



**A PETITION FOR CHARTER RENEWAL**

**For the Renewal Term: JULY 1, 2014 – JUNE 30, 2019**

**SUBMITTED TO  
The Board of Trustees  
CAPISTRANO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
March 20, 2014**

## Table of Contents

AFFIRMATIONS.....	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	6
ELEMENT 1: EDUCATIONAL PLAN.....	15
ELEMENT 2: MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES.....	46
ELEMENT 3: OUTCOME MEASUREMENT .....	51
ELEMENT 4: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE .....	65
ELEMENT 5: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS.....	70
ELEMENT 6: HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES .....	76
ELEMENT 7: RACIAL & ETHNIC BALANCE .....	78
ELEMENT 8: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS .....	79
ELEMENT 9: INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL AUDITS .....	82
ELEMENT 10: SUSPENSION/EXPULSION PROCESS.....	83
ELEMENT 11: EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEMS .....	89
ELEMENT 12: STUDENT ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES.....	92
ELEMENT 13: RETURN RIGHTS OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES.....	93
ELEMENT 14: DISPUTE RESOLUTION.....	94
ELEMENT 15: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING (EERA) .....	96
ELEMENT 16: PROCEDURES FOR CLOSURE.....	97
ELEMENT 17: FINANCIAL PLANNING, REPORTING & ACCOUNTABILITY .....	99
ELEMENT 18: DISTRICT SERVICES .....	100
ELEMENT 19: POTENTIAL CIVIL LIABILITY EFFECTS .....	101
ELEMENT 20: MISCELLANEOUS .....	106

## APPENDIX

- APPENDIX A: BELL SCHEDULE
- APPENDIX B: 2013-15 ACADEMIC CALENDAR
- APPENDIX C: BOARD ROSTER
- APPENDIX D: ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
- APPENDIX E: BYLAWS
- APPENDIX F: CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY
- APPENDIX G: CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE
- APPENDIX H: PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK
- APPENDIX I: BUDGET

## AFFIRMATIONS

As the authorized lead petitioner, I, Jeremy Cavallaro, hereby certify that the information submitted in this petition for a California public charter school to be named Community Roots Academy, the “Charter School”), and to be located within the boundaries of the Capistrano Unified School District (the “District”) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that this petition does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public charter school; and further, I understand that if awarded a charter, the Charter School will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School, including but not limited to:

- The Charter School shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Sections 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)(1)]
- The Charter School shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of Community Roots Academy for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)]
- The Charter School shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- The Charter School shall not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- The Charter School shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School, and who submit a timely application; unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case each application will be given equal chance of admission through a public random drawing process. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or his or her parents within the State. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(C). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(A)-(C)]
- The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in

Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]

- The Charter School shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.
- The Charter School shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]
- The Charter School shall ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools is required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to noncore, non-college preparatory teachers. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(l)]
- The Charter School shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- The Charter School shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D).
- If a pupil is expelled or leaves the Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card and health information. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(3)]
- The Charter School shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47612.5(a)]
- The Charter School shall, on a regular basis, consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(c)]
- The Charter School shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities. [Ref. California Education Code Sections 47605 and 47605.1]

- The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. California Education Code Sections 47612(b), 47610]
- The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Public Records Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- The Charter School shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum of school days. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960]

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Jeremy Cavallaro

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Date

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

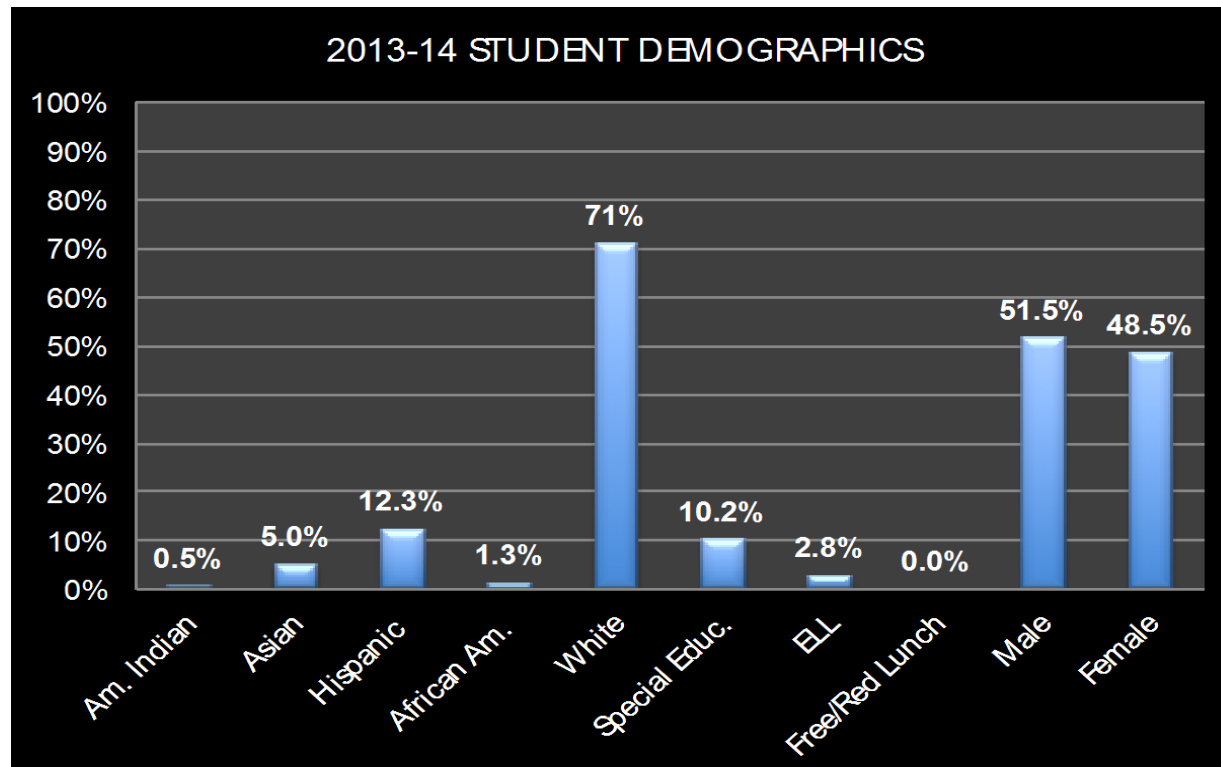
Community Roots Academy is a WASC Accredited charter school that provides its students with a rigorous and enriching Project-Based Learning Environment using Inquiry-based instruction through meaningful real-world context as they prepare to become 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars.

## INTRODUCTION

Community Roots Academy is in its third-year of operation and currently serves a total of over 400 students in grades K-7. The following chart illustrates our school's enrollment by grade level and school year. CRA has a traditional school year calendar with instruction delivered in self-contained classrooms.

DE								
	KINDER	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3	GRADE 4	GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7
2011-12	56	31	22	0	0	0	0	0
2012-13	54	56	55	28	0	0	20	0

The following chart reflects the current student demographics at Community Roots Academy:



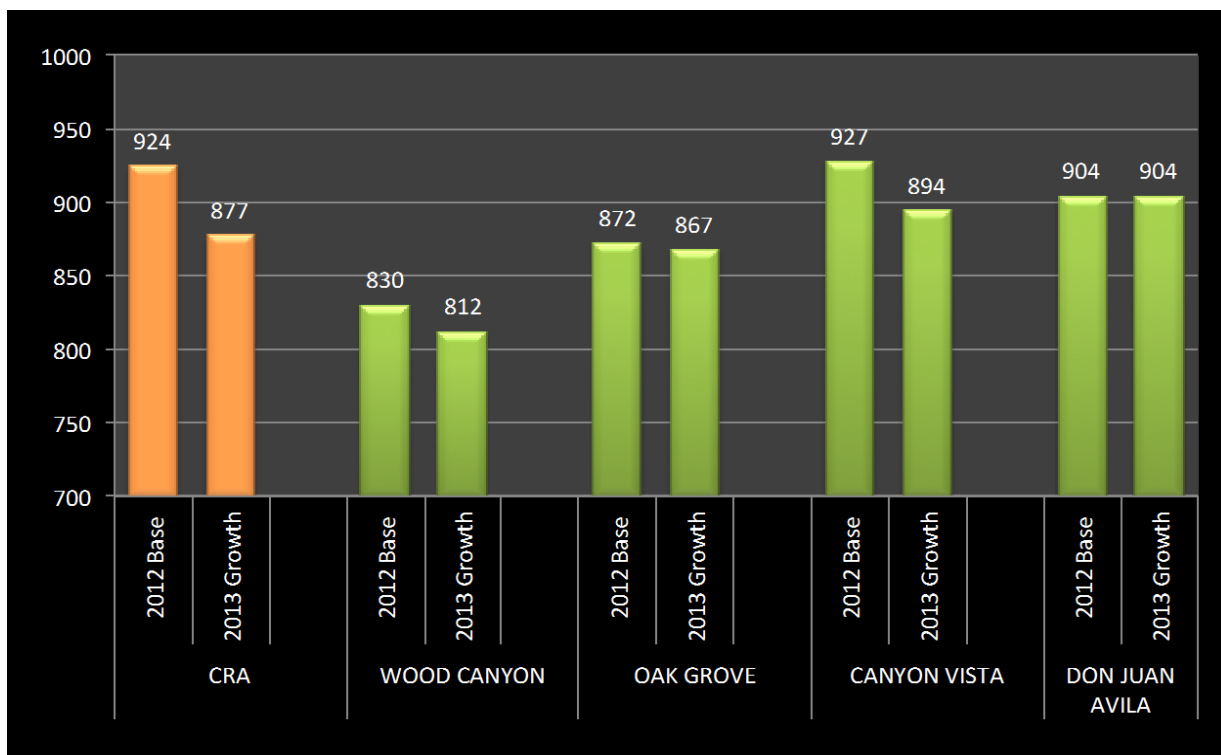
## PROJECTED GROWTH

Community Roots Academy will expand annually to serve a total of 684 students in grades K-8 by the 2017-18 school year.

PROJECTED ENROLLMENT BY YEAR						
GRADE	2013-14	2014-2015	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
K	83	84	84	84	84	84
1	61	90	90	90	90	90
2	60	60	90	90	90	90
3	62	60	60	90	90	90
4	64	60	60	60	90	90
5	30	60	60	60	60	60
6	24	30	60	60	60	60
7	26	30	60	60	60	60
8	0	30	30	60	60	60
<b>TOTAL ENROLLMENT</b>						<b>684</b>

## STUDENT OUTCOMES

The following chart provides a two-year comparison of our school's Academic Performance Index (API) with neighboring public schools.



In the 2011-12 school year, CRA tested a total of 19 students. In the 2012-13 school year, then total number of students tested was 99. Therefore, API results must be interpreted with caution as noted by the California Department of Education (CDE). CRA also earned a 2012 Statewide Ranking of 10 due to its API results. CRA did not have an API Similar Schools Ranking due to the number of students tested (n=99).

The following charts reflect our school's Annual Measurable Objectives (percentage of students who performed Proficient/advanced) both school wide and by subgroup for ELA and mathematics CST for the past 2 years. The numerically significant subgroup identified is White students.

The following analysis was made:

- In 2012, a total of 18 students were tested and included in the school's API/AYP
- Of the students tested in 2012, a total of 11 were identified as the following subgroup: White
- In 2013, a total of 99 students were tested and included in the school's API/AYP.
- Of the students tested in 2013, a total of 77 students were identified as the following subgroup: White

Despite the fact that the CDE has only identified one numerically significant subgroup for CRA, the following charts include other subgroups tested, although not numerically significant since our school strives to educate and close the achievement gap for all students.

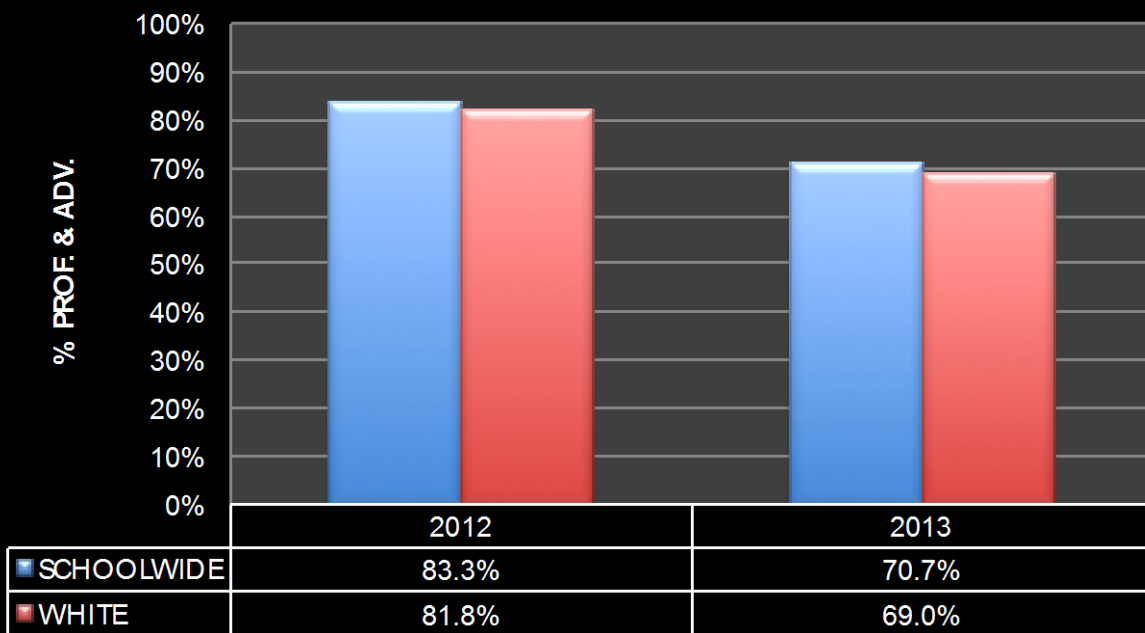
The following charts reflect the following:

- In 2012: 83.3% of students school wide performed at Proficient/Advanced in ELA; and 83.3% in mathematics.
- In 2013: 70.7% of students school wide performed at Proficient/Advanced in ELA; and 77.8% in mathematics
- In ELA: 81.8% of White students scored at Proficient/Advanced in 2012; and 69% in 2013.
- In math: 72.7% of White students scored at Proficient/Advanced in 2012; and 78% in 2013.

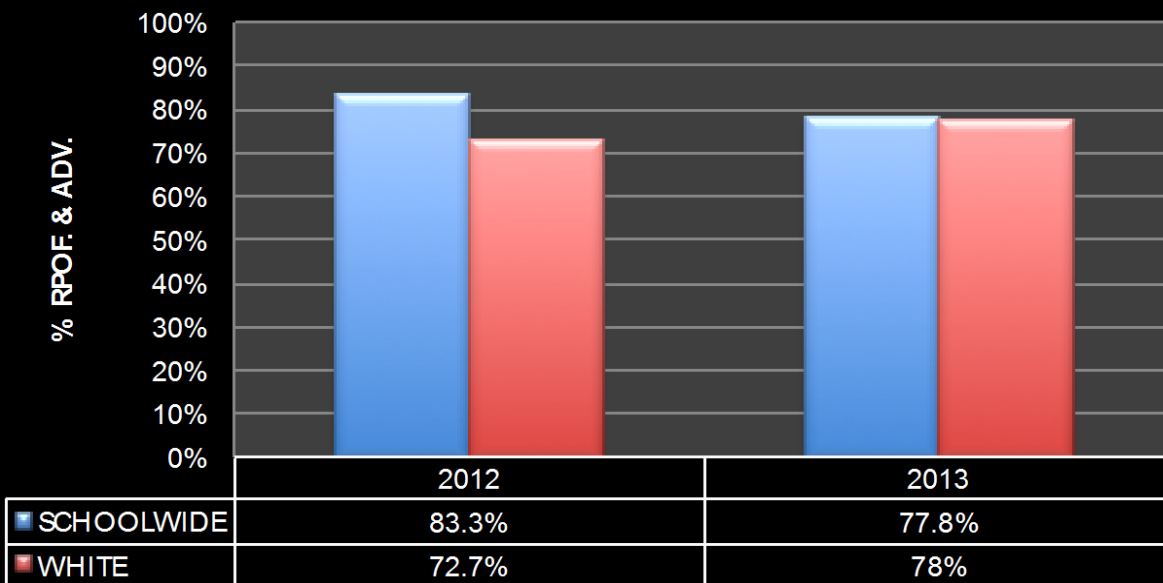
The decline in performance in 2013 must be interpreted with caution as the difference in the number of students tested in 2012 compared with 2013 was statistically significant, a comparison of 18 (2012) students versus 99 students (2013).

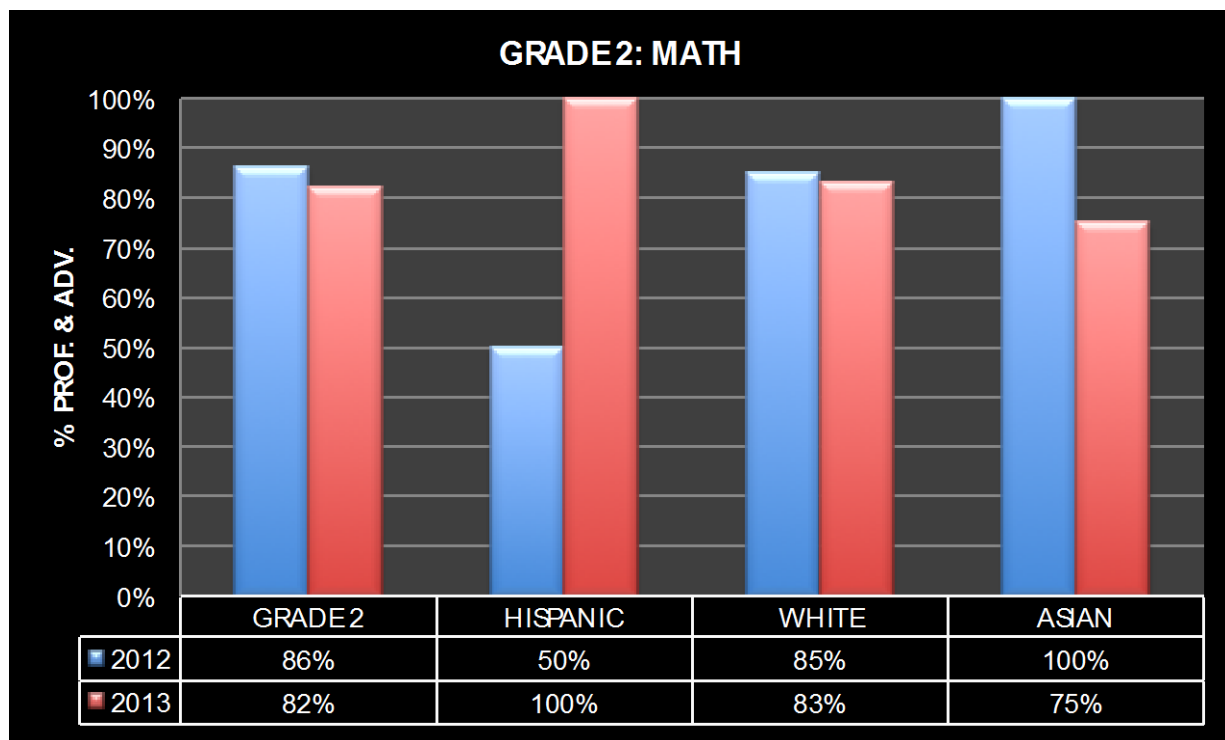
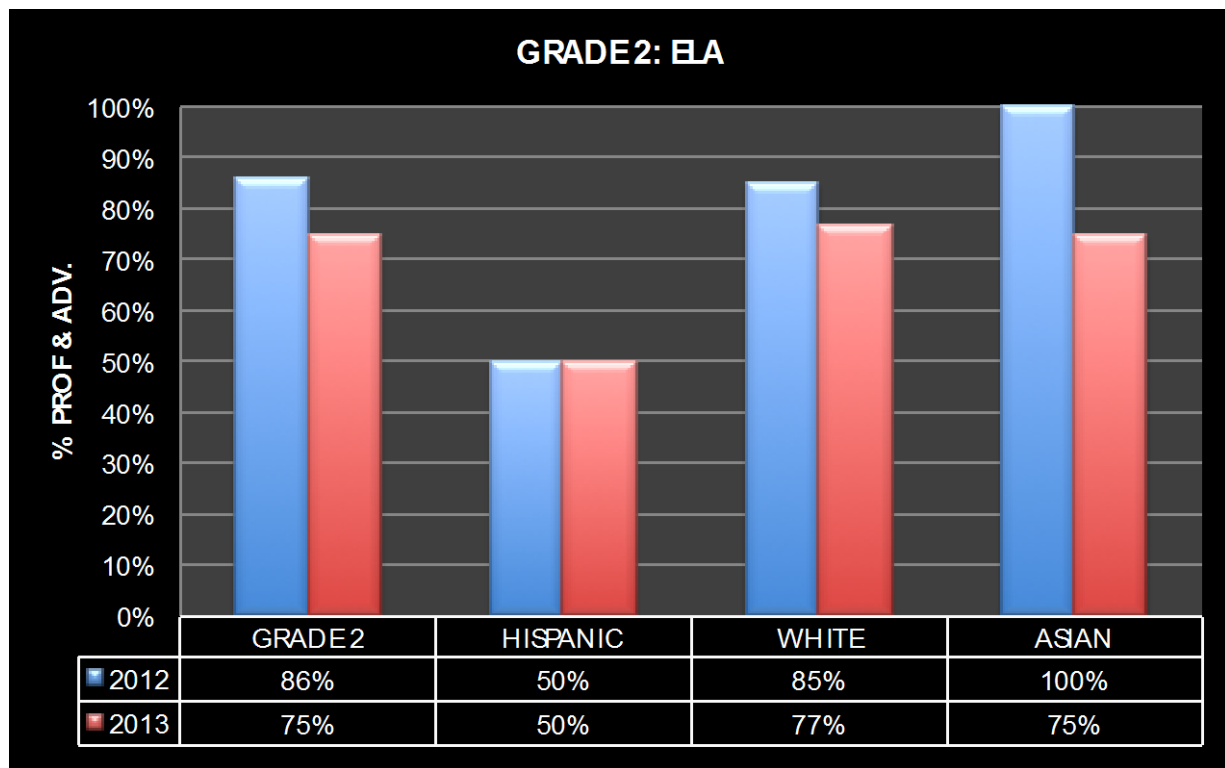


