend WLA, they will participate in a SpringBoard Advisory (outlined in the culture section) which will track their progress and ensure their success. Each student will take the formative assessments that are part of the Springboard curriculum.

In eighth grade, students will begin the ReadStep assessment program outlined in the previous section.

In eleventh grade, students will begin taking the ACCUPLACER test. The purpose of ACCUPLACER tests is to provide students and teachers with useful information about students' academic skills in math, English, and reading. Academic advisors will use the results of the assessment, in conjunction with student academic background, goals, and interests, to determine course selection.

### **Data Analysis and Collection Systems**

West Leadership Academy will collect student academic achievement data on an ongoing basis. In addition to the College Board specific assessments outlined above, teachers will collect data from unit assessments, district benchmark assessments and other standardized tests such as the CSAP. Data Teams will analyze the data from daily quizzes, exit tickets, informal observations and end of unit tests on a weekly basis during the daily extended planning time to monitor student progress.. Teachers will look at data in grade level teams, as well as in vertically integrated teams.

Data analysis will be used to adjust instructional methods to ensure that they are meeting the direct needs of the students. If a student is underperforming in a given subject, teaching teams will work to create a specific intervention plan that is appropriate for that student. If an entire class of students is underperforming, West Leadership Academy will provide support in the form of additional professional development or teacher evaluation to create a plan to improve instruction.

At a school level, the faculty will convene each quarter to engage in a self-assessment utilizing the ISSN school design framework. West Leadership Academy educators will convene for a two day retreat in June of each year to analyze the summative school evaluation conducted by ISSN as well as our annual SPF results and to refine our UIP as needed. The updated UIP will be presented to the WLA SGB in June of each year.

West Leadership Academy will use the DPS Infinite Campus to track student performance on both formative and summative assessments. A primary focus of West Leadership Academy's instructional practice will be ensuring that students are required to demonstrate mastery before moving on to new content. Thus, collecting diagnostic and formative data occurs on a daily basis. Analysis of these two data points occurs on a weekly cycle in two venues.

Formative assessment of each student's Graduate Portfolio will occur twice annually through student-led conferences with the student, parent, and advisor. Each students' advisor will have the responsibility of monitoring student progress toward completion of their Graduation Portfolio. Summative assessments of Graduation Portfolios will occur during jury reviews annually in late May and/or early June.

Formative and summative (CSAP) data will be collected and analyzed on the current DPS cycle. We will follow the DPS assessment calendar.

## GRADUATION AND PROMOTION POLICIES

Students at WLA will follow all DPS graduation and promotion policies.

In addition, West Leadership Academy will require that all students participate in at least two Advanced Placement courses and complete a Graduation Portfolio. We will ensure that all students meet these requirements by using a longer school day which will allow for more contact time with teachers and students, by hiring very qualified teachers, and by working with students from the first day of 6th grade to ensure that they are prepared for rigorous, college level work by the time they reach their final years of high school.

### **COMMUNICATION TO PARENTS**

The West Leadership Academy promotion and graduation requirements will be available for parents and students on the WLA website. New families who are considering WLA as an option for their student(s) will have opportunities to discuss the graduation and promotion criteria with WLA faculty and administration during a series of community open houses to be held from November through February each year.

Once students are enrolled at West Leadership Academy parents will be able to track their progress toward graduation through our Infinite Campus portal.

### **Credit Recovery**

In addition to DPS Policies and Procedures on credit recover, WLA will offer the following strategies to help students at risk of dropping out or not meeting graduation criteria:

- Intensive courses dedicated to credit recovery to help students back on track. This means that students will have two opportunities every school year to take an intensive in any area where they have fallen behind.
- Longer school day and school year will provide extra time during the school day and year to provide extra services for those falling behind. The WLA curriculum is designed such that a student on the standard path to graduation should have completed nearly all of their required credits by the end of their sophomore year. This will mean that students who have fallen behind will have a full two years to catch up.

### **Concurrent Enrollment**

WLA is currently in discussions with Community College of Denver to create a concurrent enrollment program for students wishing to receive college credits while at West Leadership Academy.

## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GOALS AND GAINS

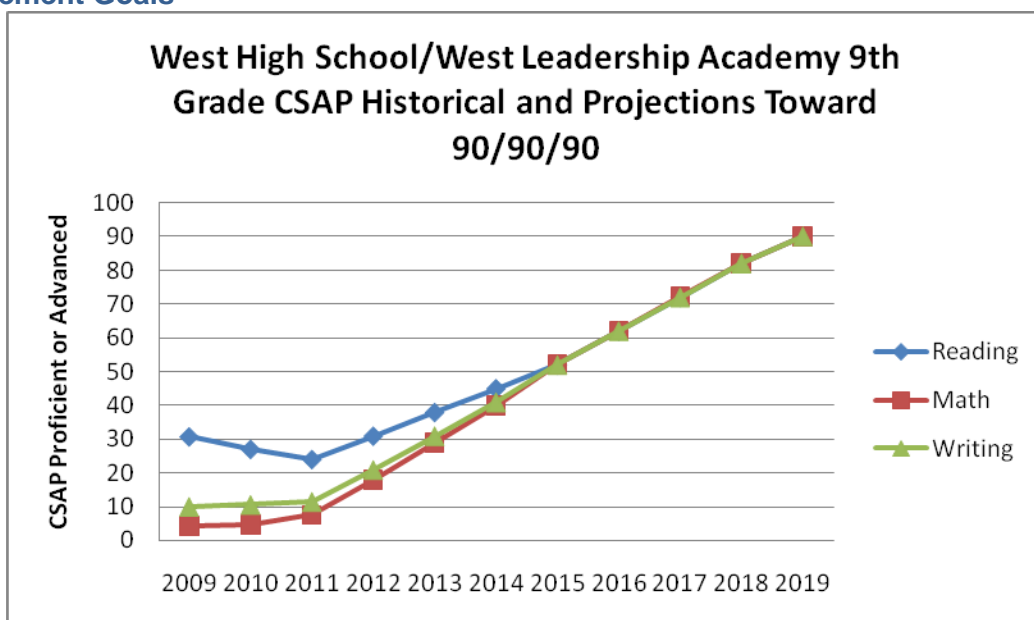
West Leadership Academy will seek to exceed district standards for academic performance. The West Neighborhood has a history of low performance but WLA plans to set high performance goals to insure that all students achieve at their greatest potential.

For a complete list of Academic Achievement Goals and Gains please see Appendix D.

### Continuous Improvement

WLA’s achievement goals will be the foundation for future school performance and improvement plans that will be developed in accordance with state and district requirements. Progress toward goals will be reviewed quarterly by the School Leadership Committee and specific actions will be determined by the school to ensure continuous improvement. Implementation of improvement plans and impact of actions on student achievement will be part of the quarterly SLC conversations. A Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) will be developed by the school in future years.

### Achievement Goals



	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Reading	30.8	27.1	24.1	31	38	45	52	62	72	82	90
Math	4.2	4.7	7.5	18	29	40	52	62	72	82	90
Writing	10.1	10.7	11.6	21	31	41	52	62	72	82	90

DPS School Performance Framework Indicators	Innovation School Annual Achievement Goals and Measures
<i>Academic Performance &amp; Success</i>	
<b>Student Growth Over Time Toward State Standards</b> , including the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CSAP and other assessments chosen, including assessments in compliance with the Colorado Basic Literacy Act</li> </ul>	By 2016 Students enrolled continuously for more than one academic year, will have growth percentiles exceeding the 65th percentile, in math, reading and writing.



<p><b>Student Achievement Level/Status</b>, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSAP and other assessments chosen, including assessments in compliance with the Colorado Basic Literacy Act</li> <li>• Colorado English Language Assessment (CELA)</li> <li>• Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)</li> <li>• Achievement gaps (FRL, ELL, Special Education, and ethnic subgroups)</li> </ul>	<p>85% of students will complete between 1 and 2 years of credits toward graduation annually. This goal will be re-evaluated annually to increase the bar</p> <p>Move 15% of students in the unsatisfactory category to the partially proficient and 15% of students from the partially proficient to the proficient category in year one and re-establish goal after initial baselines are established</p> <p>Increase the number of students who score proficient or advanced on the CSAP by 7% annually in math, reading, and writing, with the ultimate goal of reaching 90% proficient or advanced by 2019</p> <p>85% of all ELL students will move one level of proficiency annually on the Colorado English Language Assessment (CELA).</p> <p>West Leadership Academy will demonstrate a consistent trend to annually reduce the gap by 10% between performance of white and minority students and decrease the gap by 10% in the Median Student Growth Percentile among ELL and SPED students to non ELL and SPED students as measured by the Colorado Growth Model. The reduction will come as a result of larger Median Growth Percentiles for ELL and SPED students, and not a decrease MGP for non ELL and SPED students.)</p>
<p><b>Post-Secondary Readiness</b> (for high schools), including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colorado ACT scores</li> <li>• Graduation rate</li> <li>• College acceptance rate</li> </ul>	<p>Will establish a baseline and track student progress toward strong college acceptance scores on the ACT (20-30) and/or SAT (500-600) exams. These tests are key components of the College Board program and we will strive to continually increase performance in these areas. Once a baseline is determined we will set rigorous goals for improvement.</p> <p>10% above district average by 2016 (Our first</p>



	<p>graduating class) Drops to half of current rate in five years or 5.09%</p> <p>Post-secondary enrollment target of 75%+ by 2016 (Our first graduating class)</p>
<p><b>Student Engagement</b>, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance rate</li> <li>• Student satisfaction</li> </ul>	<p>Maintain 90% average attendance for year one and re-evaluate annually</p>
<p><b>School-Specific Educational Objectives</b> (must be based on <i>valid, reliable</i> measures)</p>	
<p><b><i>Organizational &amp; Financial Viability</i></b></p>	
<p><b>School Demand</b>, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment rate</li> <li>• Re-enrollment rate</li> <li>• Continuous enrollment rate</li> </ul>	<p>Student enrollment rate will be 90% + of the projected enrollment described in the application with a re-enrollment rate of 85% or higher</p>
<p><b>Financial</b> Fundraising goals Reserves Other</p>	<p>West Leadership Academy will operate in a fiscally conservative manner and be a good steward of public funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual budgets will show an effective allocation of financial resources and are balanced budgets submitted to DPS.</li> <li>• Annual audits show that MIS meets or exceeds professional accounting standards.</li> </ul> <p>All fundraising efforts will be led by the school's PTSA in a direct giving campaign.</p>
<p><b>Leadership &amp; Governance Quality</b></p>	<p>90% of staff will be satisfied with the school's leadership and working environment.</p>
<p><b>Parent &amp; Community Engagement</b>, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent satisfaction</li> <li>• Parent response rate on DPS Parent Satisfaction Survey</li> </ul>	<p>Will establish baselines for both and then seek to implement specific measures to increase satisfaction</p>

<b>School-Specific Organizational Objectives</b>	<p>90% of all students and staff at WLA will participate in least three days of service learning each school year.</p> <p>90% of staff will make home visits</p>
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### **Actions Taken if School is Not Meeting Goals**

Data gathered from district assessments will be used to identify students who are performing below grade level or not making adequate academic progress. Once identified, students will be strategically placed into groups of five to seven students. During a studio class, the groups will meet with an intervention specialist two to five times a week depending on need.