### ELA AYP: 2012-13

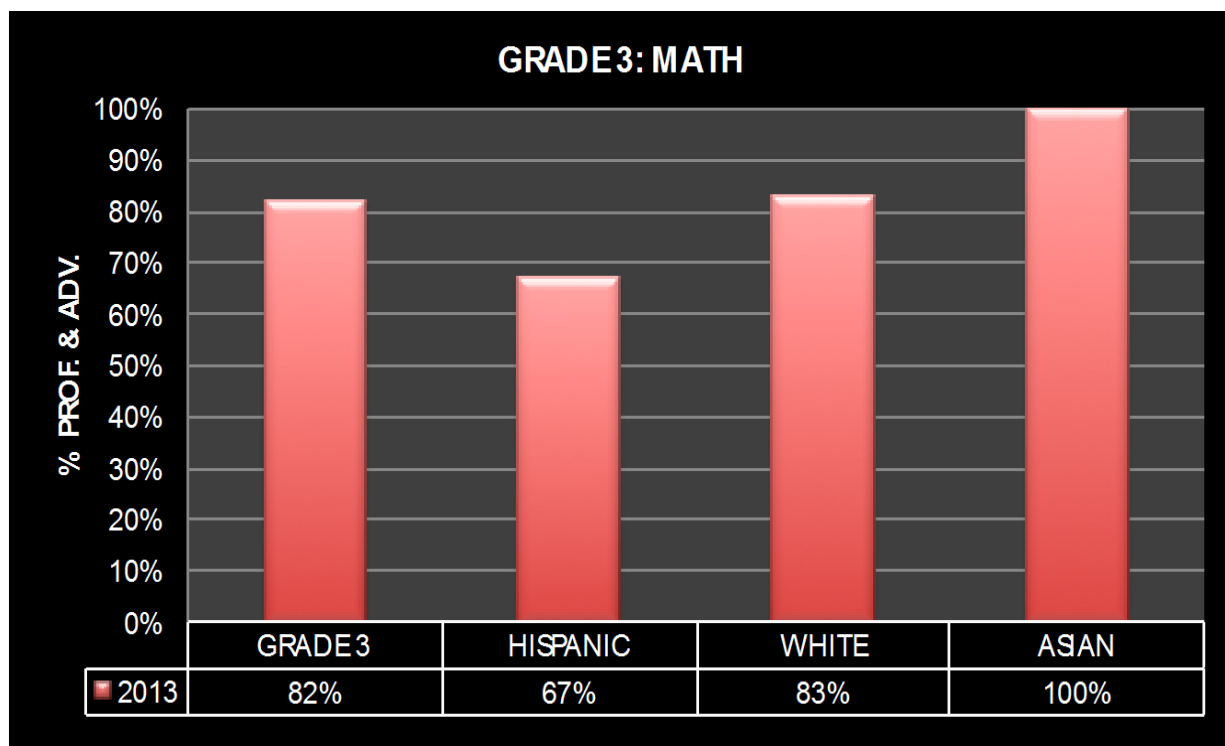
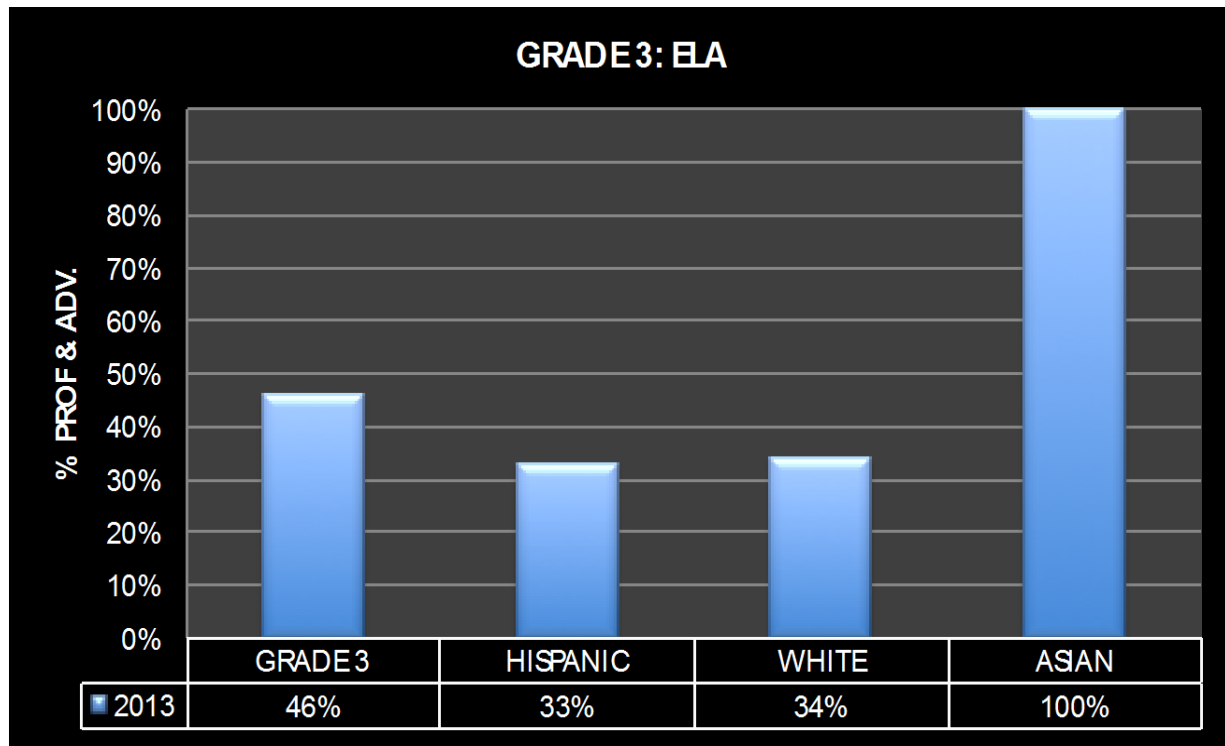


### MATH AYP: 2012 -13

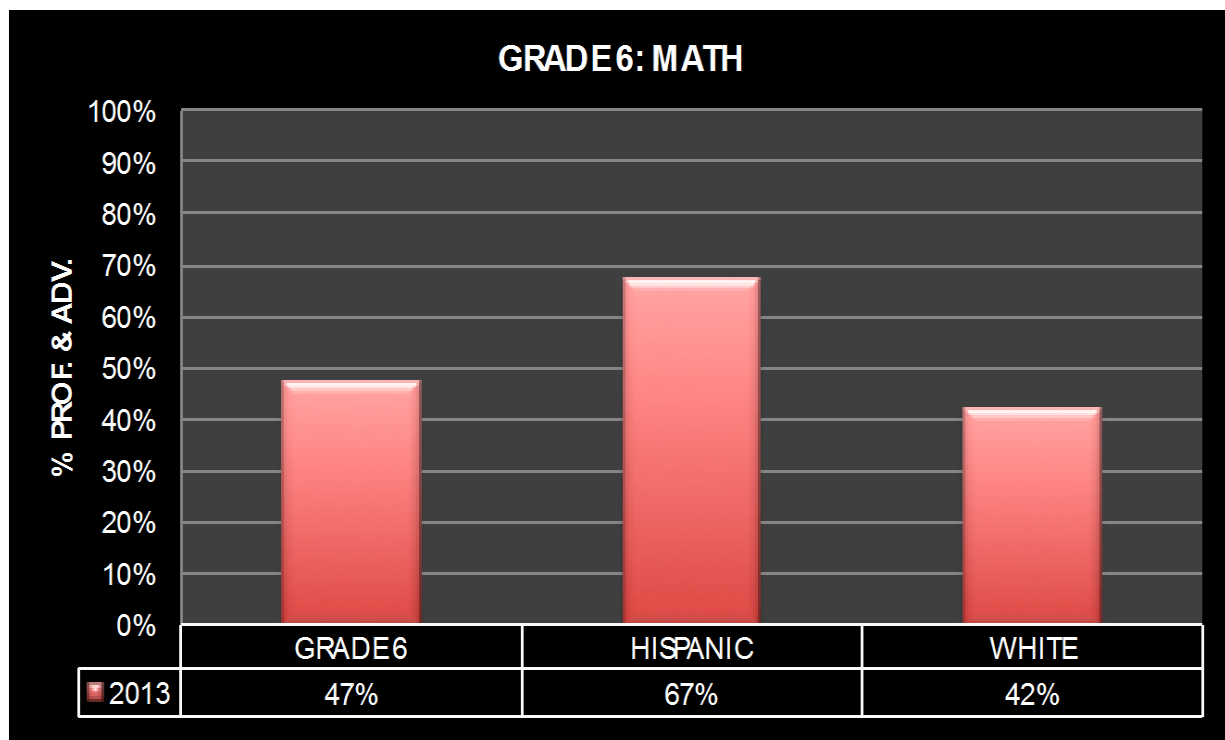
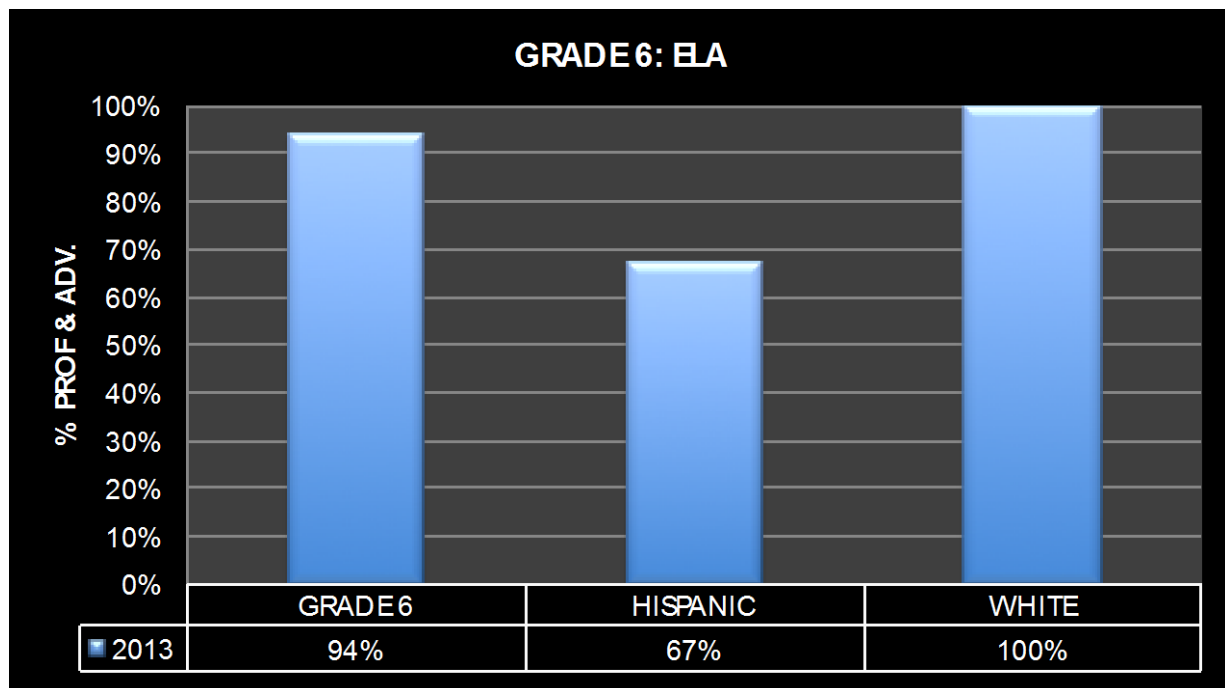




In the 2012-13 school year, CRA expanded to serve grades 3 and 6.



In the 2012-13 school year, CRA did not have any Asian students enrolled in the grade 6. Therefore, the following chart reflects two identified subgroups, although not numerically significant due to the number of students tested, which was under 100 students school wide.







As a result of preparing for a successful WASC Accreditation, Community Roots Academy developed the following measurable student outcomes that are embedded in daily

instruction and practice and thus reflects the school's core values, set of expectations and assets every CRA student will gain.




Community Roots Academy graduating students will be:

***Community Roots Academy graduates are:***




***Critical Thinkers who:***

-  Apply, analyze, identify, synthesize and evaluate information and experiences.
-  Connect the skills and content learned across the curriculum and evaluate multiple points of view.
-  Use the **Inquiry Method** to address a problem, hypothesize, observe, and draw conclusions as they investigate an issue/problem.
-  Collaborate and Participate in Experiential Learning and utilize problem-solving techniques.




***Effective Communicators who:***

-  Demonstrate Content area and grade level mastery in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, History and Science
-  Collaborate, work effectively, and manage interpersonal relationships with peers.
-  Participate in projects, presentations, town meetings, and host exhibitions, which connect students to the 'real world' and the community.

***21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars who:***

-  Use technology effectively as a learning tool to access information.
-  Demonstrate the ability to integrate technology as an effective tool in their daily lives.
-  Use Visual and Performing Arts as learning tools and a means of expression.

***Socially Responsible Global Citizens who:***

-  Embrace and respect cultural diversity through the understanding of our Global World.
-  Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of American and World History and the values of different cultures (through a multi-cultural curriculum)
-  Contribute to social activism through school wide projects.

In the past 2 years, Community Roots Academy has accomplished the following:

- Average attendance rate above 95%
- Full WASC Accreditation
- Recipient of the CDE Public Charter School Grant Program: \$350,000
- Recipient of the Aliso Viejo Schools Grant,\$10,000
- Developed & exude a Data-Driven Culture, where decision-making across all areas is based on the analysis of data. Our school administers a plethora of student assessments that allow teachers and the administration to check for student understanding on a daily basis.
- CRA was the recipient of the “Zero Waste School” as a result of our recycling and composting program led by students.
- CRA has implemented the Habits of Mind, school wide that are embedded in our core values, daily practice, and student measurable outcomes.
- CRA has a highly successful parent engagement program, evidenced by the large number of parents who volunteer at school wide events, in the classroom that support student learning and funding academic programs
- CRA has adopted a 1:1 Google Chromebooks program to prepare students for both 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and the Smarter Balanced Statewide Assessments.
- CRA has established beneficial relationships with community partners such as Environmental Nature Center, University of California Irvine, Ocean Institute, Ecology Center, Inside the Outdoors, Surfrider Foundation, the City of Aliso Viejo and others.

## **ELEMENT 1: EDUCATIONAL PLAN**

*“The educational program of the school, designed, among other things, to describe what the school intends to accomplish, to identify those whom the school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an “educated person” in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling students to become self-motivated, competent and lifelong learners. A description, for the charter school, of annual goals, for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals. A charter petition may identify additional school priorities, the goals for the school priorities, and the specific annual actions to achieve these goals.” Education Code §47605(b)(5)(A)(i-ii).*

CRA shall at all times comply with the terms and requirements of the free schools guarantee of the California Constitution, Article IX, Section 5, in all aspects of the CRA program.

## **MISSION**

Community Roots Academy (“CRA”) is a Kindergarten through eighth grade learning community where learning is embedded in a meaningful real world context and where children are deliberately taught to see the connections between their formal education and the world. Not only do CRA students meet and exceed the California content standards, but they also are enabled as leaders now and for the future by learning to think independently, to solve problems creatively, to articulate their ideas and to work productively while collaborating with diverse people. At CRA, students learn to combine curiosity and application, leading to a deep understanding of content, self-motivation and confidence. These skill sets empower students to take on challenges to become who they want to be and excel beyond their potential.

## **VISION**

CRA is a learning community with rigorous academic standards. We are dedicated to building strong relationships between all of our members. We are a learning environment that embodies the 21<sup>st</sup> century values we teach and practice. Collaboration, creativity, adaptability, reflection and evaluation are embedded in the CRA philosophy, governance, curriculum and daily operations. CRA supports and values children’s different learning styles and reaches all students through meaningful project-based curriculum. Our educators collaborate with community-based organizations to create learning experiences to build efficacy, confidence, empathy, a sense of purpose and connections to the real world. CRA is a place to learn about whom we are and empowers us to grow into the individuals we aspire to be. CRA students graduate as independent thinkers, responsible citizens and active community members.

## TARGET POPULATION

Community Roots Academy serves the community of Aliso Viejo. Currently, our school serves a total of 410 students in Grades K-5 and 6-8 and is expanding to serve a total of 504 students in grades K-8, by the 2014-15 school year.

The following chart illustrates the projected enrollment by grade level and school year.

PROJECTED ENROLLMENT BY YEAR						
GRADE	2013-14	2014-2015	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
K	83	84	84	84	84	84
1	61	90	90	90	90	90
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6	24	30	60	60	60	60
7	26	30	60	60	60	60
8	0	30	30	60	60	60
TOTAL ENROLLMENT	684					

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Community Roots Academy (“CRA”) builds the skills, knowledge and attitudes that empower individuals to thrive in their future.

- **Values for Today and Tomorrow** – CRA instills in its students the skills for success in our global society: mastery of fundamental academic skills in addition to problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, initiative, effective communication, adaptability and evaluating information and imagination all of which are requirements found in the Common Core State Standards. We teach, model and exude these values in our philosophy, governance, curriculum, instructional practice and operation.
- **Project-Based Curriculum** – The CRA curriculum includes engaging learning experiences that involve students in complex real-world projects through which they develop and apply skills and knowledge. Project-based learning empowers students with the skills for College & Career Readiness.
- **Community Partnership** – Community partnership is integral to effective education. Strong communities foster positive development in students. The CRA community includes students, parents, administration, teachers, community-based organizations, universities and national and international educational institutions.
- **Model Learning Community** – At CRA, all members of our professional community continually seek learning and growth opportunities. Faculty and staff participate in an



extensive professional development program and also partner with colleagues to foster a challenging academic environment for all. Highly qualified and motivated teachers collaborate in decision-making and develop curriculum while guiding, supporting and evaluating students.

- **Environmental Stewardship** – CRA curriculum, policies and practices are designed to promote environmental awareness and stewardship.

## **ACTUALIZING OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

**Values for Today and Tomorrow:** We believe there are specific skills and attitudes that make individuals and organizations successful in today's world."

- Mastery of fundamental academic skills (reading, writing and mathematics) is the foundation of an effective education.
- Proficiency at problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, written and oral communication and evaluation are essential skills for success.
- Adaptability, initiative and imagination are habits of mind that are critical to success.

All professional members of the Community Roots Academy learning community embrace and utilize these essential skills in their practices.

CRA's deliberate curriculum and framework enable students in the CRA learning community to develop these skills and habits. CRA's learning environment nurtures close relationships among students and school professionals through modeling and experiential learning and intentional connections to meaningful world experiences.

### **"We value individuals and their history."**

- Teachers implement a multicultural curriculum through units of study that are designed to increase student awareness and appreciation of various world cultures.
- CRA conducts regular Town Meetings where community members gather to learn about their similarities and differences through student work exhibitions and student-led presentations.
- CRA students participate in and host exhibitions showing their work product and what they have learned with the school community and the general public.

### **1. Project-Based Curriculum:** "We believe people learn best through collaboration and experiential learning both inside and outside the classroom."

- Teachers collaborate to create project-based curriculum.
- Partnerships with community-based organizations provide students with opportunities to work together to create connections to the real world and to give back to their community while enhancing their curriculum-based learning.
- The curriculum incorporates field trips and field study to enrich student and teacher learning experiences.

- Teachers plan and examine student work in grade level teams.
- Teachers share their expertise, set and maintain individual professional goals and improve their instructional practices in collaborative teams.

**“We teach students problem-solving and critical thinking skills, essential attributes to success in the global marketplace.”**

- Learning at CRA is based upon inquiry and guiding questions.
- Challenging and relevant texts are integrated into all grade level curricula.
- Through modeling and instruction, students learn to respect and challenge intellectual ideas, to question responses and to form opinions in an environment free of judgment.
- Students work in cooperative learning groups.
- Through questioning, debate and expression, students examine their points of view, as well as the perspectives of others.
- Students are exposed to a variety of cultures, races, religions, gender, health, political and other belief systems. Students learn to recognize and appreciate the differences and similarities between peoples.

**“We believe in authentic instruction and assessment that is adaptable to meet the needs of all learners.”**

- Students’ academic and social growth is measured through portfolio review, informal teacher assessment and analysis of goal setting, in addition to mandated state testing.
- Assessment modifications are made to meet the needs of any individuals with learning differences.
- Assessment is an integral part of the learning process, providing a valuable tool for reflection and growth.

**2. Community Partnership: “We believe strong communities foster positive development for students.”**

- Teachers and school leaders maintain close relationships with students and their families.
- CRA maintains its small size (under 300 students in K-5 and in 6-8) to help ensure strong relationships among students and teachers.
- Students maintain positive relationships with all adults working at or in conjunction with CRA through community open work and student advisory.
- The school establishes and maintains partnerships with community-based organizations and educational institutions to integrate expertise and real world connections into our students’ learning experiences.
- CRA is committed to parent communication and involvement that is achieved, in part, by:
  - Establishing a parent/teacher organization;
  - Maintaining a weekly parent communication detailing upcoming events, educator profiles and student work; and

- Keeping parents informed about curriculum and practices through electronic communications and through faculty-led workshops and programs for parents.

### **3. Model Learning Community: “We are a model learning community.”**

- CRA supports the professional development of teachers, administrators and school aides through weekly staff meetings, as well as workshops, retreats and learning institutes.
- Teachers plan, create and implement curriculum to best meet the needs and interests of students while exceeding California content standards.
- Teachers also meet to participate in cross-grade planning; teachers and schools leaders examine and continuously re-evaluate the scope and sequence of the curriculum.
- Teachers and administrators work collaboratively on school governance and curriculum review.

### **“We hold students and staff to rigorous academic standards while developing social and emotional competence.”**

- Teachers design curriculum for social, emotional and academic competence, challenging students to work to their fullest potential.
- Students, parents and teachers collaborate to create and work toward student goals.
- Interdisciplinary instruction creates a framework where students can approach new and challenging content and real- life situations with confidence.
- Students learn the skills of conflict resolution and participate in advisory groups to build social competency.

### **4. Environmental Stewardship: “We believe developing an appreciation and responsibility for the natural environment enhances education and individuals lives.”**

- Students develop an appreciation for the environment through curricular, projects, guided outdoor experiences and overnight trips.
- Students participate in on-going initiatives to promote conservation and reduce waste on campus.

## **AN EDUCATED PERSON IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has the confidence and skills to create the future. In order for an individual to create the future their education will need to instill a profound respect for themselves, others and the world around them.

An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is empowered with the desire to continually grow and develop throughout their lives. They have the ability to set goals, create a plan to achieve them and execute their plan. An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century possesses the ability to critically evaluate information and form opinions while maintaining the confidence to re-evaluate their opinions and beliefs when presented with compelling data. They build on their successes as well as learn from their mistakes.

An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is adaptable and has a timeless skill set that will serve them in a rapidly evolving social, cultural, technological and economic landscape. They communicate and collaborate effectively and think creatively and critically to solve problems.

### **HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS**

CRA has been designed to create a learning environment most conducive to learning for both students and teachers, based on five best practices: 1) in a small school, 2) with a rigorous interdisciplinary core academic curriculum, 3) utilizing project-based instructional methodologies, 4) in a collaborative community of learners, and 5) with community partnerships.

### **SMALL SCHOOL**

CRA's organization and size allow faculty and staff to establish meaningful relationships with students and families. CRA will maintain small class sizes, lower student to teacher ratio and a smaller overall school (targeting 300 Kindergarten-5 students and 300 6-8 students or fewer). The benefits of small schools are well documented in research and some of the benefits include: improved attitudes towards school, fewer instances of negative social behavior and better attendance especially in areas of low SES and minority students.<sup>1</sup> At CRA, students, families and educators are partners in learning. They develop strong relationships, which foster continuous, honest dialog about students' goals, growth and development.

### **RIGOROUS INTERDISCIPLINARY CORE ACADEMIC CURRICULUM**

At CRA, all subject areas and academic disciplines are integrated and interrelated to reflect a real-world learning context. Students will develop proficiency in the core subjects of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science while working to solve design challenges, problem-based projects and service learning projects. A rigorous academic curriculum based on real world projects and activities increases student achievement, improves retention of concepts and increases both student and teacher motivation. Educational research has identified that effective teaching of a rigorous core curriculum improves reading comprehension and overall student performance.<sup>2</sup> Additional research also points to how a rich background of core knowledge improves students' ability to think. Educational psychologist Daniel Willingham explains, "Knowledge comes into play mainly because if we want our students to learn how to think critically, they must have something to think about." Willingham goes on to explain that a solid foundation of core knowledge actually improves thinking by freeing space in working memory, making new knowledge easier to process.<sup>3</sup> Effective teaching of a curriculum rich in core content knowledge will foster CRA students' ability to think critically and to acquire new knowledge while contributing to improved student performance. At CRA, teachers and administrators will

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<sup>1</sup> Cotton, Kathleen. (1996). Review of Research on Class and School Size. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

<sup>2</sup> Hirsch, Ed Jr. (2006). *Building Knowledge*. American Educator. (Vol. 30, #1, p. 8-21, 28-29, 50).

<sup>3</sup> Willingham, Daniel. (2006). *How Knowledge Helps*. American Educator. (Vol. 30, #1, p. 30-37).

collaborate to design and regularly update a rich core curriculum based on California content standards.