Students in the intervention program will take assessments on a bi-weekly basis. RTI (Response to Intervention) teams will meet weekly to analyze student data and monitor student progress. RTI teams will be comprised of the interventionist, special education teacher, classroom teacher and principal. The RTI team will determine if the interventions being implemented are working. If the interventions are not improving student performance, new interventions will be selected and implemented.

Student data will be compiled in individual progress monitoring graphs and students will set SMART goals for themselves on a quarterly basis. Parents will be apprised of their student's progress at quarterly RTI nights where they will meet with their student's RTI team to review their student's data and celebrate their student's success.

If a content area teacher's students are collectively not making adequate progress and meeting academic achievement goals, the teacher will be supported directly by an instructional/master teacher coach in the following manner:

- The instructional coach will do classroom observations on a regular basis. Based on his or her observations, the instructional coach will make recommendations to the teacher and model instructional strategies.
- The instructional coach will videotape the teacher teaching and they will analyze the teacher's classroom performance together. The video will be used for diagnostic purposes and not in a punitive manner. It will not be shared with anyone other than the teacher without the teacher's permission.

If after an extended period of time, the teacher does not demonstrate improvement or professional growth, the principal will begin the process of terminating his or her position with the school.

If the school as a whole falls short of its academic achievement expectations, the principal and staff will be held accountable. The expectation for West Leadership Academy is that it will be a high growth, high performance school.

## TIME

In collaboration with Generation Schools, West Leadership Academy will offer a comprehensive model that creates the opportunity – and expectation – for multi-dimensional and differentiated instruction that actively engages all students, particularly students with special needs or limited English proficiency. Our expanded day and year are organized to accomplish this, providing students with approximately 30% more learning time annually. The credit-rich model helps students stay on-track for on-time graduation. All students participate in three types of courses and an advisory:

- Core Courses – every morning
- Studio Courses – every afternoon
- Intensive Courses – twice per year
- Advisories – daily

### **Core Courses**

Core Courses every morning. All students take two 75-minute Core Courses daily. As the core of the instructional program, these year-long courses prepare all students for the CSAP, Advanced Placement exams, and college entrance exams to promote success in college and beyond.

Core Courses are taught by a team of up to five teachers depending upon the number of students per grade level. We recruit and train teachers for this highest priority role first and foremost. By focusing the vast majority of our teachers on this task – in an “all hands on deck” mindset – the classes average less than 18-22 students at full school enrollment.

With much more time focused on far fewer students, all Core teachers are able to customize instruction substantially. Focused small-group settings enable teachers to know their students well and attend to individual learning needs and modalities. Students can build positive relationships over time with caring adults who are dedicated to their success, and who help them set and maintain high expectations. The Core Course teams include experts in the content area and in special needs or ELL instruction based on group composition.

### **Studio Courses**

Studio Courses are scheduled per trimester and meet daily or an A-Day/B-Day alternating schedule depending on the course. Science, Social Studies and World Language will be offered as studio courses. This allows students to take a variety of courses each year; it also enables the staff to plan courses that adapt to students’ needs and interests. As the school year unfolds, the faculty reviews student data during each trimester to determine which courses make the most sense to offer.

Studio Courses are usually larger than Core Courses with approximately 22-32 students and offer a chance for middle-school students to spread their wings on the path to discovery while closing content gaps in time for ninth grade.

For high school students, Studios offer an opportunity to fill-in learning gaps and complete incomplete credits while exploring interests and preparing for college and career. In reading and math, we will use approved RtI strategies and programs to create focused and individualized intervention programs.

Enrichment courses provide students the opportunity to experiment as they begin to create an identity in the arts, wellness and academic content areas. Some courses such as *Blog Production* provide accelerated students the 21st century skills to integrate graphic design and persuasive writing with engaging subjects preparing them for college, employment and the world beyond. Through college partnerships, dual credit courses can also be accessed either on or off campus as well as honors/AP courses on campus. Other courses such as *Advanced Spanish for Native Speakers* allow LEPs and FLEPs to build critical first language reading and writing skills, while being challenged in oral language proficiency.

### **Intensives Courses – Twice each year**

While college and career readiness is woven throughout every aspect of the school model, our innovative Intensive Courses fundamentally transform the concept of college/career guidance. For a full month, two times per year, students in each grade focus exclusively on college preparation and career exploration through rigorous, credit-bearing project-based learning. It is the only course students take during the month.

Intensive Courses are a unique feature of the Generations model which we are adopting as part of the West Leadership Academy model. While Core and Studio Courses are absolutely essential to the academic preparation for each student; Intensive Courses create the hands-on opportunity to link learning to life, reinforcing the relevance of Core and Studio courses. Each student participates in these rigorous, credit-bearing courses. They explore life beyond the campus through connecting to professionals, organizations and experiences that inspire students to visualize their future, recognize the tangible results of hard work and set goals. Demanding assignments, field experiences, guest speakers, college visits and culminating projects combine to create life-changing educational experiences.

Our expanded 200-day school year creates the extra time needed to offer Intensives Courses. During each Intensive month, the regular teachers on the grade level have a mid-year break: a three-week vacation and a weeklong grade-level conference. This allows WLA to expand the year for students without increasing the work-year for teachers.

## Sample Intensive Course Sequence...

With the extra time we offer a life-changing college and career readiness program to all students.



### Sept. & June: **Seniors – I Am Ready**

Application support for college entrance and financial aid, combined with life-readiness training, helps our seniors prepare for success on their next steps: life after high school.

### Dec. & April: **10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> – Campus Life & Internships**

By now the Intensive teachers know students well. They target campuses and post-secondary programs for each student. This year includes internships and community service opportunities begin and continue through the senior year.

### Nov. & March: **8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Grade – Nonprofit & Public Sector Experiences**

From Children’s Hospital and the United Way, to the State Senate and the Renewable Energy Resources Institute. Students adopt a cause they care about and engage in real-life work to affect change.

### Jan. & June: **6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade – Private Sector Experiences**

Students explore fields that interest them: medicine and health, tech and engineering, media and journalism, law and forensics, banking and Investing, and more. Culminating projects cap-off the dynamic courses.

Our Intensives are taught by a team of full-time teachers who rotate to each grade level throughout the year. The team includes English, ELL, GT and SPED teachers, and a guidance counselor enabling us to offer expanded literacy and language instruction for ELLs. By re-defining the roles of some teachers, the model does not require more professional staff than a typical school to add this groundbreaking guidance program that multiplies a student’s exposure to college and career opportunities from an average of 1 hour per year with a guidance counselor at typical schools to over 840 hours per year.

What makes this program so essential? In a typical urban high school, a single guidance counselor is expected to support an entire student body as they consider academic options, life choices and college. This is an impossible task. Many students fall through the cracks or are ignored, failing to take even the basic high school courses needed to allow them access to college. For students of color, the figures are particularly grim. Prior to opening the Generations pilot school in New York City, for instance, only one out of ten earned a high school Regents diploma; fewer attended college. Those who make it to college routinely drop out – often overwhelmed by extensive reading and writing requirements.

These figures improve dramatically for students who have on-going college and career mentoring throughout high school. Students who understand the link between school and future goals will dream bigger, work harder and care more. They are far more likely to graduate from high school and succeed in college. The Generation Schools’ model has met the challenge of how to substantially improve guidance for every student without increasing school costs and without diverting resources and time from other courses. This is accomplished through the Intensive Courses, the Advisory and every student having a personalized Student Learning & Career Transition Plan.

On the most basic level, Intensives provide students with a deeper understanding of the educational requirements and pathways necessary to achieve their college and career goals. When the connection is clear, for instance, between knowledge of chemistry and the field of medicine or between writing skills and the practice of law, students are motivated to strive for the high academic achievement that enables career success.

During Intensives, class sizes are small, averaging 25 or fewer students. Each Intensive Course prioritizes pedagogy that models the 21st century workplace and culminates in a real-life project. Negotiating, communicating, facilitating, debating, problem solving, project managing, innovating and budgeting are all essential college/workplace skills. These higher level capacities require people to utilize math and language to evaluate, synthesize and organize information successfully. These skills are essential to most well-paid professions. They also are precisely the type of skills needed to address most of the world's challenges.

At the beginning of each year, the staff surveys students and creates courses that they know will engage their students' interests. Courses will be designed to include international studies, world languages, local politics and leadership.

### **Advisories – Daily**

*Advisory Groups* ensure that all students are known well through an enduring relationship with a key adult. Advisors help students navigate peer relationships and remain future focused. An all-hands-on-deck approach keeps advisories at 8-10 students. Advisories meet twice daily: five-minute Morning Meetings set a positive tone for the day; 25-minute session mid-day enable Advisories to re-connect. Longer advisory sessions are scheduled throughout the year. College Board Schools Advisory Guides and College Ed<sup>®</sup> materials will provide the base for our curricula and training.

### **Sample Schedules for Students and Teachers**

#### **Teacher Schedules**

West Leadership Academy will use a unique staggered schedule to maximize student experience without over working teachers. Paraprofessionals and school leadership support will be on campus prior to 8:30 am. The teacher day begins at 8:30 and ends at 4:30. Expanded planning time happens during the school day. As a tradeoff for having a reduced student and course load, teachers are expected to be prepared to teach successfully as soon as the course begins. WLA schedules more teachers to teach in the morning (all hands on deck) than in the afternoon. All planning periods are scheduled in the afternoon.

West Leadership Academy  
**Sample Teacher Schedule for Year 1**

Teacher	Block A	Block B	Block C		Block D	Block E	Block F
Math 1	Teach 6 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Teach 6 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Adv.	Lunch	Prep	Teach Studio	Prep
Math 2	Teach 6 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Teach 6 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Adv.	Lunch	Prep	Teach Studio	Prep
Math 3	Teach 6 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Teach 9 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Lunch	Adv.	Prep	Teach Studio	Prep
Math 4	Teach 9 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Teach 9 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Lunch	Adv.	Prep	Prep	Prep
Math 5	Teach 9 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Teach 9 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Lunch	Adv.	Prep	Prep	Prep
English 1	Teach 6 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Teach 6 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Adv.	Lunch	Teach Studio	Prep	Prep
English 2	Teach 6 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Teach 6 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Adv.	Lunch	Teach Studio	Prep	Prep
English 3	Teach 9 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Teach 6 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Lunch	Adv.	Teach Studio	Prep	Prep
English 4	Teach 9 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Teach 9 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Lunch	Adv.	Prep	Prep	Teach Studio
English 5	Teach 9 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Teach 9 <sup>th</sup> Fdn	Lunch	Adv.	Prep	Prep	Teach Studio
Science	Prep and Dual-role Support		Adv.	Lunch	Teach Science	Teach Science	Teach Science
Social Studies	Prep and Dual-role Support		Adv.	Lunch	Teach Soc. Stud.	Teach Soc. Stud.	Teach Soc. Stud.
Foreign Lang	Prep and Dual-role Support		Lunch	Adv.	Teach Spanish	Teach Spanish	Teach Spanish
Phys. Ed.	Prep and Dual-role Support		Lunch	Adv.	Teach Phys. Ed.	Teach Phys. Ed.	Teach Phys. Ed.