### **PROJECT-BASED LEARNING**

At CRA, we believe a project-based approach to the curriculum is best suited for teaching core academic and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and provides the most opportunity for student success. We believe that authentic learning, including design-based, problem-based and project-based challenges, provides students continuous opportunities to discover their passion and give them the ability and desire to explore real world processes and issues. As students work to meet these authentic challenges, they will apply their knowledge from all academic disciplines and build self-confidence as they negotiate some of the challenges of the real world in a safe, nurturing learning environment. At CRA, teachers will collaborate to design and execute projects that will develop students' knowledge base and ability to solve problems, to foster critical thinking and collaboration and to build confidence.

At CRA, the project-based approach was inspired by the work of John Dewey and his work at the Laboratory School of the University of Chicago. The goal of the Laboratory School curriculum was to create an environment where students learned to solve social problems and meet social needs by using knowledge gained from past experiences. The activities or experiences in the curriculum were framed in such a manner that the knowledge gained had a meaningful purpose to the students in their present lives.

Dewey believed education was most effective:

...when there was no rift between experience and knowledge, when information about things and ways of doing grew out of social situations and represented answers to social needs, when the education of the immature member of society proceeded almost wholly through participation in the social or community life of which he was a member....<sup>4</sup>

At the Laboratory School, Dewey and his colleagues sought to create an environment where individuals learned by their actions and conduct. The reasons for such actions and conduct were clear, serving purposeful functions in the individuals' lives. For example, in a primitive fishing village, a boy may learn to fish from observing other individuals fishing and by fishing himself. The boy learns these techniques not because he wants to pass a test with little practical meaning, but because his contribution to the village as a fisherman is vital to sustaining the village's existence. The boy's test is life itself; he learns a skill by experiencing it and immediately appreciating (to some extent) his need for such skill.

Like John Dewey and the Laboratory School, CRA seeks to utilize project-based instruction to enable students to be successful at life in their time.

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<sup>4</sup> Mayhew, Katherine & Edwards, Anna. The Dewey School. Atherton Press. New York, New York. 1965. p.6

Research provides evidence that students engaged in effective project-based learning demonstrate improved academic achievement, positive attitudes towards learning and increased ability to use higher-level cognitive skills. Moreover, research also indicates students involved in project-based learning demonstrate increased focus on learning and mastery and motivation.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, students of all ability levels engaged in project-based learning demonstrated improved scores on standardized assessments and other performance assessments.<sup>6</sup> Equally important to improved academic performance, multiple studies show students involved in project-based learning have demonstrated and articulated a distinct attitude towards learning and acquisition of knowledge. The juxtaposition of these attitudes are best explained by J. Boaler in research comparing a school using a project-based approach to mathematics and a school using a more traditional approach. She states, “Students taught with a more traditional, formal, didactic model developed an inert knowledge that they claimed was of no use to them in the real world.” In contrast, “students taught with a more progressive, open, project-based model developed more flexible and useful forms of knowledge and were able to use this knowledge in a wide range of settings.”<sup>7</sup> Additionally, in a review of research on project-based learning, John Thomas indicates that project-based learning enhances the quality of subject matter knowledge gained by students and increases capacity for higher order cognitive skills such as problem solving and critical thinking.<sup>8</sup> The research on project-based learning suggests great potential for enabling students to build core academic knowledge and skills as well as the capacity to use their knowledge to meet the challenges they will face throughout their lives.

### **IN A COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS**

At CRA, we believe collaborative learning communities’ foster positive development for students. The faculty and staff are models of learning and collaboration as they work together and with partnering organizations to design curriculum, make informed decisions and create policies. Students learn to work together on projects and activities deliberately designed to foster student collaboration and development of interpersonal skills. Research suggests a number of benefits of collaborative learning. Learners of any age achieve more in collaboration than in competitive or individualistic interaction. Students are more effective interpersonally and are more positive about school, subject matter, teachers and each other in collaborative learning environments.<sup>9</sup> Cooperative learning environments promote: better connections to people, emotional maturity, strong personal identity, the ability to cope with

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<sup>5</sup> Blumenfeld, P.C., et al. (1991). Motivating project-based learning: sustaining the doing, supporting the learning. *Educational Psychologist*. (p. 369-398).

<sup>6</sup> Barron, B., et al. (1998). Doing with understanding: Lessons from research on problem- and project-based learning. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*. (p. 271-311).

<sup>7</sup> Boaler, J. (1998). *Open and closed mathematics, teaching styles, sex and settings*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas, John. (2000). *A Review of Research on Project-Based Learning*. The Autodesk Foundation. (p. 35).

<sup>9</sup> Roger T. and David W. Johnson. (1988). *Two heads learn better than one*. Transforming Education, Awakening the Full Human Potential...in Everyone. (Adapted from *IN CONTEXT* #18, p. 2).

adversity, self-confidence, higher self-esteem, independence and autonomy.<sup>10</sup> CRA's organizational framework is designed for students, families, teachers, administrators and community partners to work together to create and maintain a collaborative learning community through structured interdependent cooperative tasks, individual accountability and a supportive environment.





## **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

Community partners are integral to the CRA curriculum and school community. As financial and human resources for educational institutions and non-profit organizations become scarcer, the need for partnership between like-minded organizations is critical to sustaining the organizations and delivering a high quality, 21<sup>st</sup> century education.<sup>11</sup> Partnerships with community-based organizations ("CBOs") and educational institutions provide CRA resources to support school organization and development, finances, curriculum and professional development. They will provide students access to experts in various content areas, allowing CRA's students to gain deeper insights into content and act as role models in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. Additionally, the community partners support teachers in their development and execution of projects that contribute to the school and community. Research has indicated that partnerships between schools and CBOs can help build relationships with parents, foster trust between parents and educators, work to develop parent leadership and even improve student achievement.<sup>12</sup> Our community partnerships enrich CRA on-campus experiences as well as expand our learning environment beyond our classrooms.

Community Roots Academy has adopted the following Expected School-wide Learning Results/Student Outcomes that supports its mission and vision. The ESLR's are embedded in daily instruction and practice and thus reflects our school's core values and set of expectations and assets every CRA student will have.

### ***Community Roots Academy graduates are:***

#### ***Critical Thinkers who:***

-  Apply, analyze, identify, synthesize and evaluate information and experiences.
-  Connect the skills and content learned across the curriculum and evaluate multiple points of view.
-  Use the **Inquiry Method** to address a problem, hypothesize, observe, and draw conclusions as they investigate an issue/problem.
-  Collaborate and Participate in Experiential Learning and utilize problem-solving techniques.




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<sup>10</sup> Roger T. and David W. Johnson. (2009). *An Educational Psychology Success Story: Social Interdependence Theory and Cooperative Learning*. Educational Researcher. (Vol. 38, #5, p. 365-379).




<sup>11</sup> Wohlstetter, Priscilla and Smith, Joanna. (2006). *Improving Schools Through Partnerships: Learning from Charter Schools*. Phi Delta Kappan. (Vol. 87, #6, p. 464-467).

<sup>12</sup> Warren, Mark., Hong, Soo., Rubin, Carolyn Leung., and Uy, Phitsamay Sychitkokhong. (2009). *Beyond the Bake Sale: A Community-Based Relational Approach to Parent Engagement in Schools*. Teachers College Record. (Vol. 111, #9, p. 2209-2254).




***Effective Communicators who:***

-  Demonstrate Content area and grade level mastery in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, History and Science
-  Collaborate, work effectively, and manage interpersonal relationships with peers.
-  Participate in projects, presentations, town meetings, and host exhibitions, which connect students to the 'real world' and the community.

***21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars who:***

-  Use technology effectively as a learning tool to access information.
-  Demonstrate the ability to integrate technology as an effective tool in their daily lives.
-  Use Visual and Performing Arts as learning tools and a means of expression.

***Socially Responsible Global Citizens who:***

-  Embrace and respect cultural diversity through the understanding of our Global World.
-  Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of American and World History and the values of different cultures (through a multi-cultural curriculum)
-  Contribute to social activism through school wide projects.

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGIES**

The following instructional methodologies are the foundation of CRA practices. CRA hires teachers who have experience using these methods or the desire to learn them. These methodologies are fully supported by CRA's professional development plan.

**PROJECT-BASED LEARNING (PBL)**

Project-based learning is a model in which projects are the framework for learning. Projects derive from design-based or problem-based challenges and assignments. Students learn through investigation, decision-making and working autonomously while producing a realistic product or presentation.

At CRA, project-based learning is a school wide learning method that is supported through professional development, resources and mentoring from experienced teachers and administrators.

Project-based learning at CRA is consistent with researchers' definitions of project-based learning ("PBL").<sup>13</sup>

1. PBL projects are central, not peripheral to the curriculum.

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<sup>13</sup> Thomas, John. (2000). A Review of Research on Project-Based Learning. The Autodesk Foundation. (p. 3-6).



2. PBL projects are focused on questions or problems that "drive" students to encounter (and struggle with) the central concepts and principles of a discipline.
3. Projects involve students in a constructive investigation.
4. Projects are student-driven to some significant degree.
5. Projects are realistic, not school-like.

Teachers utilize a project formula which breaks projects into four phases – Define, Plan, Do, Review. This model, which is proposed by Bernie Trilling and Charles Fadel in their book *21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills: Learning for Life in our Times*, provides a framework for understanding and instructing effective projects. “The project bicycle” breaks projects into four phases for both teachers and students – Define, Plan, Do, Review. Trilling and Fadel’s model provides guidelines for managing project time, balanced instruction, assessment, evaluating learning and facilitating community involvement.<sup>14</sup>

**Evidence of Effectiveness:** As cited earlier, research evidence suggests that students engaged in effective project-based learning demonstrate improved academic achievement, positive attitudes towards learning and increased ability to use higher-level cognitive skills. In addition, research also indicates students involved in project-based learning demonstrate increased focus on learning and mastery and motivation.<sup>15</sup>

## **DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION**

**Description:** Differentiated instruction is a teaching method, which enables teachers to customize curriculum and instruction to appropriately challenge each student. Student learning occurs best if tasks and challenges are just a bit beyond their capabilities. This optimum degree of student challenge is known as the zone of proximal development. Differentiated instruction provides teachers a framework to adjust curriculum, assignments, assessments and expectations to meet the needs of each and every learner. CRA hires teachers with experience in differentiated instruction and support this practice with professional development and mentoring from teachers and administrators.

**Evidence of Effectiveness:** Research provides ample evidence that students have a better attitude towards school and are more successful in school if they are taught using methods that are responsive to their readiness levels.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, more recent research has identified more specific benefits of differentiated instruction including greater student

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<sup>14</sup> Trilling, B., Fadel, C. (2009). *21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Learning for Life in our Times*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. (p. 97 – 107).

<sup>15</sup> Blumenfeld, P.C., et al. (1991). Motivating project-based learning: sustaining the doing, supporting the learning. *Educational Psychologist*. (p. 369-398).

<sup>16</sup> Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

engagement, higher levels of intrinsic motivation, higher student productivity, greater student autonomy, increased achievement and an improved sense of self-competence.<sup>17</sup>

## **ARTS INTEGRATION**

**Description:** Arts integration is pedagogy where the performing and visual arts are deeply embedded in the core academic curriculum. Teaching of the arts in meaningful connection to core academic knowledge helps students appreciate and understand visual and performance arts while helping to enhance their learning in other disciplines.

At CRA, performing and visual arts are integrated as part of the core curriculum, playing a major role in helping students interpret a broad range of themes in English language arts, social studies, science and mathematics and as a tool for expressing student learning. At CRA, artistic work is incorporated into daily and weekly assignments and learning experiences. Students may draw, paint, create models, create plays and songs, tell stories, and write poetry, fiction and non-fiction. Arts integration is a school wide methodology, and CRA utilizes the expertise of arts specialist teachers, grade level teachers and community partners to create learning experiences that incorporate the arts in meaningful ways.

**Evidence of Effectiveness:** There is a wealth of evidence to indicate the academic and social benefits of integrating visual and performing arts as a part of the core curriculum. Research shows students taking part in learning the visual arts, music, dramatic enactment and dance have demonstrated enhanced cognitive development and organizational abilities, enhanced ability to read and interpret text, improved writing ability, improved spatial reasoning and mathematical ability, increased self-confidence and self-efficacy, enhanced creativity and many other academic and social benefits.<sup>18</sup>

## **TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION**

**Description:** Technology integration is an instructional method where students use computers, digital media and other technology as tools for learning and expressing their understanding of core academic concepts. Teachers guide students to build proficiency in communication, research, organization and presentation of data, document production and self-expression using technology. CRA is committed to developing students' and teachers' capacities to utilize technology to enhance learning. CRA aims to utilize technology integration in all grade levels to some extent. CRA will seek to hire teachers with technological capabilities, and technology integration will be supported by professional development and mentoring from teachers and administrators.

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<sup>17</sup> Tomlinson, C. A. (2003). *Differentiating instruction for academic diversity*. In J. M. Cooper (Ed.), Classroom teaching skills, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (p. 149-180).

<sup>18</sup> James S. Catterall. (2002). *The Arts and the Transfer of Learning*. Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Social and Academic Development. Available online: <http://www.aep-arts.org>.

**Evidence of Effectiveness:** The National Association of School Boards of Education (“NASBE”) Study Group on e-Learning concluded, “that e-learning will improve American education in valuable ways and should be universally implemented as soon as possible. Technology is not a solution in isolation, but rather a key component that helps make it possible for schools to address core educational challenges.”<sup>19</sup> Additional research has identified trends emerging in studies that indicate that by integrating technology as a tool throughout the disciplines, technology accelerates, enriches and deepens basic skills, motivates and engages students in learning, helps relate academics to the practices of today’s workforce, strengthens teaching, contributes to school change and connects school to the world.<sup>20</sup> The potential benefits of using technology as a tool to expand the classroom and instruction are evident in current research.

## **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

**Description:** In recent years a growing number of educators are recognizing the significant impact social and emotional development has on academic achievement. A substantial body of recent research reveals how cognitive development resulting from social and emotional learning frequently transfers into an increased capacity for academic learning. Further, exclusively academic proficiency leaves students unprepared to effectively negotiate the challenges of life. If self-esteem, character and human relationships are neglected, academic performance will suffer and potential will be limited.

**Evidence of Effectiveness:** Jonathan Cohen, a pioneer in the Social-Emotional Learning Movement, demonstrates how the integration of social-emotional learning throughout the curriculum and school contributes to (1) creating safe, caring and responsive classrooms; (2) enhancing an awareness of self and others; (3) encouraging students to become flexible problem solvers; (4) helping students become more able to cooperate, form relationships, be self-motivating and adopt roles as both followers and leaders; and (5) engaging in long-term planning that includes collaboration among home, school and community.<sup>21</sup>

Additional research on social-emotional learning has indicated, “When schools attend systematically to students’ social and emotional skills, the academic achievement of children increases, the incidence of problem behaviors decreases, and the quality of the relationships surrounding each child improves. And, students become the productive, responsible, contributing members of society that we all want.”<sup>22</sup> Attending to students’ social and emotional well-being clearly contributes to academic success.

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<sup>19</sup> National Association of School Boards of Education Study Group on e-Learning (“NASBE”). (2001). *Any time, any place, any path, any pace: Taking the lead on e-learning policy*.

<sup>20</sup> Lemke, C., & Coughlin, E. C. (1998). *Technology in American schools: Seven dimensions for gauging progress. A policymaker’s guide*. The Milken Exchange on Educational Technology.

<sup>21</sup> Cohen, Jonathan. (1999). *The First “R”: Reflective Capacities*. Educational Leadership. (Vol. 57, p. 70 – 75).

<sup>22</sup> Elias, Maurice J., Zins, Joseph E., Weissberg, Roger P., Frey, Karin S., Greenberg, Mark T., Haynes, Norris M., Kessler, Rachael, Schwab-Staone, Mary E., Shriver, Timothy P. (1997). Promoting Social and Emotional Learning: Guidelines for Educators. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (p. 1 –2).

## **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

One of the expectations for CRA teachers is their participation in and contribution to, project development, as projects are a core vehicle for instruction, taking the place of traditional instructional materials in large part. Project development is a critical component of CRA's instructional program and teachers are fully supported through professional development, teacher mentoring and coaching and designated time for teachers to collaborate in grade level teams, that is part of CRA's teachers' daily schedule. Teachers collaborate in grade level teams with performing and visual arts and physical education to create, refine and execute integrated interdisciplinary projects for each grade. Grade level teams collaborate with other teachers and community partners to integrate fieldwork, physical education, performing arts and visual arts. Teachers will develop the projects based on the California Content/Common Core Standards using the Understanding by Design<sup>23</sup> approach along with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Bicycle.<sup>24</sup> These frameworks guide teachers to select learning goals for students and create authentic project-based learning experiences, which will accomplish the desired learning goals.

## **CURRICULUM**

The curriculum of Community Roots Academy is designed to teach core academic skills and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, while integrating technology, performing arts and visual arts. Project-based learning<sup>25</sup> allows students to best learn all of these skills thoroughly and simultaneously. By taking part in a combination of project-based learning, students learn through experience and reflection as they participate in long-term projects at each grade level. Each grade level's projects share similar frameworks and structures as projects in other grades, but as students develop and learn, the projects become more complex, and students take more responsibility for their learning. The sophistication of the projects can adjust individually, student by student, as each student develops, as well as collectively when students advance grade levels. Community partners are critical to creating and executing the project-based curriculum because they add content area expertise, adult world context and sense of purpose to students' learning.

## **CRA's INSTRUCTION OF CORE SUBJECTS & 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SKILLS**

The CRA curriculum incorporates the state adopted Common Core Standards for each grade level while integrating technology, performing arts and visual arts and health and physical fitness. We believe in order for students to thrive in the future, they need to learn how to use their core content knowledge. Thus, CRA curriculum extends further to teach critical 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Specifically, CRA curriculum and instruction teach critical thinking, social and

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<sup>23</sup> Wiggins, Grant and McTighe, Jay. (2005). *Understanding by Design*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

<sup>24</sup> Trilling, B., Fadel, C. (2009). *21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Learning for Life in our Times*. Jossey-Bass. (p. 96 -115).

<sup>25</sup> CRA defines "project-based" as any design-based, problem-based or project-based activity where students are using the knowledge and skills they have gained to create an original demonstration of their learning. Teachers guide students to define design challenges or problems, next plan projects, then execute the project plans, and finally review and reflect on learning.

College & Career readiness skills to enable students to be productive and responsible citizens as well as leaders in the workforce. Problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, initiative, effective communication, adaptability, evaluating information and imagination are all integral elements of the CRA educational program and the newly adopted California Common Core State Standards. As students grow and develop, they continue to hone these skills through their immersion in learning experiences and projects that connect them to the real world in meaningful ways. Students will have the tools to explore any future they desire and the desire to work to create a better future.

### **SCOPE & SEQUENCE FOR PROJECTS**

The California content standards & Common Core State Standards are embedded in CRA's project-based, inquiry driven curriculum. The CRA curriculum and instruction is thoughtfully designed to maximize engagement and achievement while building the essential skills for College & Career Readiness. The curriculum scope and sequence reflects the stages of child development, providing students with cognitive, physical and social challenges that promote positive development. As our students grow as individuals, the curriculum evolves to meet their developmental needs. For instance, the early childhood curriculum focuses on developing basic academic and communication skills, like learning to be a part of a group and understanding what makes up a community, and progresses to reading and interpreting sophisticated texts, presenting points of view and working to make significant contributions to the community in the middle school. As students progress through grade levels, the curriculum content becomes more complex and students take increasing responsibility for their own learning. Students take an active role in planning projects, providing one another feedback, setting expectations and creating assessments. Additionally, students' projects increasingly connect with the adult world, often working toward solving problems within the community. In essence, they develop the skills and habits of mind that prepare them to learn and negotiate challenges throughout their lives.

### **CORE SUBJECTS – COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

The following is a written description of CRA core subject courses and a matrix of the content and skills being taught at each grade level.

#### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

CRA follows the state adopted Common Core Standards for English Language Arts. and reading, writing, speaking and listening will be embedded in projects in all courses, but specific, focused literacy instruction will be taught during the Humanities curriculum.<sup>26</sup> CRA Humanities courses will introduce students to the basic components and skills of reading and writing and help students develop into fluent, independent readers, skilled writers and articulate speakers.

## READING

The ability to read fluently and interpret text independently is critical to academic success as well to building a life-long love of reading. In the elementary years (Kindergarten–5), CRA’s reading curriculum progresses from the building blocks of reading in Kindergarten to fluency and decoding proficiency in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Humanities at CRA will utilize balanced literacy and an integrative approach to reading, blending the best elements of both whole language and code-emphasizing phonics.

Key components of the Kindergarten–5 Balanced Literacy Program include:

- **Phonics Instruction** – building reading and decoding skills through linking letters to sounds to form letter-sound correspondences and spelling patterns to help students learn to read.
- **Whole Language Instruction** – building literacy through focusing on meaning and strategy instruction, such as context and syntax.
- **Vocabulary Building** – explicit instruction vocabulary development.

In balanced literacy -

- The teacher models by reading or writing to the students within the following modalities:
  - Interactive Read Aloud
  - Demonstration or Modeled Writing
- The teacher reads or writes with the students within the following modalities:
  - Shared Reading
  - Shared Writing or Interactive Writing
  - Guided Reading (contains independent reading with close conferring)
- Reading and writing is done by the students independently within the following modalities:
  - Independent reading (with teacher observation and conferring)
  - Writing process (with teacher observation and conferring)<sup>27</sup>

As CRA students progress to middle school they have mastered decoding and will have a growing vocabulary and require additional reading strategies to continue their development as readers. Middle school students increasingly use reading, writing and speaking in projects and assessments in all subjects.

Key components of the middle school reading curriculum include:

- **Independent Reading** – Students will have designated class time and a homework expectation of weekly independent reading. Students will set goals for their reading

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<sup>27</sup> Fountas, Irene and Pinnell, Gay Su. (2001). *Guiding Readers and Writers/Grades 3-6*, Portsmouth: Heinemann.

and track their progress on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. Humanities teachers will meet with students to help with book selection, provide support and discuss progress towards goals. CRA students will be competent and critical readers capable of understanding text on a variety of levels.

- **Literacy Circles** – Students are assigned or choose groups based on any number of teacher specifications or students' choices. Each group meets regularly to discuss various literary themes, questions, author's purpose and similar topics. During each meeting, students take on roles and responsibilities to conduct the meetings. Students summarize, define new vocabulary, create character and plot maps, create questions and answer teacher questions about the text to prepare for the discussion group. When the group meets, they review their work, discuss the text and choose a reading goal for the next meeting. Between meetings, the group members work independently to prepare for the next meeting.

## **WRITING**

Writing is a critical component of all aspects of the CRA curriculum for all grade levels. Students receive specific instruction in various types of writing, the writing process, grammar and mechanics throughout the Humanities curriculum. CRA utilizes two main strategies for writing instruction, Writer's Workshop and Writing Across the Curriculum.

- **Writer's Workshop** – Students learn throughout the writing process including brainstorming, drafting, editing and final publication. Students learn to develop their ideas while writing about topics that are important to them in frequent writing sessions. In the Writer's Workshop model, teachers explain the writing process and offer instruction in writing during mini-lessons. At the heart of the Writer's Workshop are teachers conferencing with students to offer guidance and to discuss the aspects of writing that are relevant to students and their current work. Teacher conferencing is highly personalized so that students' focus on grammar, style or other aspects of writing according to their needs, in addition to topics addressed in mini-lessons. Students make repeated revisions while editing their works after feedback from peers and teachers. After sufficient revisions, students create a published piece to share.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The CRA mathematics curriculum will follow the state adopted Common Core Standards for mathematics. Students will develop skills in number sense, measurement, geometry, algebra and mathematical reasoning. Although math skills will be utilized throughout CRA projects and curriculum, the mathematics block will be when math skills are isolated, practiced and reviewed for mastery. Students progress from learning the basics of counting and computation to use logic and mathematical thinking to solve problems.