Each teacher will teach one of the four schedules listed below (Columns A, B, C or D):

<b>Student Schedule</b>	<b>A. Foundation Course Teacher Schedule</b>	<b>B. Foundation Course Teacher Schedule</b>	<b>C. Foundation Course Teacher Schedule</b>	<b>D. Studio Course Teacher Schedule</b>
Advisory (5min)	Advisory (5min)	Advisory (5min)	Advisory (5min)	Advisory (5min)
Block 1 <b>Foundation Course</b> 8:35-9:50 (75 min)  Math or Science 22-students	Block 1 <b>Teach Foundation Course</b> 8:35-9:50 (75 min)	Block 1 <b>Teach Foundation Course</b> 8:35-9:50 (75 min)	Block 1 <b>Teach Foundation Course</b> 8:35-9:50 (75 min)	Block 1 <b>Common Prep Time with Teaching team</b> (2 hours, 35 min)
Block 2 <b>Foundation Course</b> 9:55-11:10 (75 min)  Math or Science 22 students	Block 2 <b>Foundation Course</b> 9:55-11:10 (75 min)	Block 2 <b>Foundation Course</b> 9:55-11:10 (75 min)	Block 2 <b>Foundation Course</b> 9:55-11:10 (75 min)	
Block 3 <b>Lunch</b> 11:15-12:30 (50 min)	Block 3 <b>Lunch</b> 11:15-12:30 (50 min)	Block 3 <b>Lunch</b> 11:15-12:30 (50 min)	Block 3 <b>Lunch</b> 11:15-12:30 (50 min)	Block 3 <b>Lunch</b> 11:15-12:30 (50 min)
Advisory (25 min)	Advisory (25 min)	Advisory (25 min)	Advisory (25 min)	Advisory (25 min)
Block 4 <b>Studio Course</b> 12:35-1:50 (75 min)	Common Prep Time with Teaching team (2 hours, 35 min)	Block 4 <b>Teach Studio Course</b> 12:35-1:50 (75 min)	Common Prep Time with Teaching team (75 min)	Block 4 <b>Teach Studio Course</b> 12:35-1:50 (75 min)
Block 5 <b>Studio Course</b> 1:55-3:10 (75 min)		Common Prep Time with Teaching team (2 hours, 35 min)	Block 5 <b>Teach Studio Course</b> 1:55-3:10 (75 min)	Block 5 <b>Teach Studio Course</b> 1:55-3:10 (75 min)
Block 6 <b>Studio Course</b> 3:15-4:30 (75 min)	Block 6 <b>Studio Course</b> 3:15-4:30 (75 min)		Common Prep Time with Teaching team (75 min)	Block 6 <b>Teach Studio Course</b> 3:15-4:30 (75 min)



The school day will be 8 hours beginning at 8:30 and ending at 4:30.

During this time students will participate in the following programs:

Language Arts- 75 Minutes daily

Math- 75 Minutes Daily

Science/Social Studies- 75 minutes every other day

The extended day and year allow for more instructional time in each subject, as demonstrated below:

A five-credit class in a conventional school:

- 45-minute class period x 90 days per semester = 4,050 minutes

A five-credit course in the Generation Schools model:

- 75-minute class period X 54 day trimester = 4,050 minutes

Each trimester every student at West Leadership Academy earns:

- 5 credits of Language Arts (required)
- 5 credits of Math (required)
- 2.5 credits of Science (required)
- 2.5 credits of Social Studies (required)
- 2.5 credits of a World Language
- 10 credits of Electives (including physical education)
- 27 credits total are possible per trimester

Each school year every student at West Leadership Academy earns:

- 15 credits of Language Arts (required)
- 15 credits of Math (required)
- 7.5 credits of Science (required)
- 7.5 credits of Social Studies (required)
- 7.5 credits of a World Language
- 10 credits of Electives (including physical education)
- 16 credits of Electives during Intensive Courses
- 81 credits total are possible per school year

Generation Schools model includes multifaceted and overlapping instructional strategies to ensure that students meet all standards and receive targeted, intentional instruction daily:

- Smaller class sizes in Foundation Courses allowing teachers to personalize instructional responses daily based on student need.
- Significantly reducing course load and student load allows all teachers to prepare effective instruction tailored to their assigned students.
- Foundation Course teacher teams have two hours of common planning time daily to evaluate and apply data and make decisions related to dynamically grouping and re-grouping students to keep all students moving forward toward achieving mastery.

- Each Foundation Course teacher team also functions as an RtI team and will include SPED and ELL teachers based on student need.
- The 75-minute mid-day period strategically allows time for Advisory Groups, tutoring and RtI supports as needed still allowing a 35 minute lunch for students.
- College and Career Intensive Course teams evaluate student progress toward graduation and college-readiness twice annually. Reviewing transcript progress and student goals in detail with both student and parent.

**Sample Yearly Calendar**

**West Leadership Academy  
Academic and PD Calendar**

July '12						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

August '12						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

September '12						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29/ 30

October '12						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

November '12						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

December '12						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1/2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

January '13						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February '13						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

March '13						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30/31

April '13						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May '13						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

June '13						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

	Vacation
	Planning Days Staff Development- Whole School Conference
	6 <sup>th</sup> grade intensives, the last week of each intensive would be Grade Level Planning
	9 <sup>th</sup> grade intensives, the last week of each intensive would be Grade Level Planning
	1 <sup>st</sup> Day/ Last Day
	Holidays
	CSAP Testing window

The 200 day school calendar and expanded day allows for tiered interventions, enrichment, tutoring and non-academic activities which will take place on a daily basis. Equally, the strategic timing of the Core Courses allow for tier I and tier II interventions to be provided daily. In addition, tier II and III interventions will be provided through the Studio Courses as an added intervention as dictated by the student's IEP.

### The Optimized Schedule for Our Target Population

West Leadership Academy seeks to maximize learning time in each category, exceeding DPS Board of Education requirements in most cases and utilizing learning time to achieve maximum growth through: 1) extending time in college and career transition and support through advisory, Intensives, dual credit, apprenticeship and internship options, 2) providing a credit-rich model where students work toward mastery through meeting benchmarks, 3) extending the school year and day, 4) considering the acquisition of dual-language abilities to be critical for student success and finally, 5) requiring within the elective block that students complete a culminating project for graduation.

# Enrollment

## **Enrollment timeline and policies**

West Leadership Academy will use the following criteria for enrolling students

1. Students who live in the West boundary and have a sibling attending and projected to return to West HS
2. Students who live in the West boundary
3. NCLB students (\*only if West Leadership Academy is identified as an NCLB receiving school)
4. Students who are children of full time staff at West Leadership Academy
5. Denver residents
6. Non-Denver residents

The timeline for enrollment is as follows: WLA will participate in the DPS choice process. Families are required to submit a form with their top 5 school choices by January 31, 2012.

Placement decisions and notifications will be made in February 2012.

## **Community Outreach and Education**

West Leadership Academy has been reaching out to elementary schools and middle schools in the West Boundary to communicate the changes occurring on the West Campus. Specifically, we have spent time educating the community about the new West Leadership Academy and the College Board program so that they will understand the opportunities and benefits of the program.

WLA will participate in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Career Fair, the Middle and High School Expo and the NW, SW and West Regional Expos. The Principal and Steering Committee members will visit area elementary schools and middle schools to communicate with students and parents. Information about WLA will be mailed to potential 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in Denver Public Schools.

The Community will be involved in events to take place at West High School to promote the changes at the West Campus. Together with the West High School, West Generations Academy, WDEEC and the West Community Partners a common message will be used to market the exciting changes for the West Campus.

WLA will work directly with DPS Marketing strategists to implement a robust marketing plan that will ensure positive and effective messaging about the school. In addition, WLA will use a door to door marketing strategy to communicate directly with families the benefits to enrolling at the WLA. We will target all students in the feeder pattern, which will encompass all ethnic groups, linguistically diverse families and students with special needs. In addition, we are attending the Middle School and High School City Wide and Regional Expos, we have been visiting elementary and middle schools to meet with parents and students and we will be hosting several open houses. Promotional materials will be provided in English and Spanish.

### Equal Access Enrollment

West Leadership Academy, as a College Board School, serves as a new, high quality option for students in the West Campus enrollment boundary in addition to students that apply through the school choice process through an unscreened process. WLA will follow the DPS school choice enrollment practices. An enrollment matching process will be conducted by the District, ensuring equal access to any student who is interested in attending the school.

The following Proposed Grade Level Growth Plan describes the numbers of students to be admitted from the opening to full enrollment.

<b>Proposed Grade Level Growth Plan</b>				
<b>Grade Levels</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2014-15</b>
6 <sup>th</sup>	125	125	125	125
7 <sup>th</sup>		125	125	125
8 <sup>th</sup>			125	125
9 <sup>th</sup>	125	125	125	125
10 <sup>th</sup>		125	125	125
11 <sup>th</sup>			125	125
12 <sup>th</sup>				125
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>875</b>

After being accepted to WLA through the open enrollment process, students and parents must sign the WLA Family and Student Agreement and Code of Conduct Compact which outlines compliance norms for academic, behavior, and attendance expectations.

## Human Resource Management

Our human resource plan is strategically designed so that every student can benefit from effective and engaging instruction daily. Ultimately our goal is for good teachers to become great, and great teachers to become deeply satisfied and sustained in their profession. Our HR plan is designed to build, support and keep great teachers.

To accomplish this, West Leadership Academy provides all faculty with organizational structures that support successful teaching. This includes having all teachers spend much more time with far fewer students, and reducing the number of courses that a teacher prepares for daily. Every day, all teachers have expanded blocks of common planning time facilitated by a team leader.

Every year, all teachers have over 20 days of quality professional development built into the work year. All of these structures combine to ensure that professional growth and collaboration are fundamental priorities of the school. Through these structures, the school leadership team can provide teachers, at any phase in their career, with a wide variety of customized professional supports to ensure continuous growth.

The performance evaluation framework at West Leadership Academy is designed to create clear pathways for teachers to reach and sustain “Effective” or “Distinguished” status. We recognize that high-caliber teachers are among a school’s greatest assets and critical for positively transforming students’ lives.

Performance evaluations will be completed each trimester for every teacher using the DPS LEAP evaluation framework. The evaluations will be used to develop a personalized *Teaching Effectiveness Plan* for each teacher: articulating essential feedback, tools, mentoring, recommended PD and support.

A *Focused Teaching Effectiveness Plan* will be developed for any teacher who receives a rating of **Not Meeting** in any indicator of the evaluation framework. This focused plan will specifically address each indicator receiving a rating of Not Meeting, as well as other areas identified for improvement by the teacher and principal and will provide for intentional, regular support from the principal to help ensure that appropriate improvement is achieved in the noted areas.

As in any public school, all staff in all positions are subject to budgetary limitations and professional conduct criteria. If reductions in force (RIF) are necessitated as a result of budgetary limitations, the principal has the discretion to select the staff lines that will be eliminated in alignment with the WLA Schools model and the mission and vision of the school.

The leadership team, working closely with the College Board School organization, reserves the right to modify the LEAP Framework to accommodate the unique attributes of the WLA model and the West Leadership Academy Innovation Plan. This may include additional domains, indicators or definitions to account for model and mission alignment, such as personalized instruction, blended learning and collaborative practice.

#### STAFF RECRUITMENT AND HIRING PRACTICES

West Leadership Academy will use rigorous hiring strategies and standards to attract and retain the best possible teachers to meet our mission. Given that we will have to set a high standard to insure that we have the best teachers we will use Innovation status to lengthen our hiring window and create a process that will clearly demonstrate which teachers are a fit for the school in regards to skills and mission alignment.

As Described in this document, including Appendix E, West Leadership Academy is requesting maximum flexibility to:

- Recruit and hire staff, including teachers, administrators, and other support personnel, using practices that will ensure employee fit with the school's Innovation Plan.
- Post vacant positions, recruit, and hire staff as the need arises, even if such need falls outside the District's standard hiring cycle.
- Not be subject to direct or temporary placements of teachers by the District.
- Hire part-time staff on fractional increments that meet the needs of the school.
- Create non-traditional job descriptions, which may include adding roles aligned to the model and mission to any job description.
- Hire non-licensed teachers for non-core subjects who are not required to meet NCLB highly qualified criteria; the school will hire teachers who meet the highly qualified requirements for all core content classes.
- Create a professional development program that supports the Innovation Plan. West Leadership Academy will have the option to participate in the District-provided professional development or to opt out and provide its own professional development that is specific to the unique needs of students, staff, and programs.
- Create a process to evaluate and improve teacher performance.
- Create a process to address under-performing employees.
- Establish methods of rewarding performance, including additional bonuses and/or incentives.

Such flexibility will be limited only by federal law, and Colorado statutes, DPS/DCTA Collective Bargaining Agreement provisions and District Board policies not waived in this application.

### **Hiring Process**

The hiring process will include the following steps:

Step 1: Establish positions: WLA will establish requirements (licensees and certifications), descriptions, criteria and ensure that these adhere to state and federal laws with regards to recruitment and hiring practices.

Step 2: Advertise for positions: local – via DPS HR system, local newspapers; national – NY Times, Ed Week (if necessary)

Step 3: Screen resumes: form screening committee; screen resumes; identify potential candidates

Step 4: Establish Level I interview schedule: form interview committee; schedule interviews; send letters/emails to candidates; send rejection letters

Step 5: Review Level I interview protocols (oral and written): review questions; agree on format, follow up questions, and time limitations

Step 6: Conduct Level I interviews: rate oral and written components; identify candidates for Level II (demonstration lesson); send rejection letters

Step 7: Establish Level II interview schedule: contact candidates to schedule demonstration lessons



Step 8: Observe demonstration lessons: establish criteria and procedures; make site visit/observe demonstration lesson; have feedback/follow up interview with candidates after demonstration lesson; identify candidates being offered positions

Step 9: Level III: Conduct background/eligibility check; contact references for all candidates being offered positions; conduct site visit if demonstration lesson was not conducted at candidate's school

Step 10: Finalize hiring process with DPS HR

### **Selection Criteria**

West Leadership Academy will require staff that possess a broad range of characteristics and skills including personal, interpersonal and intellectual characteristics, as well as academic and administrative skills. Staff must come to WLA with fully integrated technology skills, be prepared to multi-task, and bring experience that will ensure success.

West Leadership Academy will seek teachers with strong content knowledge; ability and desire to work collaboratively to build on another's strengths; ability to use a variety of data in quick cycles to inform instruction; and a desire to relentlessly pursue student and school success within a culture of continuous improvement. In addition our selection criteria will evaluate a candidate's commitment to invest in the social and emotional needs of students in and out of the classroom through our Advisory/Advocacy program. West Leadership Academy will follow NCLB guidelines in regard to teacher hiring to ensure that all staff meet the highly qualified designation and other federal guidelines.

Additional staff will be hired based on school needs, understanding of the WLA model and the ability of the applicant to demonstrate how they can support model implementation and impact.

#### **Personal Characteristics**

WLA staff must be driven, passionate, ethical individuals who are intrinsically motivated and are able to motivate others. Staff must be willing to put forth the effort needed to support and advocate for the school, their colleagues, the students and their families. Staff must demonstrate initiative while being responsive to the school community. Staff must create a caring environment committed to the success of each individual.

#### **Interpersonal Characteristics**

WLA staff must commit to developing a college going school culture that incorporates the school community and is built on positive relationships, teamwork and genuine collaboration. Staff must work together to maintain open communications and a trusting climate where feedback is sought and accepted.

#### **Intellectual/Leadership Characteristics**

WLA staff must share a vision for student success. Staff must be curious, open-minded and embrace change and innovation. Staff must be thoughtful learners who use a variety of data to drive decision-making.

### Academic/Instructional Skills

WLA staff must create a learning environment that exemplifies an instructional philosophy that maximizes student engagement and academic rigor. Staff must be knowledgeable in successful pedagogical strategies and content area, and participate in on-going professional development in order to keep current with the latest research-based information about teaching and learning.

### Administrative Skills

WLA staff must share the responsibility for managing the school in accordance with the regulations and guidelines from the System and from the College Board.

This rigorous process of recruitment and selection will ensure that WLA attracts and selects the best possible teachers. Teachers who understand our mission and vision and are ready to embody our mission and vision and have the skills to create a learning environment that leads to high student achievement. The College Board program is very demanding and has proven to lead to great results in student performance. Having the right teachers on board will guarantee our success.

### **Non-Teaching Staff**

The West Leadership Academy plan includes appropriate administrative and support staff to successfully implement the school. During the first year, this includes a principal and assistant principal. The Year 1 plan also includes a shared nurse, library tech and athletic director; part-time social worker and school PC apps specialist; 1.6 secretaries and at least 3,600 hours of paraprofessional support. In subsequent years, this team will include expanded non-instructional support that includes a principal-in-residency.

In addition to this staff, a small percentage of teachers will provide limited non-instructional support in targeted roles. While the primary responsibility of these teachers is to teach three Studio Courses daily (such as electives), their secondary role can include one of the following: attendance documentation support, coverage planning, advisory planning, school community partnership coordination or other similar non-instructional roles. By reducing the course load for these teachers, we are able to schedule these dual roles reasonably and at no additional cost. This strategy allows us to focus the vast majority of staff costs on direct instruction, particularly in core learning areas, while providing the non-instructional services necessary.

Secretaries, paraprofessionals, custodians and facilities managers will be employed at West Leadership Academy in accordance with the terms and conditions of employment agreed upon between the District and Denver Association of Office Professionals (DAEOP), Denver Federation of Paraprofessionals (DFP), Facilities Managers Association (FMA), and Communication Workers of America (CWA). The school will schedule staff based on the needs of students and the mission and vision of the school. The school will maintain minimum pay thresholds consistent with the MOU and/or respective agreements.

West Leadership Academy leadership will collaborate with the district regarding the selection and placement of all personnel including secretaries, paraprofessionals, custodians, facilities

managers, and food service personnel. In the event that a classified staff member is deemed to not be a good fit, the school will work with the district to remove the staff member and find a more suitable placement. The West Leadership Academy principal will be the ultimate decision maker regarding the selection and hiring of classified personnel.

### **Changes to Staffing Structure**

Staggered staff vacations increases student learning time significantly: The Generation Schools model expands the school year for all students as well as training time for all teachers by strategically staggering teacher vacations. We accomplish this without increasing the work year by redefining the roles of some teachers to teach credit-bearing courses scheduled as month-long Intensives Courses. These courses are staggered throughout the year to different grade levels at a time. This staffing strategy provides 30% more learning time school wide without increasing the teacher work year. As a result it does not increase district costs.

Staffing structures reduces class sizes substantially in English and math: A key priority is to substantially reduce class size for every student in math and English every day. To do this, we have a high percentage of our teachers assigned to core Foundation Courses. This staffing plan helps ensure that all students have personalized instruction from remediation to acceleration. This strategy ensures inclusive Tier 1 and 2 RTI supports during Foundation Courses; while Tier 3 Rtl support is offered during the afternoons as pullout services.

All Foundation Course teachers teach one additional studio course daily in miscellaneous subject areas. This strategy ensures that the school can offer the types of broad programs and services expected in a middle and high school setting while maintaining small class sizes in all English and math Foundation Courses: our highest priority academic subject areas.

Redefined staff roles transforms college and career guidance and exploration: Intensive Courses are a unique feature of our full model. While Foundation and Studio Courses are essential to the academic preparation for each student, Intensives create the hands-on opportunity to link this learning to life: reinforcing the relevance of core academics. Twice a year for a month at a time, each student participates in a rigorous, credit-bearing Intensive targeting career sector. This is made possible by re-defining the roles of some teachers as described above and in the education plan.

Daily block schedule creates expanded common planning time: The daily schedule fully leverages the 40-hour work week defined in the teacher's contract. We are able schedule two hours of common planning time for all teaching teams daily. Collaborative planning time is strategically organized throughout the afternoon.

Overlapping staggered teacher vacations enables high-caliber staff development: By staggering teacher vacations with the Intensive Course teams and overlapping the work-year, we are able to offer over 20 days of staff development for all teachers as part of the work year. This includes a two-week summer institute, two week-long grade-level conferences and spring conference.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The professional development offered to all WLA teachers, including the special education and ELL teachers, will include intervention and support strategies that allow all teachers to best meet the needs of students with special needs and English language learners.