### *Pacing and Addressing Individual Needs*

At CRA, we recognize that mathematics can be a somewhat linear learning process where certain knowledge and skills need to be mastered before progressing to a more complex task or activity. As in all subjects, CRA utilizes activities that provide appropriate mathematical challenges for students of all abilities. Teachers will closely monitor and document students' progress, then use differentiation and student grouping to create multiple pathways for learning and student scaffolding. In order to accommodate the wide range of student ability levels, teachers may choose to group students according to ability.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

The Kindergarten-5 social studies program at CRA will use Scott Foresman's *History-Social Science for California*. This program was selected for its flexible, comprehensive approach to the content and compatibility with a project-based approach to social studies. It is aligned with state social studies standards and approved by the state of California for use in classrooms.

Grades six, seven, and eight will use *Ancient Civilizations, Medieval and Early Modern Times*, and *America: History of Our Nation, Independence Through 1914*, respectively. These texts are part of a three-book series published specifically for California middle grades students by Prentice Hall and are based upon state social studies standards. They provide a wealth of resources that help students connect the past to the present. The Prentice Hall series is approved by the state of California.

## **SCIENCE**

At CRA, the science curriculum closely follows the California content standards. Students are able to explore their natural curiosity in the world around them. Even the youngest students use the scientific method to investigate the physical, life and Earth sciences. Students learn to ask questions and teachers guide students in hands-on experimentation to find answers and solutions.

The Kindergarten-5 science program will utilize the *National Geographic Science* texts to complement the project-based curriculum. *National Geographic Science* integrates reading into the content area highlights and the everyday application of scientific concepts through colorful, high-interest books that encourage scientific inquiry. Published in partnership with Hampton-Brown, the texts are aligned with the California state standards for science.



The following is a matrix of texts used across the grades at CRA

<b>Grade</b>	<b>ELA</b>	<b>Math</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Social Studies</b>
K	SIPPS, Making Meaning - Developmental Studies Center	Envision Math - Pearson	National Geographic Science - Hampton-Brown Publishing	Scott Foresmann Social Studies - Pearson
1	SIPPS, Making Meaning - Developmental Studies Center	Envision Math - Pearson	National Geographic Science - Hampton-Brown Publishing	Scott Foresmann Social Studies - Pearson
2	Making Meaning & Being a Writer- Developmental Studies Center	Envision Math - Pearson	National Geographic Science - Hampton-Brown Publishing	Scott Foresmann Social Studies - Pearson
3	Making Meaning & Being a Writer- Developmental Studies Center	Envision Math - Pearson	National Geographic Science - Hampton-Brown Publishing	Scott Foresmann Social Studies - Pearson
4	Making Meaning, Vocabulary & Being a Writer- Developmental Studies Center	Envision Math - Pearson	National Geographic Science Online- Hampton-Brown Publishing	Scott Foresmann Social Studies - Pearson
5	Making Meaning & Being a Writer- Developmental Studies Center	Envision Math - Pearson	National Geographic Science Online- Hampton-Brown Publishing	Scott Foresmann Social Studies - Pearson
6	Making Meaning & Being a Writer- Developmental Studies Center	Prentice Hall Common Core Mathematics Course 1: 2013 Edition	Lab-Aids Issues and Life Science: 2nd Edition	Ancient Civilizations - Prentice Hall
7	Making Meaning & Being a Writer- Developmental Studies Center	Prentice Hall Common Core Mathematics Course 2 (and 3): 2013 Edition	Lab-Aids Issues and Life Science: 2nd Edition	Medieval and Early Modern Times - Prentice Hall

### **INSTRUCTION FOR SPECIALIZED STUDENT POPULATIONS**

At CRA, instruction of all students with learning differences, including high achieving students', low achieving students', English Language Learners' and special education students' academic programs, is considered on an individual and case by case basis. In order to meet the diverse needs our student population, CRA utilizes a combination of push-in and pull-out instruction to best serve each student. In Community Roots Academy's approach to educating students with learning differences we consider each student and design an instructional approach to

best suit their individual's needs. We primarily use a push-in model, where an additional instructor works with a student or a small group of students within the regular classroom. Using this approach, students receive the additional assistance needed to succeed at grade level activities without sacrificing instructional time from the regular curriculum. Examples of push-in assistance can include clarifying instructions, dividing assignments into smaller steps or components, modeling reading and writing strategies, extra coaching and immediate feedback on assignments, etc. Additionally, all CRA classrooms utilize independent instruction or self-initiated skills practice such as flashcards, puzzles, games and technology, which have demonstrated success in supporting learning in students with learning differences.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to push-in strategies, pull-out strategies are utilized for students with needs that are better met individually or in small groups outside the regular classroom. Examples of pull-out instruction: Working with English Language Learners on content specific vocabulary, previewing a reading selection with a struggling reader or re-teaching a specific math concept. These activities are best done as pull-out activities because they focus on specific isolated skills in an effort to support the regular classroom instruction. The skills practiced are integral to a student's success within the regular classroom setting.

#### **PLAN FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE LOW-ACHIEVING**

CRA supports academically low achieving students succeed with (1) curriculum that engages student interest with 'real world' relevance and active learning strategies, (2) a supportive school environment where each student's personal and academic needs are known well and (3) the systematic use of academic supports and interventions to meet the needs of academically low-achieving students. Additional academic support allows students to keep pace with class work, and targeted academic interventions will address individual learner needs through backfilling academic skills needed to bring students up to grade level performance (see Student Success Team section below). Teachers participate in professional development to address students' special needs, including those of low achievers, and use a curriculum planning process that prompts for differentiated planning of instruction to address the special needs in their classes. CRA allocates Supplemental Hourly Funding to provide additional instruction through programs, which may include extended day program, early day program, Saturday program and/or summer school. If needed, CRA may adjust individual students' daily schedules to provide additional support to students during the regular school day.

CRA identifies students who are performing below grade level through the results of California Standards Tests ("CSTs"), California Measures of Academic Performance & Progress (CalMAPP) and from CRA's assessments. Staff are trained to identify and monitor the progress of students who are struggling academically. CRA holds its instructional staff accountable for raising the academic achievement of these students since it is not only a

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<sup>28</sup> Tomlinson, C. A. (2003). *Differentiating instruction for academic diversity*. In J. M. Cooper (Ed.), Classroom teaching skills, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

moral imperative; it is also a factor in the Academic Performance Index (“API”) and in Annual Yearly Progress (“AYP”). Instructional staff monitors progress of academically low achieving students throughout the year to ensure that students are on track for meeting growth goals. Services for academically low achieving students begin with an assessment of student abilities and needs. Student supports and interventions are adjusted as needed to address the specific needs of students. Depending on the identified needs, students receive one or more of the following interventions.

Instructional activities and/or materials are modified to accommodate different academic needs, interests and learning styles

- In projects, student choice and involvement allows flexibility for teachers to work with students to customize project plans and expectations to address student needs.
- Through arts and technology integration, teachers create project extensions and supplemental activities based on student ability and interests.
- Flexible and fluid student groupings provides academically low achieving students opportunities to participate both in specialized groups consisting of only academically low achieving students and in heterogeneous groups. In specialized groups, students benefit from a pace and content tailored to their skill level and needs. When heterogeneous groups are used strategically, academically low achieving students benefit from the skills modeled by more advanced students. Additionally, students’ participation in multiple groups recognizes that not all students are low achieving in all areas. Students can get appropriate level challenges to meet their individual learning needs and to provide students the most opportunities for success.

Additional help is available to students during the school day from teachers, support staff, peers, and/or volunteer tutors. Supplemental instruction, including extra help and/or targeted academic interventions to raise skills to grade level. Student Success Team (SST) meetings with school personnel and the parent or guardian (optional) are designated for students that are not achieving at grade-level standards to review the above strategies and plan for new ones.

#### **PLAN FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ACADEMICALLY HIGH ACHIEVING**

CRA also is an ideal environment for high achieving students. Students who demonstrate an ability to advance at a faster pace or a higher cognitive level are academically challenged by CRA’s curriculum and flexible instructional practices. Teachers are expected to adjust assignments and expectations to maximize student success while maintaining a rigorous curriculum. Students are encouraged and supported to reach beyond the grade-appropriate state standards to pursue their own interests and learn at their own pace. Teachers modify instruction as needed to engage and challenge each student at his or her level. Staff also guide learners to extracurricular enrichment activities that happen throughout the year.

The process for identifying students who are academically high achieving is similar to the process for identifying academically low performing students, using the results of the CSTs

and CRA's assessments. Modifications for academically high achieving students begins with an assessment of student abilities and needs.

Depending on identified needs, students receive one or more of the following interventions:

- Instructional activities and/or materials modified to accommodate different academic needs, interests and learning styles
  - i. In projects, student choice and involvement allows flexibility for teachers to work with students to customize project plans and expectations to address student needs. Due to the deep, complex, rigorous, and integrated nature of project-based learning, academically high achievers are encouraged to be creative, develop their strengths, take risks, and extend their learning.<sup>29</sup> Project-based learning provides a natural opportunity for students to actively direct their learning and to work on complex problems and issues that have multifaceted solutions.
  - ii. Through arts and technology integration, teachers can create project extensions and supplemental activities based on student ability and interests.
  - iii. Acceleration is an instructional strategy used to advance the pace of instruction to the student's advanced abilities when other forms of instruction at grade-level do not provide an intellectual or academic challenge.
  - iv. Flexible and fluid student groupings provide academically high achieving students opportunities to participate in groups consisting of only highly able students so they may receive instruction at an advanced pace and accelerated level. In these advanced groups, students benefit from the challenging pace and content as well as scaffolding from other advanced students. Additionally, students' participation in multiple groups recognizes that not all students are gifted in all areas. Students can get appropriate level challenges to meet their individual learning needs and to provide students the most opportunities for success.
- Learning activities above grade level, including with older students on a variety of activities, such as multiage groupings in mathematics.
- Pairing with low-performing students as peer tutors for a small portion of their day to develop leadership and social skills, deepen their own understanding, and narrow the achievement gap. (Research shows that people deepen understanding through the process of teaching others).
- Participation in enrichment activities during or after school.

## **GIFTED & TALENTED STUDENTS**

CRA accommodates the needs of gifted and talented students, both those previously identified at other schools and those identified through the CRA Identification Process. At CRA,

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<sup>29</sup> Spencer J. Salend. (2005). Creating Inclusive Classrooms: Effective and Reflective Practices for All Students (5th Edition), Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.

gifted and talented students will be identified on their intellectual, academic, creative and leadership abilities. CRA curriculum and instructional practices are flexible enough to accommodate and appropriately challenge gifted students in all subject areas. The identification of gifted and talented students at CRA is a four-step process.

1. Identification and referral – Teachers and administrators nominate potential candidates.
2. Screening/Review – School administrator or designee screens students by reviewing existing data – cumulative report cards, portfolios, report cards, progress reports and standardized test data; students can be asked to voluntarily take additional assessments.
3. Committee Review – Gifted and Talented Committee reviews findings and makes recommendations.
4. Verification – Executive Directors review all screenings, assessments and recommendations and determine the eligibility of students.

The following is a list of examples of student performance and achievement that teachers and administrators might identify as gifted and talented.

- Multiple years of student achievement in English Language Arts or Math two years beyond grade level.
- Multiple years of superior report cards.
- Multiple years of standardized test scores beyond grade level.
- Distinguished participation in community activities.

To ensure that the individual needs of gifted and talented students are met, the core curriculum teachers develop individualized learning plans, working with an administrator with input and consultation of parents. Individualized learning plans may include supplemental reading, greater depth of study, customized projects and differentiated expectations. CRA and parents are partners in developing an educational program and goals best suited to each individual student. The specific goals of the individualized learning program are evaluated on report cards and discussed with parents at conferences. CRA's project-based curriculum and instructional practices such as differentiation, arts and technology integration, acceleration and collaborative grouping allow teachers the opportunity to appropriately challenge gifted and talented students.

## **PLAN FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS**

*Indicate how the charter school will identify and respond to the needs of English learners. [Criteria for Review: California Education Code §11967.5.1(f)(1)(G)]*

Community Roots Academy meets all requirements of federal and state law relative to equal access to the curriculum for English Language Learners. Community Roots Academy makes every effort to identify English language learners (ELLs) prior to enrollment. The first step in the process is to identify ELL students by reviewing current ELL status of students from

the CUSD database and/or cum files. All entering students are administered a home language survey. Students who require ELL assistance are then administered the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) to determine ELL status and level of proficiency. This information is used by teachers to guide instruction.

With the expectation of enrolling ELL students, Community Roots Academy employs a teaching staff that is Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development (CLAD) certified. All teachers are well-versed and utilize research-proven strategies including SDAIE strategies, designed to help specific students at differing levels of English development become proficient in English and support them while learning content area curriculum.

The supportive nature of the educational program at Community Roots Academy is intentionally designed to allow ELL students to receive the support necessary to advance their English proficiency. Examples of this include:

- Time allotted in the schedule for diagnostic supplemental English language instruction
- Extended instructional time allowing ELL students extra time to master course content
- Small class size allowing for increased student participation leading to language learning
- A culture of cooperation that encourages students to help each other master both the English language and course content regardless of ELL status
- Extensive small-group mentoring designed to provide academic support and build academic skills
- Ongoing and regular professional development opportunities focused on effective diagnostic instruction, especially for providing English language support in the content area classroom, use of English Language Development (ELD) Standards
- A family and culture-friendly environment that provides students opportunities to build their English language abilities by sharing their expertise (culture and traditions) with other students in a shared common language (English)
- Use of Realia (real objects and materials).
- Use of Manipulatives (drawings, posters, brainstorming-clusters, graphs, tables, maps, props, multimedia presentations, storyboards, story maps).
- Visuals (study-prints, textbook illustrations, overhead-projected prints, reproductions of paintings, and documents).
- Graphic organizers (matrices, Venn diagrams, and webs).
- Planned opportunities for interaction between all individuals in the classroom (creating a skit and acting it out, co-operative learning, collaborative learning, and student-generated stories based on personal experiences).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>SDAIE Handbook: Techniques, Strategies, and Suggestions for Teachers of LEP and Former LEP Students John Gulack and Sandy Silverstein.

For ELL students, as with all students, progress assessment takes place on an ongoing basis throughout the school year. Course performance, benchmark assessments, performance on basic skills tests and teacher observation are used to ascertain student progress and needs. Along with this, each ELL student is administered the CEDLT test annually as well as the California Standards Tests (CST). Students who receive a score of 4 or 5 on the CELDT test in every area, as well as a score of Basic or above on the English Language Arts CST, are candidates for re-designation to Fully English Proficient (FEP). In this case Community Roots Academy schedules a meeting between the Principal, the student and parents to discuss the redesignation process and complete the appropriate forms. Students and parents are required to sign the redesignation form to complete the process.

## **PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION**

As a public school, Community Roots Academy has an important obligation to serve students with exceptional needs. CRA adheres to all laws and/or consent decrees, as applicable, affecting individuals with exceptional needs, including all provisions of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), its amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Office for Civil Rights mandates, and AB 602. All students are given equal access to the school regardless of disabilities, and CRA does not discriminate against any student nor deny admissions to any student based on his/her disabilities or lack of availability of special education services. All students with disabilities are accorded a Free, Appropriate Public Education.

## **CHILD FIND**

In order to comply with Child Find requirements as specified by law, has referral and assessment process that brings together the parent/guardian, student, and school personnel to address any problems that interfere with a student's success at the school. This process will entail search and serve, a Student Study Team, referral, assessment and IEP review.

Upon the commencement of CRA's school year, all students are evaluated as a means of class placement. No assessment or evaluation will be used for admission purposes. Through collaboration between the faculty and Executive Director of Education, CRA will work to identify any students, who do not currently have an IEP but may be in need of a pre-referral intervention plan. The Executive Director of Education and faculty will then convene the Student Study Team for that student. Students possibly in need of special education can be screened from already available data (i.e. school tests, teacher observations, grades, etc.) regarding the student's progress or lack of progress within the general program. For students who are identified as needing interventions, a Student Study Team composed of the student, the student's parent or guardian, the Executive Director of Education, and a CRA faculty member will be responsible for identifying the student's needs and developing a plan to enable that student to be successful, including, but not limited to, the appropriate individual tutoring schedule, classroom modifications, strategies and techniques to enhance that student's ability to be successful. If the Student Study Team finds that the pre-intervention plan is not sufficient to meet the student's needs, they will recommend that student for a formal special education assessment. Connect Community Charter School may

also choose to refer a student for services through the provisions of a Section 504 Plan, if appropriate.

## **504 PLAN SERVICES**

Section 504 services required by CRA students are the responsibility of the charter school and to ensure these students are receiving appropriate services and accommodations CRA maintains a 504 team. A 504 team will be assembled by the Executive Director of Education or designee and shall include the parent or guardian, a teacher, and any other qualified persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment. The 504 team will review the student's existing records, including academic, social and behavioral records, and is responsible for making a determination as to whether an evaluation for 504 services is appropriate. The Executive Director of Education or designee will be responsible for overseeing the identification, assessment, monitoring, and servicing of students with 504 Plans.

If the student has already been evaluated under the IDEIA (and found to be ineligible) those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team who will evaluate the nature of the student's disability and the impact upon the student's education. This evaluation will include consideration of any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program and/or activities. The 504 team will consider all applicable student information in its evaluation including but not limited to the following information:

Tests and other evaluation materials that have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel

Tests and other evaluation materials including those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligent quotient

Tests selected and administered so as to ensure that when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level or whatever factor the test purports to measure rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills

The final determination of whether the student will or will not be identified as a person with a disability is made by the 504 team in writing and noticed in writing to the parent or guardian of the student in their primary language along with the procedural safeguards available to them. If during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information indicating possible eligibility of the student for special education per the IDEIA, a referral for special education assessment may be made by the 504 team.

If the student is found by the 504 team to have a disability under Section 504, the 504 team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations are needed to ensure that the student receives the free and appropriate public education ("FAPE"). In developing the 504 Plan, the 504 team shall consider all relevant information utilized during the evaluation



of the student, drawing upon a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, assessments conducted by professional staff at CRA. The parent or guardian shall be invited to participate in 504 team meetings where program modifications for the student will be determined and shall be given an opportunity to examine in advance all relevant records.

The 504 Plan shall describe the Section 504 disability and any program modification that may be necessary. In considering the 504 Plan, a student with a disability requiring program modification shall be placed in regular instruction at CRA along with those students who are not disabled to the extent appropriate to the individual needs of the student with a disability.

All 504 team participants, parents, and guardians, teachers must have a copy of each student's 504 Plan. A copy of the 504 Plan shall be maintained in the student's file. Each student's 504 Plan will be reviewed at least once per year to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, continued eligibility, or a discontinuation of the 504 Plan.

Under applicable state and federal law, CRA has various options on how to deliver special education and related services either as (1) arm of the charter-granting agency, (2) an independent local education agency, or (3) as a charter SELPA. During each school year during which the school operates as an arm of Capistrano Unified School District for special education purposes, CRA understands that it is required to contribute an equitable share of its charter block grant funding to support District-wide special education instruction and service costs. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47646(b), the District shall provide the school with funding and/or services reasonably necessary to ensure that all students with exceptional needs who attend the school are provided a free and appropriate education.

### **CHILD FIND**

CRA participates in a comprehensive "child find" system to identify students who have or may have exceptional needs. CRA participates in the child find systems of its special education local plan areas ("SELPAs") provider. The following is our policy and practice:

- Post matriculation in-take practices that identify students with exceptional needs to help ensure that the school is aware of all students who have identified special needs;
- Communication with all feeder local education agencies to request and obtain cumulative files and other documents in a timely fashion;
- Staff development and training for school staff, to ensure that they know how to identify students who may have exceptional needs; and,
- Review of student assessment data, including but not limited to state-mandated testing to identify students who may be falling behind expectations in their academic progress and are in need of additional support or services.

### **STUDENT STUDY TEAM**

The Student Study Team" ("SST") at CRA, is specifically for students who are not demonstrating success in academic classes due to academic, behavioral or social concerns. The SST consists of the student's teacher(s), a school administrator, the student's

parent/guardian (if possible), and others. The SST implements strategies within the general education setting, and monitors the student's progress as new strategies are tried. Strategies include targeted small group instruction, academic intervention programs that include but are not limited to web-based content support available in literacy and mathematics, use of phonics, and online assessments. Our teachers will also provide additional academic assistance during the school day, and after-school. If the student does not demonstrate success after all feasible strategies have been exhausted, and if the student's difficulty appears like it could be caused by a disability eligible for special education services, the student is then referred for formal assessment.

### **REFERRAL & ASSESSMENT**

If within a reasonable amount of time the student is not making significant progress with the personalized assistance, the Student Success Team in conjunction with the parent(s) will make a recommendation for assessment to determine eligibility for special education services. The parent must consent to the assessment plan before the assessment can take place. The assessment plan will describe the types and purposes of the assessment that may be used to determine eligibility for services. Assessments may include individual testing, observations of the student at school, interviews with the student and school personnel who work with the student, and a review of school records, reports and work samples. The parent must consent to the assessment plan before the assessment can take place. These assessments will be conducted by the staff that perform such services for the District. If this assessment identifies that the student has exceptional needs and requires special education and/or related services under the terms of applicable special education law, the school will work with appropriate District staff to convene and conduct an individualized educational plan ("IEP") team meeting or meetings.

### **INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN**

An IEP is created for each student requiring special education services upon the completion of each assessment. The IEP team recommend actions to be taken for the student and consist of the student's parent(s), the student's teacher, a CRA staff member, a special education administrator or administrative designee, and if necessary, additional members familiar with the condition of the student. The IEP team solicits participation from a CUSD special education representative and, if applicable, a representative from the student's District of residence, at IEP meetings when it is anticipated that special education service options are considered within least restrictive environments other than those at the charter school.

CRA participates and as appropriate in planning and conducting the IEP team meetings and processes. CRA commits to implementing all special education and related services called for by the IEP in partnership with the District and/or SELPA. Instructional staff monitors their progress throughout the year to ensure that those students are on track for meeting growth goals. Student progress toward the goals specified in the IEP is reviewed by the IEP team on an annual and a triennial basis. CRA agrees to follow the District's Special Education local plan, policies and procedures.

CRA monitors student progress toward the goals specified in the IEP regularly and formally reviews each IEP at least an annual and triennial basis, or more frequently if need arises. CRA shall, prior to the placement of the student with exceptional needs, ensure that the staff and other persons who provide special education services to the student be knowledgeable of the content of the IEP. A copy of each IEP shall be maintained at the school site. Service providers from other agencies who provide instruction or a related service to the individual of the school site shall be provided a copy of the IEP. All IEPs shall be maintained in accordance with state and federal student record confidentiality laws.

### **SERVICE PROVISION**

For students with exceptional needs for whom CRA's distinctive educational program is determined to be appropriate and the least restrictive environment, it is CRA's intention to provide special education services within a modified inclusion model. Special education students will participate in the general education program to the greatest extent feasible and advisable, with supplemental supports and modifications to assist students to keep pace. Appropriate designated instructional services and related services will be provided, consistent with each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). It is the intent of CRA to provide the continuum of options specified in Education Code Section 56361 through participation in special education programs and services in the same manner of other public schools within the District's SELPA.

CRA believes that students with special needs benefit academically, socially and emotionally from the opportunity to receive services in this modified inclusion model. Special education personnel work in a collaborative model with all teachers and staff aides to ensure that appropriate accommodations are in place and that the learning environment and curriculum are modified in a manner consistent with each student's IEP.

CRA implements and reviews programs and services, including related services, required by IEPs of its students to support the movement of the students into less restrictive environments and increase the interactions of these students with non-disabled students. CRA's general program of instruction for students with disabilities shall be responsive to the required sequence of courses and related curricular activities provided for all students in the charter school. CRA's special education personnel are credentialed and/or licensed consistent with California laws and regulations. Student discipline and procedures for suspension and expulsions comply with federal and state laws and regulations, and include positive behavioral interventions. CRA conducts assessments and standardized testing for students with disabilities using state and District guidelines for modifications and adaptations. CRA conducts staff development activities to support access by students with disabilities to general education programs.

## **DUE PROCESS**

In the event of a due process claim to enforce provisions of applicable special education law, CRA is committed to working in cooperation with the District to the maximum extent permitted under law to respond to and defend the school and the District in the process.