The College Board Schools' professional learning model has two goals:

- i. To build community among and within College Board Schools, leading to the development of college readiness for all students; and
- ii. To build capacity that enables schools to sustain their own professional growth with a focus on learning, instructional practice and preparing adolescents for college

These goals are achieved through faculty training and learning support which includes:

- Executive, instructional and systems coaching
- OnBoarding for New Staff
- Coaching and support for the Advisory program coordinator, guidance counselor and school leadership
- College Counseling for guidance counselors
- Conferences and Networking
- Leadership Development

As well as faculty training in:

- Instructional Strategies to Enhance Student Learning
- David Conley's College Readiness framework
- Advisory
- Curriculum Mapping
- SpringBoard® English Language Arts and Mathematics for new and experienced SpringBoard teachers
- AP® Vertical Teams from grades 6 through 12
- Advanced Placement Program® and Pre-AP®

In addition to College Board Schools-led professional learning, the CBSchools Implementation Manager will work with the West Leadership Academy Principal to develop site-based professional learning for the school faculty in response to learning needs that arise during the school year. The Professional Development will be modified and customized based on the analysis of data through the data team process. The College Board Schools Implementation manager will working directly with the Leadership Team to addressed specific staff training needs.

Professional learning will build coherence and capacity to improve student achievement, as well as support the education program, through school structures which reinforce a culture focused on collaboration and transparency of practice, including:

- Structured collaborative planning time for teachers horizontally within their grade level, as well as vertically within their content areas aligned to AP

- A protocol for expected, non-evaluative inter-classroom visitations between teachers which includes a rubric for opening dialogue between faculty and providing constructive feedback
- Training for “core team” leaders within content areas following a “train-the-trainer” model
- Implementing project-based and/or performance-based assessments across a course with a common rubric

Cultural Competency will be an integral part of the professional development program.

All professional development delivered through College Board Schools will be evaluated through an online evaluation tool. The College Board evaluation form was created by a third party evaluator, Metis Associates. Currently the evaluation data is captured online after each session. The College Board staff evaluates the feedback and adjusts the instruction for the next sessions based upon the data that is provided from participants in collaboration with the Leadership Team from WLA.

### **Teacher Evaluation/Performance Management**

The school principal will observe each teacher at least once during each 54 day trimester using the DPS LEAP Framework for Effective Teaching accompanied by the West Leadership Academy model Alignment definitions in regard to LEAP evaluation factors.

The school principal will provide each teacher with post observation feedback, including insight on areas of strength as well as growth opportunities. The first trimester evaluation will result in the creation of a Teaching Effectiveness Plan for every teacher that will constitute their personal professional development plan for the year. Any area falling below a 5 on the LEAP scale will require the principal in collaboration with the teacher to include specific required actions and growth goals be included in the Teaching Effectiveness Plan to ensure the issues identified will be addressed prior to the next evaluation and with the intent that the chosen supports identified will be addressed prior to the next evaluation and with the intent that the chosen supports are designed to move the teacher up to the next evaluation category (i.e., from Approaching to Effective).

Any teacher consistently scoring in the “Distinguished” category will be celebrated by being given the opportunity to add to the WLA Teacher Knowledge bank and may also be tapped to deliver professional development across the network during their mid-year breaks for additional compensation. Additionally in a RIF situation, teachers will be released based on their level of effectiveness rather than on seniority.

The principal is the main evaluator and will provide feedback through individual teacher meetings as well as written feedback following each trimester evaluation. Additionally, assistant

principals, principals in residence and other types of principal interns may also conduct evaluations at the request of the principal per the DCTA contract. Teachers who themselves score effective or distinguished and possess a Type D license may also be asked to perform evaluations at the request of the principal. In any circumstance when an evaluator who is not the principal conducts an evaluation and the teacher scores in the “Not Meeting” (1-2) category as an overall average, the evaluation process will be immediately referred to the principal. The principal may then choose to conduct his/her own evaluation or move directly to a follow-up conversation in regard to the evaluation and the creation of a 60 day Focused Teaching Effectiveness Plan.

### **Remediation process**

As noted, performance evaluations will be completed each trimester for each teacher using the DPS LEAP framework. The performance framework at West Leadership Academy is designed to create clear pathways for teachers to reach and sustain a rating of “Effective” or “Distinguished”. Evaluations will be used to develop personalized Teaching Effectiveness Plans: articulating essential feedback, tools, mentoring and support.

A teacher rated as **Not Meeting** on any indicator of the evaluation framework during any performance evaluation will receive a ***Focused Teaching Effectiveness Plan*** detailing areas targeted for immediate improvement. This plan will provide for more intentional, regular support from the principal so that deficiencies are addressed and appropriate improvement is achieved in the noted areas.

### **Improvements in teacher effectiveness and student achievement.**

Data supports and the West Leadership Academy model aligns with the fact that successful teachers beget successful students and that teacher effectiveness can be measured by a variety of indicators, one being student growth and achievement scores and another indicator being the LEAP evaluation system that DCTA has collaborated on the development of with DPS.

### **Innovations Around Professional Development**

As part of its partnership, College Board will provide West Leadership Academy intense professional development support to implement its program. West Leadership Academy will need the maximum flexibility over its professional development to ensure staff and leadership participate in professional development opportunities that align with the unique West Leadership Academy education program. WLA believes that professional development should be an ongoing process that is embedded into every day practice. Teachers will participate in professional development as part of a cohort, which will be determined at the beginning of each school year. These cohorts will create a sense of community across the school and form networks and share best practices with one another and other College Board schools. The extended school day and extended school year will make this model possible.

### **Support of Career Growth**

The structure and schedule at WLA supports the belief that everyone in the building should be constantly learning and growing. In order to demonstrate this value, teachers receive 20 days of professional development each year including a 2 week summer institute, two week long grade level conferences and a conference over spring break. Additionally, teachers benefit from a minimum of 2 hours of common planning time daily, giving them the opportunity to deliver high quality instruction.

In addition, faculty of West Leadership Academy will have multiple opportunities to engage in ongoing professional development each year via CBSchools-led PD, AP or Pre-AP Summer Institutes and professional conferences. Faculty will have opportunities to lead their peers and receive additional training should they accept the roles of Advisory Program Coordinator or Core Team Lead within their content area. Likewise, faculty teaching Advanced Placement will receive additional training to support successful implementation of their AP courses.

### **A Growth Oriented Culture**

Leadership demonstrates a collaborative work environment as well providing both internal and external professional development opportunities supported through staffing and scheduling. Additionally, the leadership team promotes the idea that “I learn and therefore my students learn.”

To achieve our mission of preparing ALL students for college and career success, College Board Schools believe ALL teachers are necessary. Our professional learning is created from a system-wide perspective that seeks to build collective capacity within our schools. Through a culture of high expectations for teachers that includes transparency of practice, collaboration, data-driven decision-making and a shared commitment to the belief that all students can learn, faculty at West Leadership Academy will not only grow through direct professional learning workshops and conferences, but will also grow through one-on-one, horizontal team and vertical team collaboration and peer feedback.

We will begin with 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades in grade level teams, as we increase enrollment and grade levels we will add horizontal teams and the opportunities for interdisciplinary unit projects, project based projects, content and grade level collaborative student work review.

### **Future Leadership Capacity**

Future leadership capacity will be cultivated through monthly Leadership Cohort meetings which include the Principal, Assistant Principal and may include their leadership team (or cabinet) as appropriate. Teacher leadership is cultivated through a culture that sees all faculty as teacher leaders and which includes additional leadership roles that can be filled including the Advisory Program Coordinator and content-area Core Team Leads. Extended training for the Advisory Program Coordinator and content-area Core Team Leads follows a Train-the-Trainer model to build their capacity in staff development concurrently with their skills related to direct responsibilities held by those roles.



West Leadership Academy will collaborate to share innovative practices across the entire district through:

- participation in district-led professional learning
- submitting conference presentation proposals to share successful practices
- inviting external faculty selected by the district to fill extra seats at specific CBSchools-led trainings such as Advanced SpringBoard ELA and SpringBoard Math
- participating in district-led interclassroom visitations
- participating in district-led school leadership/network meetings
- sending representatives from West Leadership Academy's student government to participate in the DPS-led district student government

## LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE AND CAPACITY

### **Leadership Capacity**

West Leadership Academy was fortunate to hire Teresa Klava, a highly qualified administrator with over 20 years of experience working in the Denver public school system.

Mrs. Klava has served as an educator and leader in the Denver Public Schools since 1988, holding a variety of positions including Principal, Assistant Principal, mathematics instructional specialist, and teacher. She has taught at the university level. Mrs. Klava has earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education with a minor in Bilingual Education at Metropolitan State College, a Master of Arts degree in Education Leadership and Policy at the University of Denver, and is currently pursuing her Ed.D in Educational Leadership at the University of Denver.

In addition to her experience as an administrator Teresa has nearly 20 years of instructional experience in Math and Science. In recent year she worked as a Math instructional specialist for the school district. Finally, she has extensive experience as an ELA instructor, including leading ELA trainings and teaching bilingual Mathematics classes. This experience will serve her well in the planning process of for WLA as many of the students will be English Language Learners and the school is planning to have a bilingual curriculum.

The specific qualifications that make Mrs. Klava qualified to lead WLA are:

- Experienced Principal with duties including Unified Improvement Plan, supervision, hiring, Site Assessment Leader, Athletic Director, discipline, scheduling, budget, School Leadership Team and Collaborative School Committee
- Strong relationships with staff, parents and community
- Strong ability to use, interpret and organize data to drive instructional practice
- Experienced in second language instruction with Linguistically Different endorsement, Literacy Squared Training

- Experienced with multicultural and diverse socio-economic communities
- Strong ability to build capacity through strong instructional leadership
- Strong ability to work collaboratively
- Strong organizational, communication and problem solving skills
- Experienced trainer and staff developer for elementary, middle school and high school teachers
- Experienced elementary, middle school, high school and adult teacher/coach with strong skills in classroom management, curriculum development, and student assessment and evaluation
- Extensive knowledge of the Denver Public Schools

### **Leadership Succession Plan**

WLA Leadership Succession Plan is as follows:

In the event that the current school principal vacates the position, College Board Schools and the Board of Advisors, which includes the school leadership team, 1 business community representative, 2 core teachers, 2 arts teachers, 1 paraprofessionals, 2 students, 1 business/office manager, and 5 parent representatives – 2 middle school parents and 3 high school parents will be responsible for implementing the principal selection process. The School Leadership Team together with representatives from College Board Schools will select their two top candidates in consultation with the Board of Advisors and make recommendations to the DPS Superintendent. Potential applicants who currently work at the school will not be able to participate in or attend any selection related meetings.

A neutral person will be invited to facilitate all faculty and parent/community meetings.

The selection process will be guided by College Board Schools working with The School Leadership Team to include: a faculty meeting to identify characteristics and criteria of desired new leader that are consistent with the innovation plan; a parent/community meeting to identify characteristics and criteria of desired new leader that are consistent with the innovation plan; development of a job description based on faculty and parent/community input; posting of position of DPS website and other related sources; development of interview questions and selection criteria rubric based on job description and input on criteria; application screening and scoring; reference checks on top candidates; conduct interviews including performance tasks; host a public symposium for finalists; conduct site visits to finalists current schools; school leadership team selects final candidates; submits recommendation of two finalists to Superintendent for final selection; announce position acceptance to staff, students, parents, and community.

## Selection Criteria

WLA is a new school, seeking innovation, which will be establishing a distributed leadership model. As such specific selection criteria for a new principal will be subject to review at the end of each year to ensure that they meet the evolving needs of the school.

Below is a general description of new leader selection criteria.

College Board School Principals are expected to:

- Lead change initiatives and embrace innovation
- Plan strategically
- Distribute leadership and build trust to facilitate change
- Develop and empower teams
- Cultivate a professional learning community focused on excellent teaching and learning practices
- Focus on student outcomes
- Learn and use data to drive decisions
- Promote academic rigor focused on student outcomes

For a sample job description see “WLA New Leader Job Description” attached.

Recruitment, Hiring and Selection. Personnel hired by the West Leadership Academy will be District employees, and subject to the District’s teacher hiring process and requirements to ensure the timely selection and appointment of qualified school personnel.

Decision Making Authority. The District has the final decision making authority on hiring the principal candidate, however, the District agrees that the selection of the principal will be a collaborative process involving College Board and the District and the West Leadership Academy principal selected by the District shall acknowledge in writing the acceptance of the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

## Parent and Community Involvement/School Governance

### **Parent and Community Engagement Plan**

Students who are successful in school have parents who take the time to work with them at home by supporting and asking questions about what they are learning. One of our goals at

West Leadership Academy will be to help parents realize the most important factor in determining a student's success rate, is parent engagement. At WLA we will develop an action plan that will move parents from the involvement to the highly engaged stage of school participation. Our key objective then will be to create an effective parent engagement plan that will impact student achievement for all students. Our plan will inform, engage, monitor and support parents.

The WDEEC, comprised of West Denver parents and community members facilitated the direction of the changes at the West Campus. They have been actively involved in defining their expectations around parent engagement opportunities. In addition several parents sit on the steering committee and have provided input regarding the development of parent support and empowerment for the campus. After the choice cycle is complete, parents will be identified and trained in the spring of 2012 as parent leaders to develop, monitor and sustain parent leadership capacity in our school.

Through partnerships with the Denver Public School Office of Parent Engagement, The West Denver Network and the Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition, we will create learning activities to inform and lead parents to a more solid understanding of the part each parent plays in the academic success of a student. The plan will include the following activities:

- 40 Developmental Assets
- Developing self-esteem
- Communication Skills
- Razalogia (Leadership Skills)
- ESL Evening classes
- Multiple Intelligences
- No Child Left Behind Law and Adequate Yearly Progress
- Standards Based Testing
- Teen Pregnancy
- Drug Awareness

Schools have always been faced with the task of keeping communication open and on-going. West Leadership Academy will develop a parent leadership group to assist with issues and projects around parent engagement. The leadership group will meet regularly with the administrative staff to share feedback from parents as well as develop a process to keep parents and communities connected to the school. Such activities would include:

- Breakfast with the Principal/Dinner with the Principal
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Monthly Newsletters
- Text Messaging/E-mail messages
- Neighborhood Walk
- Parent Handbook

The Parent Leadership Group will gather data re: parent sign-in sheets, evaluations, and telephone interviews, to determine what is working and what needs to be changed in order to keep the parent engagement above 50% at school activities and trainings.

In order to engage parents in meaningful assessments, our goal will be to improve student academic achievement by increasing the quantity and quality of parent/teacher communication. In partnership with the Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition, WLA will engage in a new Framework for parent/teacher conferences (Academic Parent-Teacher Teams). A planning committee composed of parents and teachers will guide the implementation. A parent liaison will be assigned to manage the logistics of the conferences. Teachers will participate in a professional development provided by the Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition. WLA will hold three parent/teacher conference meetings each year.

The new framework will provide key elements such as: Personal invitations to parents by the teacher to attend. The 75-minute team meetings will allow the classroom teachers to review student academic performance data and set student goals. The teacher will demonstrate skills to be practiced at home. Equally, the parents will have the opportunity to practice the skills so they can feel comfortable monitoring and assisting their child(ren) at home. In addition to the 75-minute team meeting, parents will have the opportunity to schedule an individual parent/teacher conference if they would like to continue to review their child's student performance data. Parents would continue to support the student goals by assisting the teacher with the creation of an action plan.

### **Innovation Status and Parent Involvement**

Through the extended day and extended year, West Leadership Academy will be able to have more opportunities to provide professional development for teachers in parent engagement and home visitation. There will be additional time and opportunity for parent engagement and leadership development.

### **Community Partnerships**

West Leadership Academy has partnerships with the Denver Public School Office of Parent Engagement, The West Denver Network(WDN) and the Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition to develop and support a comprehensive parent engagement and leadership system focused on student achievement.

WLA will also share the efforts of the West High School Community Partners, supported by J.P. Morgan Chase. These Community Partners support West students and families through organizations such as the Denver Housing Authority, Denver Inner City Parish, and Denver Scholarship Foundation. These organizations, along with others, work directly with families to support student success.

### **Community Partnership Development with Innovation Status**

WDN Parent & Community Engagement Coordinator will support the efficient and effective planning and implementation of improvements in parent and community engagement strategies, provide information about resources, and monitor the strategies' effectiveness in increasing parent and community members' participation.

The attached handout describes the WDN Parent and Community Engagement System.

## **SCHOOL GOVERNANCE**

(Adapted from NCAS, Noel)

WLA will be governed by the DPS Board of Education in accordance with the School Innovation Plan. The WLA principal will have the authority set forth in this innovation plan to manage the school. The principal will be held accountable and supported by the School Leadership Team, the Board of Advisors, the DPS Office of School Reform and Innovation, and the DPS WDN Administrator.

### **Leadership Team**

The school leadership team will include: the principal, the assistant principal, and three teacher leaders, selected by the principal. The leadership team will make decisions about hiring and dismissal of staff, including the new leadership in the event that the current principal leaves the school. They will also make decisions about educational structures & schedules, educational programs, community involvement, and budget and resource allocation. The leadership team will meet once a week to discuss and plan professional development for teachers, monitor calendars, update policies and shape the school culture. The leadership team will continually cultivate new leaders and help ensure that the teachers that serve WLA students are the most dedicated, reflective and effective in facilitating student learning. The leadership team will be held accountable by the principal.

### **Board of Advisors**

WLA will not have a CSC. Instead, WLA will have a Board of Advisors (BOA) consisting of the school leadership team, 1 business community representative, 2 core teachers, 2 arts teachers, 1 paraprofessionals, 2 students, 1 business/office manager, and 5 parent representatives – 2 middle school parents and 3 high school parents. The BOA will support the leadership team in securing resources and developing community partnerships necessary for success and will hold the leadership team accountable for reaching implementation and achievement goals.

The WLA board of advisors will review academic, organizational, and financial data and evaluate progress toward performance and implementation benchmarks quarterly. Student data analyses will be presented by the Assessment Board, disaggregated by academic subjects, student groups, grade level, and teacher. The Board of Advisors (BOA) will make recommendations for improvement based on trends and concerns that emerge. The school leadership team will make adjustments to the educational programming, scheduling, staffing, and resource allocations based on recommendations. The school principal will distribute a summary of data trends, board recommendations and actions to be taken to students, parents, and the community via a quarterly report and the school website.

The BOA will be held accountable for their participation in board meetings and active advocacy for the school. All BOA members will participate in a self-evaluation and will receive feedback from their peers on the impact of their involvement of school outcomes.

## **Community Advisory Councils**

WLA will establish a Business Advisory Council and an Arts Advisory Council to bridge communication and support from local businesses and local arts districts. The councils will serve to inform the community, seek support for curricular needs and foster partnerships for the Intensive courses.

## **Budget**

The West Leadership Academy will work directly with Generations Schools to develop and sustain a budget that will allow the school to have a common schedule (8 hour extended day) and school year (extended 200 days) with the West Generations Academy while keeping staff costs directly aligned with the DPS time expectations for teachers and the DCTA contract. This will allow West Leadership Academy to benefit from the innovative extended instructional time without the need to add non-sustainable resources for additional pay. The unified campus calendar and schedule will strengthen the West Campus and benefit students through increased time and access to rich experiences through the Intensives.

At the heart of the Generation Schools model is rethinking the way that schools utilize existing resources, particularly human capital and time to provide a more effective learning and teaching environment for both students and teachers. Also at the core of the Generation Schools model is a recognition that schools and districts are under increasingly tight financial pressures and that sustainable innovation must be accomplished with the funds that are currently available within the school system.

WLA has evaluated the resources necessary to implement the Generation Schools model, has considered the funding available through the SBB allocation and has developed a budget that is financially viable within two years of the school launch. As indicated in the school's Five Year Budget, the school is projected to be financially stable on an ongoing basis after that point as well.

### **Budget Narrative**

Generation Schools' sustainable and scalable model has been recognized by the Center for High-Impact Philanthropy as one of the nation's most cost-effective and promising whole-school redesigns. The Bridgespan Group described the Generation Schools model as an "exemplar" of whole-school redesigns that are financially viable. These 2010 reports and multiple others have underscored the financial (and programmatic) implications of how the innovative yet practical model successfully re-deploys existing school resources in the nation's largest public school district with support from the teachers union.

At its core, the Generation Schools full model accomplishes more without costing more by strategically implementing three over-lapping organizational strategies:

staggering teacher vacations,  
having "all-hands-on deck" at key times, and



creating sensible dual roles.

**Staggering teacher vacations:** We offer a 200-day school year for all students and schedule 20 days of high-caliber training for all teachers every year without increasing the teacher work year. To accomplish this, the Generation Schools model strategically staggers vacations for faculty. All teachers still work the same number of days as in any public school – just not all at the same time. This basic concept is similar to the calendars utilized in year-round schools. The key difference in the approach we are adopting is that students continue to attend school while their core teachers have staggered mid-year breaks. The Intensive Course teachers make this possible. WLA will not need a larger staff or over-time pay. As a result, the model is cost-neutral. Most extended learning models, by contrast, are extremely expensive since they either have to pay for an additional set of teachers or they have to pay over-time for a longer work week or year.

**All Hands On Deck:** By concentrating teachers on the highest priority courses, the models reduces class size substantially: approximately 30%. WLA does not need more staff than a typical school. We just prioritize staff responsibilities differently. The majority are trained and supported to teach Foundation Courses.

**Creating sensible dual roles for staff:** We provide all necessary services and responsibilities expected of an urban public school – instructional and administrative – without requiring a larger staff by creating sensible dual roles: a primary and a secondary role. For most staff, the primary role is to teach two Foundation Courses; the secondary role is to teach one Studio Course. For others, the secondary role may be to undertake an administrative responsibility for approximately an hour. This is certainly not a radically new concept for a school; in fact it is pretty common. What we have done differently is to schedule this in a more strategic manner. We have administrators and full-time specialty teachers; we just require fewer as a result.

## **TRADEOFFS FROM THE CONVENTIONAL MODEL**

As with any organizational model, choices are made about using existing resources. A school has to set priorities and then adopt effective and efficient strategies for accomplishing them. There are tradeoffs with the choices any school makes. The following outlines our tradeoffs from the conventional model.