## **SECTION 504 SPECIAL NEEDS**

CRA understands that its students may have exceptional needs that are not governed by the terms of the federal special education law (IDEA) but who may require accommodations or services pursuant to the terms of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and that CRA is responsible for planning and implementing any such accommodations or services according to the District 504 policies and procedures.

## **RIGHT TO PURSUE LEA STATUS**

The school functions as a part of the District for purposes of special education. CRA also retains the right to pursue independent local education agency (“LEA”) and/or special education local plan area (“SELPA”) status pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a) and the District shall not hinder or otherwise impede the efforts of the school to do so. In the event that the school opts not to establish independent LEA and/or SELPA status, it shall remain an arm of the District for special education purposes as required by Education Code Section 47641(b), and shall continue to receive funding and services pursuant to the terms of this section and any related annual agreements.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

At CRA, we believe that sustained professional development is essential to fostering a school culture where learning from investigation and exploration is modeled every day. The goal of professional development at CRA is to create a community of learners where teachers and administrators experience and model learning for the community.

The professional development plan for CRA is a multi-tiered framework that enables teachers to grow and develop as individuals while contributing the collective development of the school and pursuit of the school’s goals for students. CRA teachers participate in weekly professional development for three hours, in addition to weekly coaching led by the Director of Education. Benchmark assessments are administered three times per year. On a bi-monthly basis during staff development, discussion takes place on the progress of every student on a grade-by-grade basis, between the principal and grade level teachers. Teachers in combination with the Director of Education review samples of student work, including writing samples, benchmark assessments, and ST Math progress. Students who are struggling academically are immediately identified for academic intervention and SST referral.

The first tier of professional development is a collaborative pursuit of two school-wide professional learning goals. Teachers and school leadership review the yearly self-study and select two goals that will help improve the instructional practices to better meet the needs of all CRA students.

The second tier of professional development is the mini-observation and feedback loops between teachers and the Executive Director of Education (“EDE”). Observations are brief, unannounced and frequent. The EDE observes with five objectives in mind: safety, purpose, teaching, environment, and learning. These objectives will guide a continued dialog about individual practices and professional development.

The third tier of professional development is Professional Development Portfolios (“PDP”). Each year at CRA, individual teachers work independently or in a team to plan, develop, document and present a PDP. The PDPs document the teachers’ efforts at enhancing instructional practices in an area of their choice and study the effects of their development on practice and student outcomes. The PDP project fosters professional development through experimentation and reflection. Building a PDP library allows teachers to record data on instructional practices and to explore personal interests while leaving a permanent resource for the school. While working on individual projects, teachers and administrators collaborate to provide feedback, help research and share ideas. In addition to PDPs, CRA teachers collaborate on grade level teams to develop and refine curricular projects. Grade level teachers collaborate with specialty teachers (art, music, physical education) and community partners to create integrated units of study.

## **ELEMENT 2: MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES**

*“The measurable student outcomes identified for use by the charter school. ‘Student outcomes’ means the extent to which all students of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school’s educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both school-wide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 47607. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school.” Education Code § 47605(b)(5)(B).*

### **MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES**

The Executive Director of Education (“EDE”) responsible and accountable to the school community for implementing curriculum and instruction to promote student achievement of measurable student outcomes and for demonstrating progress toward and meeting Adequate Yearly Progress goals as required by No Child Left Behind and the recently state-adopted California Measurement of Academic Performance & Progress (CalMAPP).

### **SCHOOL OUTCOME GOALS**

CRA pursues the following school outcome goals.

1. CRA will continue to meet/exceed AYP targets required by NCLB, including an Academic Performance Index (“API”) rating of 800 both school wide and with each numerically significant sub-group targets.
2. CRA continues to maintain an ADA of 95% and a higher attendance rate than local area public schools, on average.
3. CRA continues to strive to academically outperform neighboring public schools as identified by School wide API, API Similar Schools Ranking & API State wide ranking.
4. CRA maintains a high level of parent satisfaction as measured by an 80% satisfaction rate on the annual parent survey.
5. CRA strives to close the achievement gap between groups with traditionally disparate scores: standardized test score data will demonstrate a pattern of raised achievement over time for traditionally underserved students.
6. CRA has developed and continues to foster relationships with the community in which it is housed in order to carry-out the school’s mission of creating students with the tools to be community leaders and problem solvers.

### **PUPIL OUTCOME GOAL**

CRA strives to pursue pupil outcome goals, as measured by multiple and varied benchmark assessments detailed in chart below, that are aligned to state and federal guidelines.




These pupil outcomes are directly tied to the program goal of providing students with a rigorous standards-based program while preparing them to successfully learn, excel in school and prepare to be self-motivated, competent, life-long learners.

OUTCOMES	MEASURABLE GOAL
<p><b>ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARTS:</b> in reading and other language arts skills including writing and oral communication as outlined by the California Content Standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% of students will demonstrate at least one grade level improvement in reading skills annually</li> <li>• 75% of students performing at grade level upon entry to CRA will score Proficient/Adv. on CalMAPP testing (school wide and numerically significant subgroups)</li> <li>• 75% of students performing below grade level at entrance to CRA will evidence gains of at least one proficiency level on CalMAPP testing within 3<sup>rd</sup> years of enrollment at CRA</li> </ul>
<p><b>MATHEMATICS:</b> Mastery of age appropriate principles of mathematics and logical reasoning and the ability to apply them to real life situations as defined by California Content Standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75% of students performing at grade level upon entry to CRA will score Proficient/Adv. on CalMAPP testing (school wide and numerically significant subgroups)</li> <li>• 90% of students performing below grade level on entrance to CRA will progress at least one grade level equivalent on a diagnostic assessment of foundational math skills each year</li> <li>• 75% of students performing below grade level at entrance to CRA will evidence gains of at least one proficiency level on CalMAPP testing within 3<sup>rd</sup> years of enrollment at CRA (school wide and numerically</li> </ul>

	significant subgroups)
<b>HISTORY/SOCIAL-STUDIES:</b> Students will understand and apply historical, political and geographical knowledge to prepare them to be active and responsible citizens as outlined by the California Content Standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of students will demonstrate effective use of technology to conduct academic research, communicate and apply their learning.</li> <li>• 100% of students will participate in a Presentation of Learning (POL)</li> </ul>
<b>SCIENCE:</b> Students will demonstrate sufficient knowledge, skills and strategies of science as defined by the California Content Standards. Students will understand and apply the scientific method of inquiry to examine scientific problems and questions. Their scientific inquiries will build an understanding of the major underlying concepts of the various branches of science, including earth science, biology, chemistry and physics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% of students will demonstrate knowledge of vocabulary specific to the domain of science</li> <li>• 75% of students performing at grade level upon entry to CRA will score Proficient/Adv. on Science CST/CalMAPP testing (school wide and numerically significant subgroups)</li> <li>• 75% of students performing below grade level on entrance to CRA will evidence gains of at least one proficiency level on CalMAPP testing within 3-years of enrollment at CRA</li> </ul>
<b>English Language Learners</b> will make appropriate progress toward English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 75% of ELL students will increase by at least one ELD level annually as demonstrated by CELDT/ELPAC scores and redesignation data.</li> </ul>
<b>Special education</b> students will achieve or make progress toward the learning goals in	Special education-designated students will make progress



their Individualized Education Plans.	annually toward the learning goals as outlined in their IEPs.
<p><i>CRA students will be <b>Critical Thinkers</b> who:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Apply, analyze, identify, synthesize and evaluate information and experiences.</li> <li>✚ Connect the skills and content learned across the curriculum and evaluate multiple points of view.</li> <li>✚ Use the Inquiry Method to address a problem, hypothesize, observe, and draw conclusions as they investigate an issue/problem.</li> <li>✚ Collaborate and Participate in Experiential Learning and utilize problem-solving techniques.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>CRA students will be <b>Effective Communicators</b> who:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Demonstrate Content area and grade level mastery in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, History and Science</li> <li>✚ Collaborate, work effectively, and manage interpersonal relationships with peers.</li> <li>✚ Participate in projects, presentations, town meetings, and host exhibitions, which connect students to the 'real world' and the community.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>CRA students will be <b>21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars</b> who:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Use technology effectively as a learning tool to access information.</li> <li>✚ Demonstrate the ability to integrate technology as an effective tool in their daily lives.</li> <li>✚ Use Visual and Performing Arts as learning tools and a means of expression.</li> </ul>	

<p>CRA students will be <b><i>Socially Responsible Global Citizens</i></b> who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <i>Embrace and respect cultural diversity through the understanding of our Global World.</i></li> <li> <i>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of American and World History and the values of different cultures (through a multi-cultural curriculum)</i></li> <li> <i>Contribute to social activism through school wide projects.</i></li> </ul>	
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### **ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDEX**

CRA recognizes that academic accountability is one of the foundations of the charter school's concept and believes in the importance of federal and state assessments to school accountability for student academic performance. CRA, as a public school is held accountable to state and federal accountability system, including the Academic Performance Index ("API"). CRA will annually develop a plan for meeting school wide and subgroup API growth goals that will be shared with all teachers, staff, parents, students and the community.

### ELEMENT 3: OUTCOME MEASUREMENT

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

### LOCAL CONTROL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

In compliance with Education Code § 47605.6, Community Roots Academy will develop a Local Control Accountability Plan in accordance with the template adopted by the State Board of Education in order to help monitor progress towards Community Roots Academy objectives. This plan will be reviewed and updated annually and the budget revised to implement the actions described in the plan as submitted to the Capistrano Unified School District. Community Roots Academy will engage the school community in the plan development and review process. Further, Community Roots Academy will comply with all applicable regulations and compliance requirements developed in this regard.

At Community Roots Academy, assessments are integral instruments for analyzing student performance, driving instruction and assessing CRA’s progress toward its educational and institutional goals. CRA implements a balanced assessment system utilizing a combination of formative and summative assessments that inform instructional practices as well as measure student performance.

### STATE-MANDATED ASSESSMENTS

CRA also administers state mandated tests by grade level, including the California Standards Tests (CST), California Measurement of Academic Performance & Progress (CalMAPP), the California English Language Development Test (CELDT)/ ELPAC and the California Physical Fitness Test (PFT) in Grade 7. API and AYP growth goals are developed annually and CRA reports API and AYP data to all stakeholders annually as described below.

GRADE	CAASPP (ELA/MATH)	CST SCIENCE	Physical Fitness	CAPA (ELA/MATH)	CELDT
2 <sup>nd</sup>				√	√
3 <sup>rd</sup>	√			√	√
4 <sup>th</sup>	√			√	√
5 <sup>th</sup>	√	√	√	√	√
6 <sup>th</sup>	√			√	√
7 <sup>th</sup>	√			√	√
8 <sup>th</sup>	√	√	√	√	√

The CRA assessment system is designed to reflect current best practices in assessment and specific attention has been given to each of the following elements: **1) clear purpose** - teachers and administrators understand the purpose for each assessment, **2) specific learning targets** – clear expectations of knowledge and skills (*CRA Grade Level Benchmarks*), **3) sound design** – learning outcomes and process are matched to a specific type of assessment, **4) effective**

**communication of results** – timely and clear presentation of results and next steps to parents, students and colleagues, and **5) student involvement** – student involvement in self-assessing, setting goals and tracking progress.<sup>31</sup> Using these elements as guidelines for designing an effective assessment system helps ensure that CRA assessments demonstrate student learning and inform curriculum and instruction. This approach also makes assessments an integral part of the learning process. In addition to evaluating students, these assessments build content knowledge and develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as collaboration, effective communication, problem solving, critical thinking, initiative, adaptability, evaluation and imagination. CRA's assessment system not only builds a solid foundation of knowledge, it also teaches students how to use their knowledge.

## **EXPLANATION OF ASSESSMENTS TOOLS**

CRA's balanced assessment system includes assessments that measure individual student and overall school performances. Student assessments are on-going and uses multiple measures. For this document, the assessment tools are organized by frequency within three timeframes: immediate, short-term and cumulative. This continuous cycle of assessment ensures that gaps in student learning will be recognized and addressed in a timely way and also measures students' retention of knowledge and skills over time. The combination of each of these types of assessments creates a map of each student's growth and development at CRA.

## **IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENTS**

Immediate assessments are critical for teachers to gauge student understanding on a day-to-day basis. Immediate assessments are brief (usually under 10 minutes), given frequently and easily scored. Each teacher will establish a repertoire of immediate assessments and clearly convey the purpose of this type of assessment to students. Immediate assessments are formative, and their purpose is to provide teachers instant feedback while they are teaching specific content or skills. It is crucial that students understand these assessments are formative and not summative, meaning they are significant, but they will have a minimal impact on their overall grade. Based on this feedback, teachers can quickly adjust their instruction to meet the students' needs. For example, if the majority of the class could not demonstrate understanding of a particular lesson, the teacher would re-teach the entire lesson using a different approach. Alternatively, if only a few students struggled with a lesson, the teacher could offer small group instruction to re-teach the concept to meet the needs of those specific students. These immediate assessments take a variety of forms including quizzes, journal entries, class discussions, weekly updates and exit cards. Although each of these assessments differs in form, they all gauge each individual's understanding of content or skills. In addition to informing instruction, these types of assessment also benefit students by significantly improving long-term memory because they aid in information retrieval and improve connections to new material.<sup>32</sup> CRA's immediate assessments are a teacher's first line of defense in preventing gaps in student learning and are an integral aspect of a balanced assessment system.

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<sup>31</sup> Chappuis, Stephen., Chappuis, Jan., Stiggins, Rick. (2009). *The Quest for Quality*. Educational Leadership. (Vol. 67, #3, p. 14-19).

<sup>32</sup> Glenn, David. (2007). *You Will Be Tested on This*. Chronicle of Higher Education. (June 8 2007, p.14).

## **SHORT-TERM ASSESSMENTS**

Short-term assessments are another integral aspect of CRA's balanced assessment system. Short-term assessments vary greatly in form and function, but all of these assessments provide students with timely, specific feedback on their work. In addition, these assessments usually contribute more significantly to a student's grade than immediate assessments. Thus, short-term assessments are both formative and summative. It is critical for teachers to clearly explain the purpose of each assessment.

Examples of short-term assessments that CRA utilizes include rubrics, solution reviews, performance assessments and presentations. Each of these assessments is unique in purpose and benefit both students and teachers in a variety of ways.

## **RUBRICS**

Rubrics are matrixes designed to outline the specific content being assessed and performance level expectations for a given project or assignment. These matrixes can be simple or intricate. Regardless of their complexity, rubrics provide students with exemplars of performance level associated with all possible scores or grades.

Rubrics are a valuable assessment tools for CRA teachers because they are adaptable and flexible enough to use in all content areas and with students of any age. In addition they bring objectivity to subjective scoring and provide a consistent tool for evaluation. Rubrics benefit students by clarifying the content being assessed and performance level expectations. They also act as a guide for students to refer to while working on an assignment and can be used by students to assess their own work prior to submission. Furthermore, rubrics clearly communicate the grading process to students and parents and offer specific feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of an assignment or project.

## **SOLUTION REVIEWS**

CRA also utilizes solution reviews as an integral type of formative assessment. Solution reviews are opportunities for students to share more significant projects or assignments in progress in order to get feedback from teachers, peers or other members of the school community. During solution reviews, students present the work they have completed thus far and their plan for completion. After students present their work, students field questions and get suggestions from teachers, classmates and possibly experts in the field. Students benefit from these types of assessments in numerous ways by giving students the opportunity to present their ideas to an audience helps them understand their ideas are valued and reinforces the idea that their work holds significance in the real world. Additionally, students benefit from receiving and incorporating feedback, as well as offering constructive feedback to others.

## **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS**

CRA utilizes performance assessments as another component of its balanced assessment system. Performance assessments are usually small group or individual projects completed over a short period of time. Performance assessments are extremely valuable because they can

be both formative and summative. The feedback students receive guide them in preparing the larger project and enable them to produce a higher quality work product.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

Presentations are another relatively short-term assessment CRA teachers use to enhance and evaluate student learning. Presentations are student demonstrations of learning given to an audience of peers, parents or other school community members. Presentations reflect polished work products that have been reviewed and refined over time. Students not only deeply understand the content they are presenting, but they also will develop critical communication skills and confidence. Research indicates that presentations “ensure that their [students] mastery is genuine. These public presentations signal to students that their work is valued and reinforce the significance of their tasks in a real-world context.”<sup>33</sup> CRA teachers’ use of presentations motivate and engage students by making their work more meaningful while aiding them in building a deep content knowledge and mastering 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

Rubrics, solution reviews, performance assessments and presentations are examples of the types of on-going, short-term assessments that are utilized by CRA instructors. These assessments not only will serve as tools for evaluation, but also for improving instruction and enhancing student learning.

## **CUMULATIVE ASSESSMENTS**

In addition to immediate and short-term assessments, CRA utilizes several different types of cumulative assessments to measure students’ progress throughout the school year and throughout their career at CRA. CRA uses cumulative assessments, including locally generated benchmark assessments, student portfolios, state approved textbook summative assessments and state mandated standardized assessments, to evaluate student progress.

## **BENCHMARK ASSESSMENTS**

Benchmark assessments at CRA are created and updated by teachers and designed to track students’ progress toward grade level benchmarks – expectations of student knowledge and skills for each grade level. These assessments are designed to measure students’ progress towards meeting statewide performance and content standards. The benchmark assessments include a combination of open response, multiple choice and writing prompts. Identical tests or tests measuring identical skills are given to students approximately every 60 days or three times annually. Ideally, students demonstrate mastery of at least 1/3 of the material by the first assessment, at least 2/3 of the materials by the second; and meet all benchmarks by the third assessment.

CRA uses its benchmark assessments to monitor student progress in order for teachers to use concrete data to adapt instruction to meet the specific needs of an entire class, groups or individuals. In order to utilize benchmark assessments to their fullest potential, CRA

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<sup>33</sup> Barron, B. and Darling-Hammond, L. (2008). Powerful learning: Studies show deep understanding derives from collaborative methods. Edutopia. Available online: [www.edutopia.org](http://www.edutopia.org).

incorporates the following guidelines into the establishment of CRA benchmark assessments and into its regular practices. A clear set of learning outcomes is established for each grade level that is easily understood by teachers, students and parents. Teachers are involved in developing the benchmarks and maintain an intimate familiarity with them. After students are administered the assessments, they are scored and review the assessments. Teachers and school leaders then review the data in small teams to identify gaps in learning and to create action plans to address any academic issues. For example, if a significant number of students answer a question incorrectly on material that the instructor has already taught, the teacher adjust the curriculum to include re-teaching and reviewing this particular content. Timeliness is critical to the process. Teachers involve students in the process by communicating the assessment result and plans for follow up teaching. Finally, CRA school leadership continuously follows up with teachers to be sure action plans are being implemented and adapted to best meet students' needs.

Benchmark assessments are an integral tool for providing CRA teachers and school leaders a consistent stream of data to aid in decision-making. An efficient and effective system of benchmark assessments enable CRA teachers to make informed curricular decisions and systematically intervene with struggling students. Benchmark assessments also improve instruction by providing data to help teachers identify the areas where their instruction is effective and areas for improvement. Reviewing the assessments and planning collaborative follow up will create a forum for teachers to learn from each other and drive continuous improvement among faculty.

## **PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENTS**

CRA student work portfolios represent a collection of individual student work demonstrating each student's progress and mastery of selected content and skills throughout the year. Student portfolios are reviewed and assessed annually. These portfolios continue with and are supplemented by the students throughout their career at CRA.

At CRA, student portfolios are an on-going collaboration between each student and his/her teachers. The portfolio illustrates a student's growth and development through work samples and written reflection. Periodically throughout each school year, teachers select pieces of student work that demonstrates mastery of particular content or personal best work product. For example, a teacher might choose a piece of writing that exemplifies a student's mastery of personal narrative writing or a younger student's best attempt at writing a complete sentence. Along with each of these selections the teacher would attach a narrative that provided the date the work was completed and the reason for adding it to the portfolio. In addition to teacher entries, students periodically are given the opportunity to select work samples for their portfolio and provide written explanations or reflections on their choices. Along with these selections, students would share their reasoning for these choices. At the end of each school year, teachers review the portfolios with students and guide them through a self-evaluation of their progress throughout the year.

Student portfolios at CRA are a valuable part of cumulative assessment because they present a broader and more intimate view of student learning than scores on benchmark assessments or standardized tests. Student involvement in selecting and reflecting on portfolio pieces promotes students' accountability and self-directed learning. Research indicates that student involvement in self-assessment leads to the assumption of greater responsibility for their learning and higher academic achievement.<sup>34</sup> CRA's use of portfolio assessments enhance student learning and document their development over the course of their school career.

## **EXIT PROJECT**

The CRA exit project is the culmination of the CRA educational experience designed for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to demonstrate all of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills they have developed in their experiences at CRA. The teacher-approved exit project is entirely student designed and implemented over the course of approximately 12 weeks. The exit project process begins with a small group or an individual who purposes a project, problem or design possibility to be approved by an 8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. The proposal includes the purpose, intended outcomes, an execution plan and a list of the individuals he/she intends to involve in the project. After the project is approved, the student(s) asks a CRA faculty member to act as the project advisor. The faculty project advisor is responsible to schedule periodic meetings to check progress and offer feedback. As students execute their project plan, they are required to document their process through written journal, photography, video or another approved means. In order to demonstrate proficiency in CRA's 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, students are required to incorporate several elements into their projects including technology, collaboration with peers and input from an expert in a related field, incorporating critical feedback and creating a project presentation. When students have completed their exit projects, they are required to present their process and outcomes to a panel made up of faculty members, school District representatives and community partners who will evaluate the work.

The exit project provides students the opportunity to design and execute an original project, problem or design utilizing the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills developed at CRA. This self-directed learning experience acts as an assessment of the skills students learned at CRA.

## **STUDENT OUTCOME & ASSESSMENT MATRIX**

The following Matrix below includes state mandated assessments. The combination of assessment tools used in each content area may vary; not all measures will apply to every content area every year.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Assessment Measure</b>	<b>Monitoring Timeline</b>	<b>Reporting</b>

<sup>34</sup> Barron, B. and Darling-Hammond, L. (2008). Powerful learning: Studies show deep understanding derives from collaborative methods. Edutopia. Available online: [www.edutopia.org](http://www.edutopia.org).