**Staff Development:** We provide substantial staff development without shifting the best teachers out of the classroom. Tradeoff: We build no fulltime school-based staff developers into our school model. We are committed to extensive, ongoing staff development for all teachers. Yet we are implementing a strategy that is far less expensive and, we believe, more effective than the conventional model. The typical strategy which pulls the best teachers out of the classroom to make them fulltime staff developers, is an expensive strategy that has not yielded exceptional student outcomes.

Our model enables our best teachers to work closely with their peers without pulling them out of the classroom fulltime. Our work schedules allow us to offer a two-week summer conference for the whole staff, weeklong grade-level conferences twice annually for all teachers and a whole-school spring conference every year. As noted, our schedule also provides two hours of common-planning daily for every team of teachers. This commitment of time creates unparalleled opportunities to re-imagine professional development and create leadership roles for our best faculty to guide, influence and model effective instruction.

**Enrichment and Specialty Courses:** WLA will offer diverse programs by having all Foundation Course teachers also teach one Studio Course daily. Tradeoff: We have fewer full-time enrichment or specialized teachers built into our plan. The conventional model has evolved in a piecemeal fashion over decades, adding new staff to teach specialized courses or provide specialized services. This strategy adds costs and complexity to a school's organizational structure. It also tends to increase class size in core courses.

We offer these types of enrichment programs differently. We recruit and hire teachers to teach a core subject in the morning and a Studio Course each afternoon. This strategy aligns with a deep talent pool. Most people have expertise and interests outside of their core content area. They are skilled at art, music, dance, film, technology, language, fitness and more. Our strategy creates an opportunity to leverage these talents deliberately. We still include some fulltime specialty teachers, but there are fewer.

**Non-teaching Staff Roster:** Our roster has a greater percentage of professional staff who teach. Tradeoff: We have fewer fulltime staff hired for non-teaching roles. As noted, nearly 90% of our fulltime professionals are teachers. In the conventional model much of the staff does not teach core courses, or teach at all. Title I directors, athletic directors, special needs coordinators, special program directors, data managers, discipline room managers, media center/librarians, are some of the full-time roles a conventional school roster may include.

Again, we fill fewer of these roles with full-time staff. We provide the necessary services, but staff them differently. Full-time administrators are complemented by a small number of teachers who have non-teaching responsibilities for a small and sensible portion of their day or year without distracting from instructional or planning time.

**Special Education Instruction:** We provide ELL and special education services through Foundation Courses and as Studio Courses. Tradeoff: We scheduled staff to teach just SPED pullout services. Our ELL and SPED certified teachers teach Foundation Courses in the morning, offering inclusive services. These teachers then provide pullout services during Studio Course time. We believe far more teachers will be able to successfully teach a more inclusive classroom because we have 1) reduced class size dramatically, 2) expanded the time teachers have with each class, and 3) provided training and resources to successfully differentiate instruction. For decades, in conventional high-poverty schools, a greater and greater percentage of the budget has been reserved for special needs strategies that wait for a student

to fall behind before intervening. These conventional practices have isolated students with special needs, often tracking them into non-college-bound options.

### **Major Sources of Revenue**

A grant from the Wallace Foundation of \$172K in the aggregate is included in years 2 through 5 of the attached budget. It is intended that this grant will be used to subsidize the costs of a residency program for new school leaders.

Start-up funding of approximately \$946K will be provided by DPS to fund shortfalls in the planning year and year 1. It is expected that the revenues generated through the SBB allocations will be sufficient to cover the school's projected expenses beginning in year 3.

A \$20,000 planning grant has been approved by the Walton Family Foundation and the school will apply for a \$300,000 grant to support the launch of the school including the measures outlined in this Innovation application. Note that these funds are not included in the sources of revenue set forth on the attached budget.

### **Unique Operating Costs of Innovation Status**

The Generation Schools model in itself, which will be implemented at WLA, does not require any additional operating costs. By contrast, the Generation Schools model creates significant efficiencies for the district, adding substantial value to the DPS PPOR. This includes an expanded day and year that provides every student (who begins at the school in 6th grade) with the equivalent of more than two additional years of school by time he/she graduates. In addition, the school model incorporates over 20 days of high-caliber professional development into the work-year of every teacher.

### **Planning Costs**

WLA, as a new school, will incur costs of approximately \$216K in the planning year and will incur a \$575K shortfall in year 1 and \$156K in year 2. These costs are the result of launching a new school rather than the result of operating with innovation status. As noted above, and within this innovation application, the Generation Schools model which is being implemented at WLA incorporates significant innovation features; these do not contribute to any additional costs to the school.

The planning year costs will contribute the professional development and technical assistance support provided by the College Board and Generation Schools organizations. Year one costs will ensure that the necessary teaching and administrative staff are in place to successfully launch the school.

### **Support for Additional Operating Costs**

Start up funding to be provided by the district and funding to be provided by the Wallace Foundation will be used to fund these one-time costs. The leadership teams of WLA and Generation Schools has worked closely with the DPS Office of School Reform and Innovation (OSRI) to ensure that the short-term startup costs are well within the District expectations.

### **Financial Management**

West Leadership Academy will provide the structure and accountability mechanisms necessary to implement our financial plan with fidelity. Together with Generations Schools, the ongoing sustainable financial plan will be created and monitored to implement the campus wide model for scheduling and disbursement of human resources.

The Principal and Office Manager are responsible for the day to day management of WLA budget. They will work closely with the DPS Budget Liaison to receive the necessary training to implement sound financial practices to manage the school's finances. The Principal and Office Manager will monitor the budget on a weekly basis and review with the DPS Budget Liaison each month.

INNOVATION: OTHER PROGRAMS, POLICES, OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS

N/A

## WAIVERS

See Attached Document

## ADMINISTRATIVE AND FACULTY SUPPORT

- III. **Provide evidence of administrative and faculty support.**
- A. **Attach evidence that the majority of administrators support the innovation proposal.**  
Teresa Klava (West Leadership Academy principal) was involved in the development of the innovation proposal as well as Dr. Robert Villarreal, principal of West Generations Academy, also located in the same building.
- B. **Attach evidence that more than 50% of faculty have voted to support the proposal.**  
This is a new school. Faculty have not yet been hired.
- C. **If seeking waivers from collective bargaining agreements, attach evidence that more than 60% of faculty have voted to support the proposal.**  
This is a new school. Faculty have not yet been hired.
- D. **Attach statements of support from other staff employed at the school.**  
This is a new school. Support staff have not yet been hired.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- IV. **Provide evidence of community support**
- A. **Provide a letter of support showing majority of members support innovation status from the school's School Advisory Committee.**
- B. **Provide letters of support from community based organizations.**
- C. **If applicable, provide other evidence of community support.**

## APPENDIX A

### **Request Waivers in Curricular Materials & Instructional Design**

Schools requesting waivers from district curriculum are required to complete the questions in Appendix A.

Note that the approval process for securing waivers in these areas is separate from the approval process for securing innovation status. Waivers in curriculum, assessments, and/or promotion and graduation policies are granted by the Chief Academic Office, the Instructional Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendent. Requests for waivers in this application will be forwarded to the CAO and appropriate IS for review.

#### **Instructional Design**

**Building on overview of the school’s research-based educational program described in section III, describe the innovative educational program that is being proposed as part of the school’s innovation plan. Clearly articulate how it will lead to excellence in student achievement.**

The school will implement the College Board program with the SpringBoard curriculum as the base for academic instruction. This program has demonstrated success with similar populations around the country. Schools that have implemented the SpringBoard program in Colorado and DPS have shown significant success and growth in student performance.

**Provide an overview of the core curriculum.**

College Board’s College Readiness System, SpringBoard infuses rigor, sets high expectations, and expands access and opportunity for ALL students. SpringBoard provides culturally and personally relevant activities designed to engage students in problem solving, academic discourse and critical analysis. This unique approach to individualized learning provides teachers with a road map for opening the doors to a bright future for all students.

**Describe the research to support the proposed educational program and its effectiveness with the school’s target population.**

SpringBoard offers teachers of mathematics particular assistance in the area of mathematical problem solving. Researchers have studied the effect of teaching the problem-solving strategies to students and found significant improvements in their mathematical achievement (Collins, Brown, and Holum, 1991; Eshel and Kohavi, 2003; Ives and Hoy, 2003; King, 1991; Kroesbergen and Van Luit, 2003; Ostad, 1998; Pape, Bell, and Yetkin, 2003; Pugalee, 2004).

#### **Curricular Materials**

**Explain how the proposed non-adopted material aligns to state standards for the grade level.**

SpringBoard Mathematics with Meaning™ - Alignment to the Common Core Standards

The SpringBoard program provides a well aligned, coherent curriculum for schools and teachers to deliver the Common Core standards to students. The strength of the SpringBoard program continues to be its emphasis on rigor, conceptual understanding, applying knowledge, and communicating mathematical understanding.

### **Organization of Common Core Standards**

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for Mathematics are organized by grade level in Grades K–8. In the middle grades, the CCSS focus on the following domains:

- Ratios and Proportional Relationships
- The Number System
- Expressions and Equations
- Geometry
- Statistics and Probability
- Functions (Grade 8)

At the high school level, the standards are organized by these conceptual categories:

- Number and Quantity
- Algebra
- Functions
- Geometry
- Modeling
- Statistics and Probability

These conceptual categories show the body of knowledge students should learn in each category to be college and career ready, and to be prepared to study more advanced mathematics. To assist in delineating courses to address the high school standards, a Model Course Pathways based on the Common Core Standards is given. The pathways provide a model of one way to create possible groupings of standards into high school courses. However, the course descriptions are merely suggestions rather than prescriptions for curriculum or pedagogy, and the articulation of the standards into a coherent curriculum is left to states, districts, and schools.

For both middle school and high school standards, SpringBoard provides a proven, coherent curriculum that allows schools to meet the Common Core Standards.

### **Standards for Mathematical Practice**

In addition to the conceptual standards, the Common Core outlines Standards for Mathematical Practice. These standards describe the important “processes and proficiencies” that are of long-standing importance in mathematics education, including the NCTM process standards and the strands of mathematical proficiency specified in the National Research Council’s report *Adding It Up*.

The following paragraphs outline how SpringBoard Mathematics fully addresses these Standards for Mathematical Practice.

**Explain how the proposed non-adopted material has a sequence that is equally or more rigorous than that adopted by DPS.**

The sequence for the SpringBoard math curriculum is:  
Mathematics with Meaning™:



Grades 6–12

- Middle School Math 1
- Middle School Math 2
- Middle School Math 3
- Algebra 1
- Geometry
- Algebra 2
- Precalculus
- AP Calculus

This is equally or more rigorous than the standard DPS curriculum

**Explain how the proposed non-adopted material better prepares students for post-secondary readiness.**

The College Board has backmapped, from AP courses and college-level work, the skills and knowledge students need to be successful in preparing for college. SpringBoard is a research-based program designed to prepare students for AP and college success through integrated instructional materials, formative assessments and sustained professional development. SpringBoard provides a vertical alignment of these skills starting in grade 6, scaffolding them through grade 12, to ensure that ALL students are prepared for the rigorous courses required of today's students. SpringBoard was developed using the Understanding by Design model, employing proven strategies to enable students to “think deeply” and take personal responsibility for their learning by:

- Emphasizing higher-order thinking skills that challenge them to aim higher and achieve more
- Helping them personalize and own their learning
- Encouraging self-exploration and the application of learning strategies that work best for them as individuals

Westat, a leading research organization, conducted an independent longitudinal research study comparing the results of SpringBoard and non-SpringBoard districts. SpringBoard was shown to have “significant benefit in increasing student achievement.”

**Explain how the proposed non-adopted material aligns to non-flexible requirements (e.g., State and DPS standards and assessments; unit scope and sequence).**

SpringBoard not only meets state standards but also exceeds them through further alignment with the Common Core State Standards and the rigorous College Board Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

**Explain how the proposed non-adopted material is research-based for the school's population.**

West Leadership Academy anticipates a student population with:

- High poverty
- High ELL (mixed ELA-L and ELA-S)
- Predominantly black and Hispanic
- Many below grade level
- Some requiring enrichment
- Some special education

- Many first-generation college

Research studies have demonstrated SpringBoard success with these populations including (but not limited to) urban students, ELL, special education, and first-generation college students. Urban districts have implemented SpringBoard to close AP achievement gaps and accelerate academic achievement for ALL students on state assessments and towards making AYP. Success stories and efficacy studies can be reviewed in detail at: <http://springboardprogram.collegeboard.org/case-study>.

**Explain how the school will minimize the impact of mobility (both student and teacher) with the use of alternative sequence.**

The impact of teacher mobility will be minimized through ongoing professional development for new and experienced SpringBoard teachers.

The impact of student mobility will be minimized through SpringBoard's emphasis on differentiated learning strategies to engage learners of all levels in challenging learning experiences.

**Explain how the proposed non-adopted material will be accessible to all students. If the non-adopted material will not be accessible to all students, please explain why.**

SpringBoard will be accessible to most students because:  
Differentiated learning strategies are incorporated in teaching suggestions for each activity  
Training emphasizes the use of learning strategies to meet special needs  
Collaborative activities enable all students to be engaged

Many districts have experienced success using SpringBoard with their ELL and special education students.

The SpringBoard student materials are not currently available in Spanish, so ELA-S students will have limited accessibility to the SpringBoard material. To provide equal learning for the West Leadership Academy ELA-S students, a Spanish-language math curriculum will be provided to the ELA-S students. The teachers of the ELA-S will participate in SpringBoard training and will engage in collaborative unit and lesson planning with the SpringBoard teachers on grade level so they can implement the same instructional strategies and the horizontal teams can align units and drop appropriate SpringBoard content into their lessons as the ELA-S students transition to learning in English.

**Explain how the proposed non-adopted material promotes academic achievement for diverse groups of students.**

The SpringBoard program takes advantage of years of research in cognitive science to support the design of an instructional program that successfully engages all students in challenging learning experiences:

- Rigorous content, aligned to standards, has been carefully articulated in a scope and sequence that builds knowledge and skills incrementally from 6th grade through 12th grade in both English language arts and mathematics

- Embedded in each lesson are numerous opportunities to introduce, model, and then practice and evaluate the application of research-based strategies in reading, writing, oral proficiency, collaboration and problem solving.
- The instructional materials are grounded in real-world situations and are designed to be engaging and interactive.
- Standardized formative assessments with scoring rubrics are embedded in each lesson
- Teachers are trained in the use of the model instructional units and strategies.

Each of the SpringBoard strategies has been chosen from the most effective classroom practices that have been time-tested by educators in instructional situations so students of all ability levels are able to engage with and then master the content successfully through the utilization of the various strategies. Many of the strategic approaches have been researched through empirical and experimental studies as well.

**Explain how the non-adopted material decreases the potential for tracking.**

SpringBoard decreases the potential for tracking by providing teachers with specific guidance for differentiating instruction for students at varying learning levels.

**Detail the total purchase cost of the proposed non-adopted material and the source of funds for each year of operation.**

The purchase cost of the student materials varies by grade. Initial estimates which assume a maximum enrollment of 125 students per grade and which include costs for requisite staff training are:

- Year 1 (Grades 6,9) - \$10,300
- Year 2 (Grades 6,7,9,10) - \$18,433
- Year 3 (Grades 6-11) - \$23,230
- Year 4 (Grades 6-12) - \$25,629

Purchases will be made annually based on the number of students enrolled in West Leadership Academy and revised actual costs will be provided by College Board at that time. As outlined in the College Board Schools Memorandum of Understanding, DPS will contract with College Board annually to obtain these materials.

**APPENDIX B**  
**Request Alternative Benchmark Assessment Program**

Schools requesting waivers from DPS's benchmark assessment program are required to complete the questions in Appendix B.

Note that the approval process for securing waivers in these areas is separate from the approval process for securing innovation status. Waivers in curriculum, assessments, and/or promotion and graduation polices are granted by the Chief Academic Office, the Instructional Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendent. Requests for waivers in this application will be forwarded to the CAO and appropriate IS for review.

1. Identify *valid and reliable* assessments your school proposes to use to assess student learning needs and progress throughout the year. Explain how these assessments align with the school's curriculum, performance goals and state standards.
2. Explain how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole throughout the school year and at the end of each academic year.
3. Explain *how* and *how frequently* the school will collect and analyze diagnostic, formative, predictive, and summative student academic achievement data, use the data to refine and improve instruction, and report the data to the school community.
4. Identify the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be responsible and involved in the collection and analysis of assessment data.

Not Applicable. West Leadership Academy is not requesting any waivers from DPS's assessment

**APPENDIX C**  
**Request Alternative Graduation & Promotion Standards**

Schools requesting waivers from DPS’s graduation and promotion standards are required to complete the questions in Appendix C.

Note that the approval process for securing waivers in these areas is separate from the approval process for securing innovation status. Waivers in curriculum, assessments, and/or promotion and graduation polices are granted by the Chief Academic Office, the Instructional Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendent. Requests for waivers in this application will be forwarded to the CAO and appropriate IS for review.

1. Explain the school’s policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next. Describe how and when promotion and graduation criteria will be communicated to parents and students.
2. Provide the school’s exit standards for graduating students. Exit standards should clearly set forth what students in the last grade you anticipate serving will know and be able to do.
3. Explain how graduation and/or promotion requirements will ensure student readiness for college and other postsecondary opportunities.
4. If it differs from DPS, explain how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements for the school will exceed those required by DPS Policy IKF, explain any additional requirements  
Not Applicable. West Leadership Academy is not requesting any waivers from DPS’s promotion policies.

**APPENDIX D**  
**School Performance Framework Goal Setting Worksheet**

<b>DPS School Performance Framework Indicators</b>	<b>Innovation School Annual Achievement Goals and Measures</b>
<i><b>Academic Performance &amp; Success</b></i>	
<p><b>Student Growth Over Time Toward State Standards</b>, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSAP and other assessments chosen, including assessments in compliance with the Colorado Basic Literacy Act</li> </ul>	<p>By 2016 Students enrolled continuously for more than one academic year, will have growth percentiles exceeding the 65th percentile, in math, reading and writing.</p>
<p><b>Student Achievement Level/Status</b>, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSAP and other assessments chosen, including assessments in compliance with the Colorado Basic Literacy Act</li> <li>• Colorado English Language Assessment (CELA)</li> <li>• Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)</li> <li>• Achievement gaps (FRL, ELL, Special Education, and ethnic subgroups)</li> </ul>	<p>85% of students will complete between 1 and 2 years of credits toward graduation annually. This goal will be re-evaluated annually to increase the bar</p> <p>Move 15% of students in the unsatisfactory category to the partially proficient and 15% of students from the partially proficient to the proficient category in year one and re-establish goal after initial baselines are established</p> <p>Increase the number of students who score proficient or advanced on the CSAP by 7% annually in math, reading, and writing, with the ultimate goal of reaching 90% proficient or advanced by 2019</p> <p>85% of all ELL students will move one level of proficiency annually on the Colorado English Language Assessment (CELA).</p> <p>West Leadership Academy will demonstrate a consistent trend to annually reduce the gap by 10% between performance of white and minority students and decrease the gap by 10% in the Median Student Growth Percentile among ELL and SPED students to non ELL and SPED students as measured by the Colorado Growth Model. The reduction will come as a result of larger</p>

	Median Growth Percentiles for ELL and SPED students, and not a decrease MGP for non ELL and SPED students.)
<b>Post-Secondary Readiness</b> (for high schools), including the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colorado ACT scores</li> <li>• Graduation rate</li> <li>• College acceptance rate</li> </ul>	<p>Will establish a baseline and track student progress toward strong college acceptance scores on the ACT (20-30) and/or SAT (500-600) exams. These tests are key components of the College Board program and we will strive to continually increase performance in these areas. Once a baseline is determined we will set rigorous goals for improvement.</p> <p>10% above district average by 2016 (Our first graduating class) Drops to half of current rate in five years or 5.09%</p> <p>Post-secondary enrollment target of 75%+ by 2016 (Our first graduating class)</p>
<b>Student Engagement</b> , including the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance rate</li> <li>• Student satisfaction</li> </ul>	Maintain 90% average attendance for year one and re-evaluate annually
<b>School-Specific Educational Objectives</b> (must be based on <i>valid, reliable</i> measures)	
<b>Organizational &amp; Financial Viability</b>	
<b>School Demand</b> , including the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment rate</li> <li>• Re-enrollment rate</li> <li>• Continuous enrollment rate</li> </ul>	Student enrollment rate will be 90% + of the projected enrollment described in the application with a re-enrollment rate of 85% or higher
<b>Financial</b> Fundraising goals Reserves Other	<p>West Leadership Academy will operate in a fiscally conservative manner and be a good steward of public funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual budgets will show an effective allocation of financial resources and are balanced budgets submitted to DPS.</li> <li>• Annual audits show that MIS meets or exceeds professional accounting standards.</li> </ul>



	All fundraising efforts will be led by the school's PTSA in a direct giving campaign.
<b>Leadership &amp; Governance Quality</b>	90% of staff will be satisfied with the school's leadership and working environment.
<b>Parent &amp; Community Engagement</b> , including the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent satisfaction</li> <li>• Parent response rate on DPS Parent Satisfaction Survey</li> </ul>	Will establish baselines for both and then seek to implement specific measures to increase satisfaction
<b>School-Specific Organizational Objectives</b>	90% of all students and staff at WLA will participate in least three days of service learning each school year.  90% of staff will make home visits