<u>English Language Arts</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of eighth grade students will demonstrate the ability to read fluently &amp; comprehend a variety of age appropriate texts.</li> <li>• Students will demonstrate the ability to read and respond to age appropriate text both orally and in writing.</li> <li>• Students will demonstrate effective public speaking and active listening.</li> <li>• Students will demonstrate the use of age appropriate vocabulary orally and in writing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAASPP (California Assessment of Student Performance &amp; Progress) – ELA (Gr. 3-8)</li> <li>• Locally created benchmark assessments</li> <li>• Performance evaluations or presentations</li> <li>• Portfolio assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aligned with state testing and reporting timeline</li> <li>• 3 times annually, approx. every 60 days</li> <li>• 1-4/semester</li> <li>• Annually in June</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/guardians, community, Board of Trustees, SARC, performance report to CUSD</li> <li>• Parents/guardians, students, faculty, and performance report to CUSD.</li> <li>• Parents/guardians, community, students, faculty.</li> <li>• Parents/guardians, students, faculty</li> </ul>
<u>Mathematics</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of eighth grade,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAASPP (California Assessment of Student</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aligned with CUSD testing and reporting timeline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/guardians, community, Board of Trustees SARC, performance</li> </ul>

<p>students will demonstrate proficiency at age appropriate principles of mathematics and logical reasoning and the ability to apply them to real life situations as defined by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will understand and solve problems using computation, algebra, number sense, measurement, geometry, statistics, data analysis, probability and logic.</li> </ul>	<p>Performance &amp; Progress) – Math (Gr. 3-8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Locally created benchmark assessments</li> <li>Common Core Aligned assessments</li> <li>Performance evaluations or presentations</li> <li>Portfolio assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 times annually, approx. every 60 days</li> <li>Per instructional unit</li> <li>1-4 per semester</li> <li>Annually in June</li> </ul>	<p>report to CUSD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty, performance report to CUSD</li> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty</li> <li>Parents/guardians, community, students, faculty</li> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty</li> </ul>
<p><u>Science</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By the end of eighth grade students will demonstrate sufficient knowledge, skills, and strategies of science as defined by the Next Generation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CST Science (Gr 5 &amp; 8) Locally created benchmark assessments</li> <li>NGSS aligned summative assessments</li> <li>Portfolio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 times annually, approx. every 60 days</li> <li>Per instructional unit</li> <li>Annually in June</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty, performance report to CUSD</li> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty</li> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty</li> </ul>

<p>Science Standards (NGSS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will understand and apply the scientific method of inquiry to examine scientific problems and questions.</li> <li>Students' scientific inquiries will build an understanding of the major underlying concepts of the various branches of science, including earth science, biology, chemistry and physics.</li> </ul>	<p>assessments</p>		
<p><u>Social Studies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By the end of eighth grade, students will understand and apply historical, political and geographical knowledge as</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State mandated History/Social Science assessments</li> <li>Locally created benchmark assessments</li> <li>Common Core</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 times annually, approximately every 60 days</li> <li>Per instructional unit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty, performance report to CUSD</li> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty</li> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty</li> </ul>

<p>outlined by the California State Standards, to prepare them to be active and responsible citizens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will demonstrate grade level historical knowledge (Grade 4, California; Grade 5, Early U.S. History; Grade 6, Ancient Civilizations; Grade 7, Medieval and Early Modern Times; Grade 8, U.S. History).</li> <li>Students will be able to conduct historical research to ask and answer questions about the past and make predictions about the future.</li> </ul>	<p>Aligned summative assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portfolio assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually in June</li> </ul>	
<p><u>Technology</u></p> <p>Students will demonstrate technological proficiency in areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital Portfolio</li> <li>Performance evaluations or presentations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annually in June</li> <li>1-4 per semester</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty</li> <li>Parents/guardians, community, students, faculty</li> </ul>

including word processing, spreadsheet development, research, and responsible internet use and multimedia presentations.			
<u>Visual and Performing Arts</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will demonstrate the ability to understand and create works of visual and performance art related to core subjects including social studies, language arts, world language, science and mathematics.</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance evaluations or presentations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-4 per semester</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/guardians, community, students, faculty</li> </ul>
<u>Physical Education</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will understand the aspects and importance of physical health &amp; demonstrate knowledge and skills that contribute to a healthy lifestyle, including</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher observation</li> <li>Physical Fitness Testing (PFT)</li> <li>(Gr 5 &amp; 8)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 times annually, parent-teacher conferences and report cards</li> <li>Annually</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty</li> <li>Parents/guardians, students, faculty</li> </ul>

<p>nutrition and exercise.</p> <p>Students regularly engage in a variety of forms of physical activity.</p>			
<u>English Learners</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CELDT (2013-2016) ELPAC (starting 2016-17SY)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aligned with CUSD testing and reporting timeline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/guardians, community, Board of Trustees SARC, performance report to CUSD</li> </ul>
<u>Designated Special Education Student Progress</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IEP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual IEP evaluation meeting according to IEP schedule</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/guardians, teachers, administrators</li> </ul>
<u>Attendance</u> CRA will continue to have an ADA of at least 92%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student records of Annual Average Daily Attendance (ADA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually in July</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/guardians, community, Board of Trustees SARC, annual performance report to CUSD</li> </ul>
CRA will maintain high-level parent satisfaction as measured by an 80% satisfaction rate on the annual parent survey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual parent surveys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually in May</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/guardians, community, Board of Trustees SARC, annual performance report to CUSD</li> </ul>

### USE & REPORTING OF DATA

CRA has implemented an assessment data collection and analysis that assesses the quality and effectiveness of its educational program. CRA monitors, records, analyzes, reports student progress and creates longitudinal data on individual student progress and school wide progress toward meeting goals, including API and AYP targets. CRA uses PowerSchool to record, organize and report student data. Powerschool allows CRA to maintain a comprehensive

student records that includes attendance, demographic data, free and reduced lunch eligibility and emergency information.

Teachers input student assessment performance on immediate and short-term assessments into PowerSchool. Additionally teachers enter benchmark assessments into the LinkIt 3 times annually. After each benchmark assessment period (60 days), SIS reports are generated on student attendance and performance. These reports will be review and analyzed by teachers and the executive director of education to drive instruction and professional development as well as measure student progress.

The results of these assessments are reviewed with parents during parent-teacher conferences scheduled midway through each semester (or more frequently if requested by teacher or parents). Teachers also review assessment results with their students to ensure students understand the purpose of the assessment, their individual progress and to set individual student goals. The goal of sharing assessment data with parents and students is to de-mystify the assessment process and to use assessment as a tool for instruction and communication about a student's progress towards meeting state standards and school-wide learning goals.

Student data will be:

- Processed and organized into easily read and understood formats such as tables and graphs.
- Provided to staff during regularly scheduled assessment review meetings and used to monitor individual student progress.
- Analyzed and discussed during grade level meetings and across grade levels to target specific areas of strength and weakness in overall student achievement.
- Evaluated annually to measure the overall effectiveness of the CRA educational program and make strategic curricular and instructional modifications as necessary.
- Provided to parents and reviewed at parent-teacher conferences each semester.
- Used to create student progress reports to be communicated with parents on a monthly basis and report cards each semester.
- Used to create an annual School Accountability Report Card (SARC) in compliance with CUSD deadlines.
- Used by the EDE to create an annual, comprehensive analysis of student achievement to present to the Board of Directors and to external stakeholders. The results of state test scores and API rankings come out once a year and will be reported to our parents/guardians shortly after the rankings are released. This annual performance report will also include the results of our other assessments measures, including our growth measures, authentic assessments, etc.

CRA issues comprehensive, standards-based report cards at the end of each semester (approximately 90 days). In addition, parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for mid-semester to maintain an on-going communication with parents regarding individual student progress. Additionally, CRA distributes interim progress reports electronically or by mail each

month. Student assessments that include: regular examinations, performances, projects, papers and other assignments are graded using a conventional number system for all courses and a numbered content-standard based report card for grades K-8. A content-standard based report card, particularly in English/Language Arts and Mathematics, provides more skill-specific information. The scale for reporting this vehicle is as follows: 4=Meets or Exceeds Standard; 3=Making Significant Progress Toward Standard; 2=Making Progress Toward Standard; 1=Shows Limited Progress Toward Standard. Missing work may result in a grade of Incomplete (I). Teachers will determine the deadlines for submission of missing work, as well as the consequences and final grade if students fail to complete missing work. CRA retains the ability to adapt the frequency of these reports in order to provide more effective and meaningful feedback to parents and students.

In a commitment to continual progress and school wide development, CRA also utilizes student assessment data to drive instruction and guide professional development efforts. In weekly grade level team meetings, teachers review and analyze student assessment data to help them develop strategies to support underperforming students. Additionally, reviewing assessment data in these weekly team meetings provides a format for teachers to measure their instructional effectiveness. Continued self-reflection and data analysis enables teachers to identify areas for growth in their methodologies and instructional delivery.

In addition to teacher self-reflection, the Executive Director of Education uses student assessment data as a component of assessing the effectiveness of teachers' instructional practices in order to inform professional development efforts. The EDE collaborates with teachers to create individual development goals and provide appropriate support to enable the faculty to grow professionally and meet the needs of their students.

One of CRA's guiding principles is to establish and to maintain a model learning community where students and educators are provided the feedback and support, which enable them to grow and develop as individuals. Our balanced assessment system creates a framework of continuous feedback cycles to ensure incremental student progress towards state standards, to enhance long-term retention of knowledge and skills and to provide data for evaluation of instructional practices.



#### **ELEMENT 4: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

*“The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement” Education Code § 47605 (b)(5)(D).*

The District shall not be responsible or liable for the operations of CRA. The School will be governed pursuant to this Charter (current Bylaws and Articles are attached as Appendices “D” & “E.”)

CRA shall provide written notice to the District Superintendent of any proposed revisions to the Articles of Incorporation and/or Bylaws no less than ten (10) business days prior to the effective date of any changes. Should the District Superintendent or designee reasonably determine that the District considers the revision(s) to be a material revision to the charter petition, the District shall so notify CRA in writing and the changes shall not take effect until a material revision is approved through the process set forth in Education Code section 47607 for material revision to the Charter.

CRA shall provide to the District Superintendent copies of all of its Governing Board and Board committee agendas (including all backup materials) with respect to the operation of the charter school at or before the time required for posting of such agendas in compliance with the Brown Act.

#### **NON-PROFIT**

Community Roots Academy is operated by a California nonprofit public benefit corporation. The corporation, Community Roots Charter School, A California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation (“CRCS”), shall comply with all provisions of the charter petition, as approved by the Capistrano Unified School District, with respect to all activities and operations of the charter school. The corporation may, consistent with its articles of incorporation and charitable purposes for which it was formed, carry out other activities which are complementary with, supportive of, and not inconsistent with its charter school’s operations.

#### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST CODE**

CRA’s Conflict of Interest Code, which adopts the California Fair Political Practices Commission’s Model Code and has been approved by the CRA board and sent to the County Board of Supervisors for final approval, is included herein as Appendix “X.” CRA’s Conflict of Interest Code shall comply with the Political Reform Act and will reflect CRA’s full commitment to financial transparency and service. CRA shall be subject to applicable sections of Government Code section 1090 *et seq.* if the California Legislature mandates as such.

CRA and CRCS shall be subject to the Political Reform Act of 1974 (Gov. Code section 87100, *et seq.*, the “PRA”) and any attendant regulations as they may be amended from time to time, and all conflict of interest laws and prohibitions applicable to California nonprofit corporations and/or California charter schools. Prior to the commencement of the 2014-2015 school year, CRA shall adopt the Fair Political Practices Commission’s Model Conflict of Interest Code,

pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 2, Section 18739, including the formal designation of reporters and reporting categories and the forms to be filed thereunder, and review, revise and maintain that Code as current throughout the term of the Charter, and provide a copy of that Conflict of Interest Code and the documentation of board action adopting it to the District (and any revisions thereto), and require all affected CRA officers, employees, representatives and governing board members to comply therewith.

CRA and CRCS shall conduct all operations of the charter school, including Board meetings, in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act as set forth in California Government Code section 54950, *et seq.* and applicable provisions of the Education Code.

### **BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES**

CRA is currently governed by Board of Directors comprised of 5 members serving staggered one, two and three year terms.

The Community Roots Academy Board of Directors is responsible for the following:

1. Developing annual school wide goals for the school and long range plans with input from the Co-Directors, teachers, and parent action committee members.
2. Establishing and approving all major educational and operational policies.
3. Approving all major contracts.
4. Approving the school's annual budget and overseeing the school's fiscal affairs.
5. Evaluating the performance of the Executive Director's -.
6. Assessing CRA goals, objectives, academic achievements/student progress, the school's financial status and any need for redirection.
7. Reviewing reports from legal counsel, auditors, business services provider and consultants and providing recommendations to the Community Roots Academy Co-Directors
8. Setting policy, approving the budget, and ensuring that the school helps students achieve high academic standards

### **GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF CRA**

Board Members are selected based on their expertise and skills and their commitment to advocate for the school's student population and uphold the school's mission (See Appendix C: Board Roster). Board seats may be filled by community members who have the desired mix of experience and expertise, to ensure the school's success. The threshold screening criteria for all prospective members of the Board of Directors include a demonstrated understanding of the school's mission and vision and an interest in serving the charter school's target student population. Other criteria for Board selection include a commitment to diligently fulfill all responsibilities as Board Members, with a willingness to routinely attend Board meetings, to actively participate in Board working groups and/or committees, and to actively engage in overseeing and supporting the CRA program. Demonstrated ability to act in a leadership capacity is preferred.

The Board of Directors has ultimate responsibility to oversee the program to ensure the school's success; however, the CRA Co-Directors and teachers will carry out the day-to-day operations of the school. The Co-Directors are the overall site managers and report directly to the Board of Directors. The Co-Directors are responsible for implementing policy, overseeing operations and carrying out the provisions of the charter and the Board's directives. The teaching faculty work closely with the Executive Director of Education to implement the educational program. The Executive Director of Education will be responsible for hiring, providing support to, evaluating and, when needed, terminating instructional staff. The Executive Director of Resource Development will be responsible for hiring, providing support to, evaluating and, when needed, terminating non-instructional staff.

#### *The Board of Directors, Make-Up of the Board of Directors*

The Board of Directors will be comprised of between three and eleven voting members with legal, financial and/or pedagogical expertise.

#### **ELECTION TERM & REMOVAL PROCESS FOR BOARD MEMEBERS**

Board Members are chosen as follows:

Current Board of Directors determine the selection process for representatives from the general community with an attempt to achieve the desired mix of skills and expertise necessary to effectively govern the charter school.

To establish continuity and sustainability for the charter school's long-term success, members of the Board of Directors will serve three years in staggered terms. To create the staggered effect, the Board of Directors in the opening year will be elected to one, two and three year terms.

Community Roots Academy Board Members or other members of the Community Roots Academy community may recommend the removal of a Board Member pursuant to the Board of Directors' removal policy and procedure that is set forth in the school's bylaws (See Appendix E – Bylaws).

#### **BOARD STRUCTURE**

The Board of Directors follows the Brown Act and meet routinely. (Expulsion hearings and other confidential governance matters are held in closed session, unless open session is requested by the parent of the child in question in accordance with current law). The Board has appointed members that serve as the chairperson, and secretary and treasurer (Chief Financial Officer). The secretary distributes the agenda and records board minutes. Two weeks prior to a scheduled Board meeting, the secretary issues a request for agenda items. The school's Co-Directors and any member of the Board of Directors may request that an item be placed on the agenda, with ultimate discretion to set the agenda being held by the chairperson. The agenda for a Board meeting is issued to all Board of Directors members and posted in school's website and publicly posted at least 72 hours prior to a board meeting. The treasurer is responsible for

overseeing the fiscal situation of the charter school, and provides guidance to the school's primary fiscal employee to ensure that CRA is operating in a fiscally responsibly.

The following is an outline of the governance structure of CRA:



### **BOARD TRAINING & SUSTAINABILITY**

CRA is committed to continuous improvement and on-going training to assist the Board of Directors in fulfilling its responsibilities to act as stewards for the charter school. To this end, the Board will seek appropriate training and educational opportunities, both as a full Board and individually. Such training experiences may include group training sessions with legal counsel or other experts familiar with public school governance, and/or training sessions with charter school governance experts. New Board Members will go through an initial orientation and training to help ensure that they fully grasp their responsibilities as Board Members and develop the requisite expertise in public school oversight to be effective. Board Members may be given a stipend to attend supplemental training sessions in areas of school oversight as needed. CRA maintains, general liability and Board errors and omissions insurance policies.

### **VOLUNTEERS & PARENT ACTION COMMITTEES**

CRA believes firmly that active parent and student participation in school operations and decision-making helps foster a public school's long-term sustainability as a successful program.

Once a student is admitted to the school, his or her family is encouraged to sign up with one of the school's parent action committees. Possible committees include Fundraising Committee, Landscape and Garden Committee, Building Maintenance Committee, Diversity Outreach

Committee, Art and Music Committee, Business Partnerships Committee, Teacher Support Committee, and Parent Relations Committee. The Co-Directors of the school and the Board of Directors oversee and direct the work of these committees. Where appropriate, especially in the upper grades, students are invited to participate on these action committees in an effort to involve students in the ongoing operations of the school.

CRA is responsible for screening all volunteers for the protection of students, including fingerprinting and criminal background checks for those on site when students are present. Registered sex offenders under Penal Code section 290 may not serve as volunteers on campus or anywhere or at anytime students are present. Volunteers working on campus or when students are present who will be unsupervised by certificated personnel at any time must submit to a criminal background check pursuant to Education Code 45125.

### **AMENDMENTS**

Material revisions of the provisions contained in this Charter may be made in writing with the mutual consent of the CUSD Board of Trustees and the CRA Board of Directors. Material revisions and amendments shall be made pursuant to the standards, criteria, and timelines in Education Code Section 47605; provided however that the charter school shall not be required to obtain petition signatures prior to making material amendments to the charter petition.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION GOVERNANCE**

The Community Roots Academy and the Capistrano Unified School District pledge to work in cooperation to ensure that a free and appropriate education is provided to all students with exceptional needs in accordance with all state and federal laws regarding provision of special education services.

Community Roots Academy shall have the right to pursue independent local education agency (LEA) and/or special education local plan area (SELPA) status pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a) and the District shall not hinder or otherwise impede the efforts of the charter school to do so. In the event that CRA opts not to establish independent LEA and/or SELPA status, it shall remain an arm of the District for special education purposes as required by Education Code Section 46741(b), and shall continue to receive funding and services pursuant to the terms of this section and the annual agreement.

Community Roots Academy and the District shall annually, and in good faith, negotiate and enter into a written agreement, via a memorandum of understanding or annual operational agreement, to clearly specify the desired mix of special education funding and services to be provided and to detail the specific terms of such services and funding.

## **ELEMENT 5: EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS**

*"The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school." Education Code Section 47605(b) (5) (E).*

### **QUALIFICATION OF SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

CRA ensures that all legal qualification requirements are met for teachers, staff, paraprofessionals and other administrative employees of the school. Each certificated employee at the charter school meets the state licensing requirements for the position that he/she holds. No state licensing requirements exist for most non-certificated positions. For all positions, certificated and non-certificated, the employee, at minimum, needs to satisfactorily meet the performance specifications required for the position and must possess the qualifications required to perform the essential functions of the position, as determined by the CRA Board and/or the Co-Directors. The number, type, mix and salary levels of each employee are outlined in detail in the financial plan, attached. All persons working on campus or when students are present must submit to a criminal background check pursuant to Education Code 45125 and must have a current TB test on file with the charter school.

CRA adheres to the No Child Left Behind ("NCLB") requirements with respect to teachers and paraprofessional employees. Teachers meet the requirements for employment as stipulated by the California Education Code section 47605(l). Teachers of core, college preparatory subjects (i.e., English language arts, math, science, history/social science, special education) are required to hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in a non-charter public school would be required to hold. As specified in NCLB, as applicable to charter schools, CRA has flexibility regarding the qualifications needed for teachers in non-core subject areas. In order to ensure implementation of the school's mission and educational philosophy, preference is given to teachers who have experience designing and implementing a curriculum aligned to state standards.

### **TEACHERS**

Community Roots Academy employs a teaching staff that holds appropriate California teaching certificates, permits, or other documents issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. These teachers teach the "core" academic and college preparatory classes of mathematics, language arts, science, history /social studies. Our teachers are responsible for overseeing the students' academic progress and for monitoring grading and matriculation decisions as specified in the school's operation policies.

Pursuant to the teacher qualification requirements under the NCLB, all CRA teachers teaching core subjects are "highly qualified" as that term is defined under NCLB and further defined by California state regulations implementing NCLB requirements, as applicable to charter schools such as CRA. Applicants to teach in our program will be evaluated based on the following qualifications:

- Demonstrated instructional ability, with experience in the school's instructional methods preferred, and knowledge of content to be taught.
- Possession of a CLAD credential for core college preparatory subjects.
- Desire to engage in professional development to continually improve effectiveness in improving student achievement.
- Knowledge and experience with standards-based instruction: ability to align curriculum and standards.
- Knowledge of assessment strategies, including the ongoing use of formative assessments and the ability to use data to adjust instruction to meet students' needs and to promote continuous improvement of student learning.
- Ability to effectively use instructional strategies to meet students' diverse needs
- Demonstrated competence in advanced technology as a teaching tools by integrating technology into instruction.
- Strong classroom management skills.
- A commitment to the school's mission and vision.
- Willingness to work with the CRA team to ensure continuous school improvement.
- Willingness and ability to work with students and parents on an ongoing basis to ensure student success.
- Love of students, enthusiasm for teaching, the belief that each student can succeed and a commitment to ensuring that all students master the content and skills necessary for success at the next level of schooling.
- Positive references from most recent employment and/or college or graduate school.

Community Roots Academy also may employ or retain non-certificated instructional support staff where the candidate has an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience and the capacity to work successfully in an instructional capacity. Instructional support staff would not assign grades or approve student work assignments without the approval of a teacher unless they are instructing non-core or non-college preparatory courses and activities.

### **CO-DIRECTORS**

The Co-Directors are the primary administrators of the charter school's program. In this role, the Co-Directors must possess both leadership skills and other job-related competencies to build and sustain a high quality educational program.

The job duties of the Executive Director of Education include the following:

- Promoting the school's mission and vision while overseeing the daily operations of the school;
- Creating and maintaining a supportive environment that helps students and staff feel safe and reach their full potential;
- Hiring, supporting, evaluating and, when necessary, terminating all instructional staff;
- Reporting on the school's academic performance to the governing Board, the charter authorizer and funders;

- Supporting teachers in instruction to implement the school's vision and realize the school's mission;
- Preparing credentialing paperwork and monitor processing;
- Coordinating all professional development activities of instructional staff;
- Organizing teacher common planning time;
- Acting as a liaison to external partners supporting the educational program;
- Representing school at meetings/forums; and
- Assisting in writing grants, facilitating fundraising and/or obtaining loans, as needed.

The qualifications for this position include:

- Organizational management experience with human and financial resources, including employees and volunteers, and compliance procedures related to academics;
- Leadership, supervision and staff development experience;
- At least five years teaching experience using the school's instructional methods;
- Strong interpersonal skills, including the ability to interact effectively with staff members, parents, District personnel, vendors and community stakeholders;
- Proficiency in the use of computers, including but not limited to word processing, spreadsheets, multimedia presentations, email, the internet and digital media;
- Advanced degree, preferably in education and/or administrative credential; and
- In-depth understanding of and commitment to the school's vision and mission.

The job duties for the Executive Director Resource Development include the following:

- Overseeing the budget and financial reporting for the school;
- Hiring, evaluating, supporting and, when necessary, terminating non-instructional staff;
- Developing procedures around payroll, benefits and retirement withholdings;
- Training the office staff in attendance accounting, compliance reporting and other fiscal policies;
- Overseeing local and state compliance reporting;
- Managing vendor relationships (e.g., custodial, food service, technology)
- Assisting in the development of school policies;
- Developing with Board Members and stakeholders a strategic plan for the school;
- Procuring both short and long-term facilities for the school;
- Working with the Board of Directors and other stakeholders to procure additional funds for the school;
- Coordinating the technology infrastructure;
- Leading the fundraising efforts for the facility and for educational programs (including identifying grants, external funding sources, and financing);
- Reporting to the Board on the financial progress of the school; and
- Representing the school at public meetings/forums.



The qualifications for this position include:

- Organizational management experience with human and financial resources, including employees and volunteers, budgeting fiscal management and compliance procedures;
- Leadership and supervision experience;
- Experience in contract negotiations and vendor relationship management;
- Strong interpersonal skills, including the ability to interact effectively with staff members, parents, District personnel, vendors and community stakeholders;
- Proficient in the use of computers, including but not limited to word processing, spreadsheets, multimedia presentations, email, the internet and digital media;
- Advanced degree
- In-depth understanding of and commitment to the school's vision and mission.

### **SUPPORT STAFF**

The school employs administrative and operational staff that have demonstrated experience or expertise in the issues and work tasks required of them and are provided professional development opportunities to ensure that they remain abreast of all relevant changes in laws or other operational requirements. All non-instructional staff shall possess experience and expertise appropriate for their positions within the school as outlined in the school's staffing plan and the school's adopted personnel policies.

### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS, HIRING & PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

Prior to employment and within thirty (30) days of hiring, each employee is required to submit to a criminal background check as required by Education Code §44237. CRA adheres to California laws including fingerprinting and prohibitions regarding the employment of persons who have been convicted of a violent or serious felony. CRA complies with the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act as they apply to certificated personnel and paraprofessionals. Each employee must furnish proof of tuberculosis testing, as well as documents establishing legal employment status. The Co-Directors and/or administrative designees are responsible for monitoring and maintaining documentation of criminal investigation clearances, as required by California and federal laws. Those employees that require a criminal background check and do not have a current background check are required to undergo such a check through such services as a LiveScan fingerprint process. CRA shall pay for such services on behalf of its prospective employees. These services shall occur where the LiveScan service is offered, which may be located at District, county or local college facilities.

Employee supervisors are responsible for providing feedback on performance. They will not wait until major evaluations but shall maintain an ongoing dialogue about how the employee performs his or her work. For example, the principals visit classrooms regularly, for both quick "snapshot" visits and longer stays to keep in touch with teacher performance.

Major evaluations occur once a year and address all aspects of each employee's job description. Performance measures, both quantitative and qualitative, are used to evaluate all school personnel.

Teachers are evaluated by the EDE based on the following measures:

- Student progress as referenced from assessment measures.
- Effectiveness of teaching strategies as evaluated by the director, lead/mentor teacher, and Academic Review Board through classroom visitations.
- Performance of job duties.
- Knowledge of curriculum.
- Participation in school activities aligned with the school's mission and vision
- Performance rating on teacher evaluation rubric (see p. 58)

Classified and other personnel are evaluated by the Executive Director of Resource Development based upon completion of assigned job duties and regular, punctual attendance.

If an employee disagrees with an evaluation, a written objection may be appended to the review. Employees always have the right to engage in the Due Process and Process for Resolving Complaints/Grievances. If requested, assistance is provided to employees in due process. Please refer to Element 11 for specific details about the grievance process. All staff members have the right to due process at all times.

The Co-Directors have the authority to create formal job descriptions for each position, recruit and interview candidates. The CRA Board of Directors has the right, if it so chooses, to review these candidates' credentials before a job offer is made to the candidate. The Executive Director of Education is responsible for evaluating the performance of the teaching staff on an annual basis, and the Executive Director of Resource Development is responsible for evaluating the performance of the administrative staff on a yearly basis. The CRA Board of Directors has the right, if it so chooses, to review these performance evaluations before they are delivered to the staff members. The Co-Directors, with input from the CRA Board of Directors, determine the criteria by which to evaluate the job performance of these employees. The CRA Board of Directors creates the job description of the Co-Directors and reviews their performance on an annual basis.

### **SALARIES & BENEFITS**

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

CRA offers a 403b plan in conjunction with Social Security for its certificated and non-certificated full-time staff.

CRA does not maintain a formal salary schedule for certificated or non-certificated employees. CRA offers all full time employees health benefits and a retirement savings plan with a percentage of matching by CRA. As a CRA staff members, all employees have access to high

quality professional development from organizations such as Google and the University of California Irvine.

The Co-Directors, as approved by the Board of Directors, has the authority to determine the salary and benefit levels, working conditions and work year characteristics (e.g., length of year and day, vacation policies, etc.) for all employees, which allows CRA to attract and retain high caliber employees necessary for CRA's success.

## **ELEMENT 6: HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES**

*“The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in section 4437.” Education Code Section 47605 (b) (5) (F).*

CRA has adopted and implements a comprehensive set of health, safety and risk management policies. These policies were developed in consultation with the school’s insurance carriers and at a minimum addresses the following topics:

1. All enrolled students and staff shall provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required by law, including mandatory tuberculosis screening for staff and volunteers expected to have prolonged contact with students.
2. Policies and procedures for school wide training to respond to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires and earthquakes (Disaster Plan). This Disaster Plan shall be appropriate to the school site.
3. Policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens.
4. Policy that requires instructional and administrative staff shall receive training in emergency response, including appropriate “first responder” training or its equivalent.
5. Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines. All facilities and sites shall meet federal, state and local building codes and requirements applicable to California charter schools prior to the site being used by CRA. All structures secured for CRA staff and students shall meet or exceed the requirements set forth in the following codes or acts:
  - a. Federal Uniform Building Code (UBC)
  - b. Fire and Emergency Exit Codes
  - c. Health and Safety Codes
  - d. Local Building Codes and
  - e. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
6. A policy that the school will be housed in facilities that have received state Fire Marshal approval and that have been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer who has determined the facilities present no substantial seismic safety hazard.
7. Policies and procedures for the immediate reporting of suspected child abuse, acts of violence, or other improprieties, and the role and obligation of staff in the reporting of child abuse pursuant to CA Penal Code Section 11164.
8. A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.
9. A requirement that each employee of the school submits to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Section 44237. The school will comply with the provisions of the California Education Code, Section 44237.
10. A policy against sexual harassment and provides for training on this topic.
11. A policy outlining school staff training on the school’s health and safety policies.

12. Policies requiring that every female student in grade 7 and every male student in grade 8 shall be screened for scoliosis. The screening shall be in accordance with standards established by the California Department of Education. Policies detailing how CRA will test each student's vision and hearing upon first enrollment in the school and at least every third year thereafter until the student has completed the eighth grade.

Health and Safety issues are dealt with in accordance with CRA Board Policies. These policies are incorporated as appropriate into the student and staff handbook and reviewed on a regular basis.

Community Roots Academy will develop a Comprehensive School Safety Plan that includes the Site Emergency Response Plan and will provide the CUSD Police with a copy.

#### **AUXILLARY SERVICES**

School staff conducts annual reviews to ensure all auxiliary services are safe (food services, transportation, custodial services, hazardous materials) by developing appropriate policies, monitoring of compliance with those policies and implementation of awareness training.

## **ELEMENT 7: RACIAL & ETHNIC BALANCE**

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

CRA has implemented a student recruitment strategy that includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following elements or strategies to achieve a racial and ethnic balance that is reflective of the CUSD:

1. An enrollment process that is scheduled and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based recruiting and application process.
2. The development of promotional and informal material that appeals to all major racial and ethnic groups represented in the District, including materials in languages other than English to appeal to limited English proficient populations.
3. Strives to achieve racial and ethnic balance among its student population through outreach efforts to various racial and ethnic populations within the community.
4. Commits to developing promotional and informational materials as well as informational presentations in languages other than English in an effort to appeal to limited English proficient populations and address concerns specific to that population.
5. Meetings and events in locations that assist in reaching a racial and ethnic balance that is reflective of the CUSD
6. The distribution of promotional and informational materials to nonprofits and businesses that serve the various racial, ethnic and interest groups represented in the District.
7. Each year reviews its racial and ethnic balance and these policies to determine which policies and practices are the most effective in achieving a diverse student population.
8. Hosts Open Houses and provides tours of the school throughout the school year.
9. Creation of a Facebook page and website

Because we seek a targeted student population whose families may not be reachable by traditional means, CRA utilizes direct outreach strategies such as direct mailing and community and home meetings targeted in specific communities in the local area.

## **ELEMENT 8: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

*"Admission requirements, if applicable." Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(H).*

Community Roots Academy actively recruits a diverse student population. Students who understand and value the school's mission and are committed to the school's instructional and educational philosophy are encouraged to apply. Admission to CRA shall be open to any resident of California that is of legal age to attend public school (e.g., old enough to join Kindergarten). Pupils are considered for admission without regard to disability, gender, nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and association with a person or group with one or more of the above actual or perceived characteristics. CRA strives through recruiting efforts to achieve a racial and ethnic balance of students that reflects the general population within the territorial jurisdiction of the CUSD.

Community Roots Academy has no requirement for admission and must admit any child that wishes to apply. We do, however, have a family-school agreement which all parents are asked to sign and an orientation meeting which parents are asked to attend. A family cannot be turned away for refusing to sign this agreement or refusing to attend an orientation. In no instance will a student be refused admission nor subjected to any form of discipline for failure of a parent to sign or comply with the family school agreement (See Appendix H - Parent/Student Handbook).

### **FAMILY-SCHOOL AGREEMENT**

This agreement has two main components: 1) agreement to abide by the academic and behavioral rules of the school. Parents/legal guardians will be asked to sign a family school agreement stating that they understand the academic and behavior policies of Community Roots Academy and will support those policies at home and will work to ensure that their children abide by the rules of the school. 2) Voluntary Family Participation Plan. Signing the voluntary Family-School Agreement also outlines the volunteer agreement of completing twenty hours per year of participatory services at the school and for submitting a plan for completion of those hours. Parents are greatly encouraged to complete these hours and every effort will be made to offer flexible options to parents to perform these hours; however, no student will be denied admission or continuing enrollment at the school due to their parents not completing these hours.

### **NO ADMISSION TESTING**

Post matriculation, Community Roots Academy holds a grade-level knowledge-based examination, which allows the administrator or testing coordinator to assess the students' readiness for the grade of entrance; however, such assessments are not used as a means to prohibit or discourage certain students from attending. Post matriculation, various assessments are administered to monitor and assist each student's academic progress. These instruments aid in the development of individualized learning plans for children. Children who are performing below grade level or simply need a little extra help will be asked to attend voluntary summer and after school programs designed to remediate any deficiencies.

## **APPLICATION & ENROLLMENT PROCESS**

CRA has established an annual recruiting and admissions cycle, which includes a reasonable time for all of the following: (1) outreach and marketing, (2) orientation sessions for students and parents, (3) an admissions application period, (4) an admissions lottery, if necessary, and (5) enrollment. CRA may fill vacancies or openings that become available after this process using either a waiting list or any other non-discriminatory process.

Community Roots Academy has developed a standardized application form required of all prospective students. Applications for admission are made available in December of the previous year and will be due by the third Friday in March. CRA holds at least three parent information meetings between January and March, annually so parents can learn more about the school before they apply. When students enroll they receive a student handbook detailing school philosophy, discipline, policy and parent participation.

## **LOTTERY**

If the number of applications for admission to a grade exceeds the number of available slots in that grade, the spaces for that grade will be filled by random lottery. This lottery is held in a public setting. Drawings are held on a grade by grade basis to fill the available slots per grade. All applicants to a grade will have their name randomly drawn. Those students who have their name drawn after the number of admission slots to that grade have been filled are placed on an admissions waiting list for that grade in the order that they were drawn.

This lottery takes place during the end of March. Students currently enrolled at CRA are exempt from the lottery.

Admission preferences are extended to potential students in the case of a random public lottery in the following order.

1. Returning or existing students in good standing.
2. Children of CRA Employees. This priority is capped at 10% in accordance with the California Department of Education guidelines on charter school admission policies.
3. Siblings of students currently attending the school if space is available

In order to meet the requirement that preference for admission be offered to in-district students. CRA will ensure that approximately 85% of slots for admission will be allocated to in-district zip codes. Specifically a weighting mechanism is employed to ensure that approximately 85% of school enrollment comes from the District resulting in approximately 15% of enrollment coming from outside the District.

After the lottery, families receive their official enrollment forms and are informed of the enrollment process detailed below. If the number of applications does not exceed the number of spaces available in each grade in the school there will be no lottery, and all students who submitted complete contact information forms will be enrolled.



**THE ENROLLMENT PROCESS**

Each summer, after the lottery for admission, CRA hosts an orientation meeting for parents. At the meeting, staff and parents review school policies and are asked to sign the family-school contract and official enrollment papers. The enrollment packet also includes information such as an immunization record and a list of emergency contacts. Parents are also asked to sign up with a parent action committee through which they will complete most of the suggested parent volunteer hours. Parents and legal guardians also receive a family-student handbook during this mandatory orientation. Parents who are unable to attend the orientation are required to make a personal appointment with CRA's Co-Directors or designee to address the information covered in the meeting.

## **ELEMENT 9: INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL AUDITS**

*“The manner in which an annual, independent, financial audit shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority.” Education Code Section 47605 (b) (5) (I).*

CRA is an independent, directly-funded charter school. Each year, the Board of Directors’ Audit Committee oversees the preparation and completion of an annual audit of the school’s financial affairs. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller’s K-12 Audit Guide. The books and records of the Charter School are kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and as required by applicable law, the audit uses Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

Each audit shall be made by a certified public accountant selected from the directory of certified public accountants designated by the State Controller’s Office as active to conduct audits of local education agencies. This auditor will have experience with audits of educational entities and education finance, preferably with charter schools. The scope of the audit includes all elements mandated by the Audit Guide regulations promulgated by the Education Audit Appeals Panel as applicable to charter schools and any other elements as required by applicable law. The audit is conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to the school and verifies the accuracy of the school’s financial statements, average daily attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and review the school’s internal controls. By December 15<sup>th</sup> of each year, the annual audit is completed and a copy of the auditor’s findings is forwarded to the charter-granting agency, the county superintendent of schools, the State Controller, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The school’s audit committee reviews any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the school’s Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board reports to the charter-granting agency regarding how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved. In addition, the charter granting agency’s primary factor when deciding whether an audit exception or deficiency is resolved is whether the auditor considers the item resolved; however, the charter granting agency may reserve the right to only consider an item resolved once the charter granting agency believes the item is resolved to its satisfaction (EC 47605(b)(5)(I)).

## **ELEMENT 10: SUSPENSION/EXPULSION PROCESS**

*"The Procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled." Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J).*

This policy and its rules and procedures have been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well being of all students. When these policies and standards are violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction.

CRA staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently amongst all students and accord all students with similar rights to due process. These disciplinary rules and procedures are printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook and are clearly describe discipline expectations. In addition to these suspension and expulsion policies required for this charter, prior to completing student enrollment, CRA has develop a complete set of student discipline policies and procedures which are distributed to each student/parent as part of the Student Handbook.

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

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain on a student.

For purposes of the policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to the charter school property.

CRA's Co-Directors shall ensure that students and parents/guardians are notified in writing of all discipline policies, rules, and procedures and given an opportunity to provide input and feedback on discipline policies and procedures. Transfer students and their parents/guardian shall be so advised upon enrollment. The notice shall state that these disciplinary rules and procedures are available on request at the charter school office.

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

A student identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to the Individual with Disabilities Education Act is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education students except to the extent that federal and state law or the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) mandates additional or different procedures for that student. CRA will follow all federal and state law when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities and according due process to such students.

### **Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students**

A student may be suspended or expelled for any of the enumerated acts listed below if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at Charter School or at any other school: (a) while on school grounds; (b) while going to or coming from school; (c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; (d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity. A CRA student *shall be* recommended for suspension or expulsion for the following acts:

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
2. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with one of the charter school Co-Directors or designee's concurrence.
3. Unlawfully possessed, used sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of, any controlled substance as defined Health and Safety code sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
4. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
5. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal code section 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined Penal Code 243.4.
6. Made terrorist threats against school officials and /or school property.
7. Committed sexual harassment as defined in Education code Section 212.5.
8. Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence as defined in Education Code Section 233. (e)

A CRA student *may be* recommended for suspension or expulsion for the following acts:

1. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
2. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
3. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
4. Possessed or used tobacco or any product containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel.
5. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
6. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in the Health and Safety Code sections 11014.5
7. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisor, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.

8. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
9. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e., a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
10. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and /or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
11. Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder, and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment.

### **SUSPENSION PROCEDURE**

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

- **INFORMAL CONFERENCE:** Suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference conducted by CRA's Executive Director of Education or designee with the student and whenever practicable, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to CRA's Executive Director of Education.

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

- **NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS:** At the time of the suspension, a CRA employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the students may return to school. If school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may add that state law requires the parent/guardian to respond to such requests without delay.

### **AUTHORITY TO EXPEL**

Only CRA's Board of Directors upon the recommendation of the expulsion panel may expel a student. The expulsion panel shall be made up of two teachers and one member of the CRA Board of Directors. The teachers shall not also be members of the CRA Board or the primary teacher of the student being considered for expulsion. The member of the CRA Board shall not be a CRA employee or an immediate relation of such an employee. The Board of Directors may expel any student found to have committed an expellable offense(s) listed above in the "Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion."

Except for expulsions for offenses listed under Education Code Section 48915(c), a student may only be expelled upon the findings and recommendations of the expulsion panel if CRA's Board of Directors finds that the student committed the expellable offense and that at least one of the following findings may be substantiated:

1. That other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct.
2. That due to the nature of the violation, the presence of the student causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the student or others.

### **EXPULSION PROCEDURE**

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. The hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after CRA's Co-Directors or designee determines that one of the acts listed under "Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion" has occurred.

The hearing will be presided over by CRA's Co-Directors who will make a recommendation to the expulsion panel.

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

1. The date and place of the hearing;
2. A statement of the specific facts, charges and offense upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
3. A copy of charter school's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
4. Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status in charter school to any other District in which the student seeks enrollment;
5. The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel;
6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses;

### **RECORD OF HEARING**

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

## **PRESENTATION OF EVIDENCE**

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to an expulsion hearing, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the expulsion panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed any of the acts listed in “Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion” above.

Finding of facts shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While no evidence shall be based solely on hearsay, sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses whose disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

The decision of the expulsion panel shall be in the form of a recommendation to CRA’s Board of Directors, which will make a final determination regarding the expulsion.

## **WRITTEN NOTICE TO EXPEL**

CRA’s Co-Directors or designee following a decision of CRA’s Board of Directors to expel shall send written notice of the decision to expel to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall include the following:

1. The specific offense committed by the student from the acts listed in “Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion” above
2. Notice of the right to appeal the expulsion
3. Notice of the student’s or parent /guardian’s obligation to inform any new District in which the student seeks to enroll of the student’s status with the charter school

If a pupil is expelled or leaves Community Roots Academy without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, CRA shall notify the superintendent of the school District of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school District with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information. Upon expulsion from the charter school, students will attend school pursuant to the procedure of their District of residence pertaining to expelled students.

## **APPEAL OF SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION**

The suspension of a student will be at the discretion of the EDE or the EDE’s designee. Expulsion of a student will be recommended by the EDE and must be approved by the Board of Directors. Parents and/or guardians will be notified in advance of the suspension or expulsion and can appeal a student’s suspension or expulsion. A suspension appeal will be heard by the EDE, and upon consideration the EDE’s decision is final. An expulsion may be appealed within five working days. The student will be considered suspended until a meeting is convened to hear the appeal (within 10 working days) at which time the parent(s) must attend to present their appeal. The appeal shall be heard by a fair and impartial panel of representatives assigned by the CRA Board of Directors. The decision of the panel of representatives of the Board of Directors will be final.

In the event of a decision to expel a student from CRA, the school will work cooperatively with the district of residence, county, and/or private schools to assist with the appropriate educational placement of the student who has been expelled. Any incident of violent and/or serious student behavior shall be communicated to the district/school to which the student matriculates.



## **ELEMENT 11: EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEMS**

Capistrano Unified School District employees cannot be required to work at Community Roots Academy, nor can the District require CRA to hire District non-certificated, certificated, or confidential employees, with the exception of District employees provided to the charter school as part of the administrative services paid for by the charter school under a separately negotiated agreement for services or memorandum of understanding.

Community Roots Academy employees are not subject to District transfers without written consent of that employee.

CRA Board of Directors has approved and adopted a comprehensive personnel policies and procedures that are provided to each employee upon hire. These policies set forth personnel obligations, rights, responsibilities, complaint procedures, discipline procedures, and other pertinent policies essential to preserving a safe and harmonious work environment. CRA's Co-Directors resolve complaints and grievances and administer any personnel discipline, with the assistance of the District when necessary, in accordance with these policies. Disputes over personnel discipline shall not be covered by CRA's dispute resolution process, and instead, will be resolved through the personnel policies and procedures.

### **CREDENTIAL MONITORING**

All teachers hired are highly qualified as defined under No Child Left Behind. Appropriate records of credentials held by CRA teachers and supporting documentation is maintained by the school administration. Credentials are monitored annually in compliance with state and federal law.

### **WORK MATTERS**

Work calendars, hours per week, and vacation time are determined by individual employment work agreements. Administrators and office staff shall work a calendar year of 12 months, with a standard week of approximately 40 hours. These staff may possibly work extra time for special events, school meetings, etc. Teachers typically work a calendar year of 10 months and up to 1 additional month to provide extended instruction time, with a standard week of approximately 38.5 hours, including instructional hours, meetings and professional development (including staff development days and supplemental instruction). Teacher will likely work longer hour weeks for evening parent conferences, for school meetings, events, preparation of instruction and professional development.

### **TIME OFF**

CRA complies with all the regulations pursuant to California Labor Code 233.

Only full-time employees working year round (12 months a year) in excess of 36 hours per week may accrue and take paid vacation time. Part time employees working 30 hours per week or more will receive pro-rated paid vacation. Part-time employees working less than 30 hours per week will not be eligible for paid vacation. Full-time employees will accrue 15 days of paid

vacation per year, which cannot be carried over from year to year. Vacation is accrued on a monthly basis (*i.e.*, a full-time employee accrues one and one quarter vacation day per month).

### **SICK DAYS**

Full-time employees and teachers working in excess of 36 hours per week may take paid sick leave. Full-time employees and teachers working in excess of 36 hours per week accrue a total of 10 days of paid sick leave per year. Sick leave is accrued on a monthly basis (an employee accrues one sick day per month). Eligible employees may not carry over unused sick leave from one school year to the next. Sick leave will not accrue during any unpaid leave of absence.

### **BEREAVEMENT**

Eligible full-time employees and teachers may take up to five (5) days paid leave per rolling 12-month period for the death of a parent, parent-in-law (including parent of a domestic partner), spouse, domestic partner, child (including stepchild or child of domestic partner), or sibling. Paid Bereavement Leave is available only to a full-time employee or teacher who has been working at CRA for twelve (12) consecutive months. Upon request, and at the school's sole discretion, those employees not eligible for paid Bereavement Leave may take up to five (5) days unpaid leave per rolling 12-month period as bereavement leave.

CRA retains the right to modify any of the preceding 'work related matters' policies, as it deems appropriate.

Employees will be expected to engage in professional behavior with fellow employees, students, parents, and others with whom interaction is made on behalf of or while representing CRA. Unprofessional behavior includes unlawful harassment including, but not limited to jokes, threats, put-downs, decorations, and innuendoes related to gender, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Employees are expected to refrain from such activity and to report alleged improprieties in accordance with state and federal laws.

### **DUE PROCESS**

All staff members will have due process rights that include:

- Right to just cause discipline and dismissal.
- Right to mediation and a fair hearing if necessary.
- Right to appeal before a free state arbitrator (offered to small school districts).
- Right to binding arbitration conducted by a paid arbitrator.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

If an employee has a grievance, the first step in attempting to resolve the dispute is to engage in a good faith effort with the administrative staff. The good faith effort will include problem identification, possible solutions, selection of resolution, timeline for implementation, and follow-up. A written summary of the good faith effort will be included in the personnel file.

If the good faith effort is unsuccessful, the employee should submit a written complaint to the CRA Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will schedule a hearing at a mutually convenient

time and place for discussion of the complaint with all parties involved, but in no event later than 35 days after receipt of the written complaint and after notification to the employee. Board members who are interested parties will excuse themselves from grievance proceedings if such members have a conflict of interest in the subject of the proceedings (See Appendix F – Conflict of Interest Policy).

A decision as established by a majority vote of the members of the CRA Board of Directors hearing the grievance will be rendered within ten working days of the completion of the hearing. In the event that additional information, investigation, or hearings are necessary after the initial hearing, the hearing may be continued and the final decision will be made within ten working days of the last committee hearing, or as soon thereafter as is practicable. Any additional proceedings will be completed as soon as practical. The decision of the CRA Board of Directors will be final. If the attempt to resolve the grievance through the hearing process is not successful, professional mediation or legal intervention may be necessary.

If the grievance is a complaint of discrimination, action will take place within 24 hours. An investigation of the complaint will ensue to determine as many facts about the issue as possible.

#### **CORRECTIVE ACTION**

Any CRA employee who engages in unprofessional behavior of any kind will face disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**ELEMENT 12: STUDENT ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES**

*“The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school District who choose not to attend charter schools.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(L).*

No student is required to attend the Community Roots Academy. Students who do not attend the school may attend their local school or pursue an inter-District transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of their District or county of residence.

Parents or guardians of each student enrolled in the charter school are informed upon enrollment and within the student/parent handbook that the student has no right to admission in a particular school of any local education agency as a consequence of enrollment in CRA, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the Capistrano Unified School District.

**ELEMENT 13: RETURN RIGHTS OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES**

*“Description of the rights of any employee of the school District upon leaving the employment of the school District to work in a charter school and of any rights of return to the school District after employment at a charter school.” Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(M).*

Those members of the Community Roots Academy staff who leave employment in Capistrano Unified School District to work at CRA shall not have any right to return to employment within the CUSD without prior consent by the CUSD.

Employees of CRA who were not previous employees of the Capistrano Unified School District will not become employees of the Capistrano Unified School District and will not have the right to employment within the District upon leaving the employment of the charter school.

Upon dismissal from CRA, no previous CUSD employee may return to the District for employment without the prior written consent of the CUSD.

#### **ELEMENT 14: DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

*“The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(N).*

#### **INTENT**

The intent of this dispute resolution process is to (1) resolve disputes within the school pursuant to the school’s policies, (2) minimize the oversight burden on CUSD, (3) insure a fair and timely resolution of disputes, and (4) frame a charter oversight and renewal process and timeline so as to avoid disputes regarding oversight and renewal matters.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The Members of the Board of Directors and the staff of Community Roots Academy and the District agree to resolve all disputes regarding this charter school pursuant to the terms of this section. Both shall refrain from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute resolution process.

#### **DISPUTES BETWEEN CRA & DISTRICT**

If the District determines that a material violation of the Charter or law may have occurred or a problem has arisen related to the operation of CRA or the District’s oversight obligations, or a dispute otherwise arises between the District and CRA, the following procedures shall be followed to resolve the dispute:

1. Should District determine in writing that the violation or issue in question constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils, it shall not be bound by any portion of this dispute resolution process and may commence revocation proceedings immediately or take action, as it deems necessary.
2. If the violation or issue in question does not constitute a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of pupils, but constitutes a material violation of the Charter or law, the District will provide written notification of the violation or issue. The date that this notice is sent shall be the “Notice Date.” This notice will constitute the notice required under the provisions of Education Code 47607(d) prior to revocation of a charter. Upon issuance of this notice, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss and possibly resolve the dispute. Both parties must have representatives present at this meeting and under no circumstances will the meeting be held more than ten (10) business days after the Notice Date. The District representative at the meeting will be the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee, and the CRA representative will be the Executive Director or the Executive Director’s designee. If the dispute is not resolved at this meeting, the parties will proceed to step three.

3. District shall send written notification to CRA summarizing the result of the meeting held pursuant to Step 2 and setting forth the violation or issue and demanding that it be cured. District shall provide CRA a reasonable amount of time to cure the violation or issue. If CRA determines that the time needed to cure is more than thirty (30) business days, CRA shall notify the District as such in writing. If CRA determines that the time needed to cure is more than sixty (60) days, CRA shall notify the District in writing and set forth a specific deadline date to cure, which date shall be subject to approval by the Superintendent of District. All periods of time from the Notice Date through the completion of this formal time given for cure (as well as any time during which any informal attempts at resolution are undertaken by the parties), shall constitute the reasonable cure period required by Education Code section 47607 prior to revocation of a charter. If the violation or issue is not cured within this time period, the parties will proceed to Step four.
4. District may commence revocation of the Charter and/or other appropriate action in accordance with Education Code section 47607 or applicable law.
5. The parties shall exchange information as necessary to avoid disputes and assist in curing disputes and shall use their best efforts to resolve disputes between them at the earliest possible time.
6. In the event of a dispute raised by CRA against District over the terms of the Charter, CRA shall put the dispute in writing to the Superintendent or designee, and the District Superintendent or designee shall meet with the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee to seek resolution within two weeks of receiving the written complaint. After this meeting if resolution is not reached, both parties are free to pursue any other legal remedy available. However, mediation may be commenced with the agreement of both District and CRA, with the costs of the mediator to be split by both parties.

## **INTERNAL DISPUTES**

CRA shall have an internal dispute resolution process to be used for all internal disputes related to CRA's operations. Parents, students, board members, volunteers, and staff at CRA will be provided with a copy of CRA's policies and dispute resolution process. District will refer all disputes not related to a possible violation of the Charter or law or to the operation of CRA or District's oversight obligations to CRA. CRA shall provide District written notice of the resolution of any such internal disputes that were initially submitted to the District and referred by the District to CRA.

**ELEMENT 15: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING (EERA)**

*“A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O).*

Community Roots Academy is the exclusive public school employer for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. Under the EERA, CRA employees shall have the right to form a collective bargaining unit and to negotiate directly with the charter school. If the employees lawfully form a collective bargaining unit with a representative designated to negotiate with the charter school on their behalf, CRA shall negotiate matters covered by the EERA directly with that representative. These matters may include such items as salary levels (which may be based upon such factors as educational degree attained, years of teaching experience and/or other factors), employee benefits (health plan provider, levels of coverage and co-payments, retirement plans, vacation days, dental and vision coverage, etc.), number of work days per year and number of teaching hours per day, and work rules (including required breaks).



#### **ELEMENT 16: PROCEDURES FOR CLOSURE**

*A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records. (Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(P))*

The following procedures shall constitute the “Closure Protocol” and shall apply in the event CRA ceases to be a charter school or otherwise closes for any reason:

Any decision to close CRA as a charter school operating pursuant to this Charter shall be documented by official action of the CRA Charter Governing Body (“Closure Action”). The action will identify the reason for closure (e.g., decision not to renew as a charter school). The Closure Action shall be deemed to have been automatically made if any of the following occur: the Charter is revoked or non-renewed and the Board elects not to appeal or otherwise challenge the revocation or non-renewal, the CRA Governing Board votes to close CRA, or the Charter lapses. In the event of a Closure Action, the following steps shall be implemented.

1. The CRA Governing Body will notify the authorizer of the determination of the Closure Action and of the effective date of the closure as a charter school within five business days of the Closure Action.
2. Written notification to the home districts of the list of returning students within five business days of the determination of the Closure Action. In addition, the District shall be provided with a list of students indicating their last known district of residence.
3. Written notification of the Closure Action and the effective date of closure of CRA shall be made by CRA to the California Department of Education and the Orange County Office of Education by registered mail within five business days of the Closure Action.
4. On closure, CRA shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of the charter school.
5. The CRA Governing Body will ensure notification to the parents and students of CRA of the closure and provide information to assist parents and students in locating suitable alternative programs. This notice will be provided within five business days of the Closure Action. The written notification shall include information on assistance in transferring each student to another appropriate school, and a process for the transfer of all student records, and advise parents/guardians that CRA will provide copies of student information that includes grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, and completed coursework upon request.
6. CRA will provide the receiving school districts with copies of all appropriate student records within fourteen (14) business days from the determination of the Closure Action or within fourteen (14) business days of the last student attendance day at CRA if CRA is

to remain open as a charter school beyond the date that a Closure Action is determined, and will otherwise assist students in transferring to other schools. All transfer of student records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") 20 USC Section 1232g. CRA will ask the District to store original records of Charter School students.

7. As soon as is reasonably practical, CRA will prepare final financial records. CRA will also have an independent audit completed by an independent auditor included on the State Controller's approved list of independent auditors as soon as is reasonably practical, but in no case later than six (6) months after closure. The final audit will delineate the disposition of all assets and liabilities. Any liability or debt incurred by CRA shall be the responsibility of CRA and not the District. CRA understands and acknowledges that CRA will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of CRA. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. CRA understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused special education related funds will be returned to the District or SELPA, as appropriate, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.
8. For six (6) calendar months from the later of the Closure Action or effective date of the closure, whichever comes first, sufficient staff will maintain employment to take care of all necessary tasks and procedures required for smooth closing of the School and student transfers.
9. The CRA Governing Board shall adopt a plan for wind-up of the School and, if necessary, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code.
10. In addition to the final audit, CRA shall also submit any required year-end financial reports to the California Department of Education and the District, in the form and timeframe required.

This Closure Protocol shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, cancellation of this Charter or any other act or event that would end CRA's right to operate as a charter school pursuant to this Charter or cause CRA to cease operation. CRA and the District agree that, due to the nature of the property and activities that are the subject of this petition, the District and public shall suffer irreparable harm should CRA breach any obligation under this Closure Protocol.

## **ELEMENT 17: FINANCIAL PLANNING, REPORTING & ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **BUDGET**

*Provide financial statements that include one-year cash flow and three-year budget.*

CRA has provided one-year cash flow and five-year projected budget that can be found in Appendix I.

### **FINANCIAL REPORTING**

CRA has fiscal control policies and procedures in place and contracts with a back-office provider experienced in charter school operations. The School complies with all other financial reporting requirements of California Education Code § 47604.33 and fully complies with California Education Code § 47604.3.

CRA has implemented an attendance recording and accounting system, which complies with state law

CRA will annually prepare and submit to CUSD:

- On or before July 1<sup>st</sup>, a final budget. For a charter school in its first year of operation, financial statements submitted with the charter petition pursuant to Education Code 47605(g) will satisfy this requirement.
- On or before December 15<sup>th</sup>, an interim financial report which reflects changes to the final budget through October 31<sup>st</sup>
- On or before March 15<sup>th</sup>, a second interim financial report which reflects changes to the final budget through January 31<sup>st</sup>
- On or before September 15<sup>th</sup>, a final unaudited financial report for the prior full fiscal year

**ELEMENT 18: DISTRICT SERVICES**

Community Roots Academy and Capistrano Unified District (CUSD) will negotiate in good faith and may on an annual basis to develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) separate from this charter, one that establishes more specifically the financial and service relationship between the two parties. The School's purchase of goods and services, if any, from the District shall not negate the operational independence of the School from the District. Breach of the MOU shall not necessarily constitute breach of this charter.

CRA shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the District to the fullest extent permitted by law and in accordance with the terms of this Charter and the MOU between the District and CRA. The Charter School shall work diligently to assist the District in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including annual meetings, reporting, or other District requested protocol. CRA and its employees will institute appropriate risk management practices and health and safety policies and practices.

## **ELEMENT 19: POTENTIAL CIVIL LIABILITY EFFECTS**

### **A. Indemnification**

To the fullest extent permitted by law, CRA and CRCS jointly agree to promptly, fully and completely indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Capistrano Unified School District, the Capistrano Unified School District's Board of Trustees, and each of their members, officers, administrators and employees ("Indemnitees") from and against any and all claims, demands, actions, causes of action, suits, fines, or liabilities, including, but not limited to, attorney's fees and litigation costs, that in any way arise out of or relate to any actual or alleged act or omission on the part of CRA or CRCS, and/or on the part of the board of directors, administrators, and employees of CRA or CRCS in any way related to the performance of and/or to the failure to perform in whole or in part any obligation under the Charter and/or in any way related to the operation or operations of CRA, CRCS, or of any other CRA facility, CRA program, or activity of CRA. In the event the District determines that the interests of CRA/CRCS and the District cannot be ethically represented by counsel for both parties, District shall be entitled to be represented by counsel reasonably acceptable to the District. The joint obligations of CRA and CRCS to defend the Capistrano Unified School District and the other Indemnitees identified herein is not contingent upon there being an acknowledgement of or a determination of the merit of any claim, demand, action, cause of action, or suit, and those obligations will be deemed to be triggered immediately upon the assertion of any claim, demands, actions, cause of action, or suit within the scope of this paragraph. However, nothing in this paragraph shall be constructed to obligate CRA or CRCS to indemnify Indemnitees for any claims, demands, actions, causes of action, suits, fines, or liabilities resulting from an Indemnitee's sole negligence, from an Indemnitee's active negligence, or from an Indemnitee's willful misconduct where such sole negligence, active negligence, or willful misconduct has been adjudged by the final and binding findings of a court of competent jurisdiction; except, in instances where the active negligence or willful misconduct of an Indemnitee accounts for only part of the loss(es) involved, the indemnity obligations of CRA and CRCS shall be for that portion of the loss(es) not due to the active negligence or the willful misconduct of such Indemnitees.

CRA and CRCA further jointly specify that their indemnification, defense, and hold harmless obligations pursuant to this Charter extend to indemnify, defend, and hold the District and District Personnel harmless from any and all financial obligations in the event of an unbalanced budget.

CRA and CRCS obligation to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the District and District Personnel, as set forth in this section of the Charter, shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, or cancellation of this Charter or any other act or event that would end CRA's right to operate as a charter school pursuant to this Charter or cause CRA to cease operations.

## B. Insurance

CRA and/or CRCS shall purchase and maintain in full force and effect at all times during the term of this Charter insurance in amounts and types specified below and subject to review by the Capistrano Unified School District's risk manager. CRA and CRCS' joint obligations to acquire and maintain insurance as provided in this section of the Charter shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, or cancellation of this Charter or any other act or event that would end CRA's right to operate as a charter school pursuant to this Charter or cause CRA to cease operations until CRA AND/or CRCS have fully complied with the Closure Protocol set forth in this Charter.

Without limiting this Charter and/or the defense, indemnity, and hold-harmless obligations of CRA and CRCS, throughout the life of the Charter, CRA and/or CRCS shall obtain, pay for, and maintain in full force and effect insurance policies issued by an insurer or insurers admitted by the California Insurance Commissioner to do business in the State of California and rated not less than "A or A-VII" by A.M. Best Insurance Rating Guide, or, in the case of self-insurance, with a California Joint Powers Authority, a memorandum or memoranda of coverage providing coverage as follows:

COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY insurance and/or coverage, which shall include coverage for: "bodily injury", "property damage", "advertising injury", and "personal injury", including, but not limited to, coverage for products and completed operations, increasing in equal increments each year of the charter from current limits of no less than:

- A. \$2 million per occurrence and \$5 million in the aggregate for 2014/2015 school year.
- B. \$3 million per occurrence and \$7 million in the aggregate for 2015/2016 school year.
- C. \$4 million per occurrence and \$9 million in the aggregate for 2016/2017 school year.
- D. \$5 million per occurrence and \$11 million in the aggregate for 2017/2018 school year.
- E. \$5 million per occurrence and \$13 million in the aggregate for 2018/2019 school year.

These limits may be met through a combination of primary and umbrella/excess insurance.

COMMERCIAL AUTO LIABILITY insurance and/or coverage, which shall include coverage for owned, non-owned, and hired autos, with bodily injury and property damage liability limits not less than \$1,000,000 per person and per occurrence. These limits may be met through a combination of primary and umbrella/excess insurance. The deductible or self-insured retention applicable to this insurance shall be subject to the review of the District risk manager. WORKER'S COMPENSATION insurance and/or coverage, as required by applicable law, with not less than statutory limits.

PROPERTY insurance and/or coverage, which shall include: (a) coverage for real property on an “all risk” basis with full replacement cost coverage and code upgrade coverage, (b) Fire Legal Liability, to protect against liability for portions of premises leased or rented, and (c) Business Personal Property, to protect on a Broad Form, named peril basis, for all furniture, equipment and supplies of CRA and/or CRCS. If any Capistrano Unified School District property is leased, rented or borrowed by CRA and/or CRCS, it shall also be insured by CRA/CRCS in the same manner as (a), (b), and (c) above. The deductible or self-insured retention applicable to this insurance shall be subject to the review of the District risk manager.

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY insurance and/or coverage, which may also be called Educator’s Protection Plus Professional Liability, in an amount not less than a professional aggregate limit of \$2,000,000, and a Defense Reimbursement Aggregate of not less than \$300,000. These limits may be met through a combination of primary and umbrella/excess insurance. The deductible or self-insured retention applicable to this insurance shall be subject to the review of the District risk manager.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION ERRORS AND OMISSIONS insurance coverage in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 per claim and \$3,000,000 in the aggregate. These limits may be met through a combination of primary and umbrella/excess insurance. The deductible or self-insured retention applicable to this insurance shall be subject to the review of the District risk manager.

SEXUAL OR PHYSICAL ABUSE OR MOLESTATION VICARIOUS LIABILITY COVERAGE insurance in an amount not less than \$1,000,000 each abusive conduct limit, and \$3,000,000 in the aggregate. These limits may be met through a combination of primary and umbrella/excess insurance. The deductible or self-insured retention applicable to this insurance shall be subject to the review of the District risk manager.

The General Liability, Professional Liability, Employee Benefits Administration Errors and Omissions Insurance, Sexual or Physical Abuse or Molestation Vicarious Liability, and Auto Liability coverage required by the foregoing provisions of this Charter shall: (a) be endorsed to name the Capistrano Unified School District and its Board of Trustees, Board members, officers, administrators, and employees as additional insureds, or ensure that the District is included as an additional insured under a blanket endorsement; (b) shall be primary insurance to the extent the additional insured status applies, and any insurance and/or self-insurance or coverage maintained by the Capistrano Unified School District and/or by its Board of Trustees, Board members, officers, administrators, and employees shall be in excess of CRA/CRCS’ insurance and/or coverage required by the foregoing provisions of this Charter and shall not contribute with the primary insurance and/or coverage to be provided by CRA; (d) shall be on an “occurrence” basis rather than a “claims made” basis, excepting only educators’ legal liability and errors and omissions insurance and/or coverage, which shall be on a “claims made” basis; and (e) shall apply separately to each insured against whom claim is made or suit is brought, except with respect to the limits of liability set forth in the applicable policy or memorandum of coverage.

Each policy of insurance and/or memorandum of coverage required by the foregoing provisions of this Charter shall be endorsed to state that coverage shall not be suspended, rescinded, voided, cancelled, reduced in coverage or in limits, or non-renewed, or materially changed for any reason, without thirty (30) days prior written notice thereof given by CRA or CRCS to the Capistrano Unified School District risk manager by certified mail, personal/hand delivery, or email. In addition to such notice provided to the Capistrano Unified School District by the insurer, CRA and/or CRCS shall also provide the Capistrano Unified School District with thirty (30) days prior written notice, by certified mail, return receipt requested, of the suspension, recession, voiding, cancellation, reduction in coverage or limits, non-renewal, or material change for any reason, of any policy of insurance or memorandum of coverage required by the foregoing provisions of this Charter. If at any time any policy of insurance or memorandum of coverage required by the foregoing provisions of this Charter is suspended, rescinded, voided, canceled, reduced in coverage or in limits, non-renewed, or materially changed for any reason, CRA and/or CRCS shall notify the District's risk manager of such changes within one (1) business day of CRA and/or CRCS' notification of such change by the insurer, and if the required insurance and/or coverage is not restored within two (2) business days thereafter, the Charter shall be subject to revocation pursuant Education Code Section 47607.

The acceptance by the Capistrano Unified School District of the insurance and/or coverage required by the foregoing provisions of this Charter shall in no way limit the liability or responsibility of CRA or CRCS or of any insurer or joint powers authority to the Capistrano Unified School District.

Each policy of insurance and/or memorandum of coverage required by the foregoing provisions of this Charter shall be endorsed to state that all rights of subrogation against the Capistrano Unified School District and/or its Board of Trustees, Board members, officers, administrators, and employees are waived.

CRA and/or CRCS shall provide to the Capistrano Unified School District copies of each policy of insurance and/or each memorandum of coverage required by the foregoing provisions of this Charter, including all declarations, forms, and endorsements, which shall be received and approved by the Capistrano Unified School District within thirty (30) days of the approval of this Charter and by July 1 of each year thereafter. The procuring of such insurance and/or coverage or the delivery of copies shall in no way be construed as a limitation of the obligation(s) of CRA and CRCS to jointly defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Capistrano Unified School District and its Board of Trustees, Board members, officers, administrators, and employees.

The limits of liability applicable to the policies of insurance and/or memoranda of coverage required by the foregoing provisions of this Charter shall not reduce or limit the defense, indemnity, and hold harmless obligation(s) of this agreement.

The limits of liability applicable to the policies of liability insurance and/or memoranda of coverage in place of liability insurance required by the foregoing provisions of this Charter shall



not be reduced by or apply to defense costs or attorney s fees incurred to defend against covered claims.

CRA and/or CRCS shall promptly respond to all inquiries from the Capistrano Unified School District regarding any claims against CRA and/or any obligation of CRA under the foregoing provisions of this Charter.

## **ELEMENT 20: MISCELLANEOUS**

### **A. Term of Charter:**

1. The term of this Charter shall be for five (5) academic years, July 1, 2014 through and including June 30, 2019.
2. CRA's Governing Board may request that the District renew the Charter, and it will be the goal of CRA to submit the necessary documentation for such renewal request any time between July and October of the final year of operations approved hereunder. This timing provides CRA and District an adequate opportunity to focus on the renewal request, while taking into account all years of performance. Such renewal request shall include, but is not limited to, a complete Charter that has been revised and updated to meet all legal requirements and reflect the current status and practices at CRA, including a redline indicating all revisions made from the current Charter and an electronic (Microsoft Word) version of the revised Charter and attachments thereto.

### **B. Submittal of Documents, Reports, and Information:**

1. CRA shall submit all documents, reports, and information to the District required by law, including but not limited to, all reports required pursuant to Education Code section 47604.33.
2. On or before May 1 of each year, CRA shall submit to the District an approved school calendar establishing that CRA is complying with the required minimum number of school days and an approved bell scheduled to establish the number of instructional minutes being offered.
3. No less than one (1) month before the commencement of each new semester, CRA shall provide the District with a list of classes to evidence class offerings for the semester.
4. CRA shall fully comply with its CALPADS obligations, submitting information independently of the District. CRA shall provide the District with notice of students who leave CRA to return to the District within five business days of the student's departure from CRA.
5. If a pupil who is subject to compulsory full-time education pursuant to Education Code section 48200 leaves the Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, CRA shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within thirty (30) days, and shall, upon request, provide that school

district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information.

C. Inspections:

1. CRA agrees to permit the District to inspect and receive copies of all records relating to the operation of the charter school, including financial, personnel, attendance accounting, and pupil records, subject to FERPA and employee privacy laws. CRA shall promptly comply with all reasonable inquiries from the District in accordance with Education Code section 47604.3. CRA shall be subject to the California Public Records Act.

D. Oversight Costs:

1. The District shall charge CRA for supervisory oversight of CRA, up to any maximum permitted by law (currently described and limited in Education Code section 47613), currently set at 1%. CRA acknowledges that the District's actual costs in conducting its oversight obligations will meet or exceed the maximum percentage permitted by law and the District shall not be required to submit documentation of its actual oversight costs.

E. Governing Law and Construction:

1. This Charter shall, in all respects, be governed by the laws of the State of California applicable to agreements executed and to be wholly performed within the State of California. Nothing contained herein shall be construed so as to require the commission of any act contrary to law.

F. Debts and Obligations

1. CRA and CRCS shall be solely responsible for all costs and expenses related to this Charter and its operation, including but not limited to, costs of insurance, reserves, staff and operations.
2. CRA and CRCS shall have no authority to enter into contracts for or on behalf of the District and the District shall have no authority to enter into contracts for or on behalf of CRA or CRCS. Any contracts, purchase orders, or other documents which are not approved or ratified by the District Governing Board as required by law, including but not limited to, Education Code section 17604, shall be unenforceable against the District and shall be CRA and CRCS' sole responsibility. Any contracts, purchase orders, or other documents which are not approved or ratified by the CRA Governing Board as required by law shall be unenforceable against the CRA and shall be the District's sole responsibility.

- G. CRA and CRCS. shall require that the following language is included in any and all contracts entered into by those entities related to the charter school:
1. CRA and/or CRCS shall have no authority to enter contracts for or on behalf of the Capistrano Unified School District. Any contracts, purchase orders, or other documents which are not approved or ratified by the Capistrano Unified School District Governing Board as required by law, including but not limited to, Education Code section 17604, shall be unenforceable against the Capistrano Unified School District and shall be CRA and CRCS' sole responsibility. The District shall have no authority to enter into contracts for or on behalf of CRA and/or CRCS. Any contracts, purchase orders, or other documents which are not approved or ratified by the CRA Governing Board as required by law shall be unenforceable against the CRA and shall be the District's sole responsibility.
- H. Independent Entity:
1. CRA and CRCS and their respective officers, board members, employees and volunteers, shall operate and provide the school services pursuant to this Charter as a wholly independent entity. Capistrano Unified School District and CRA/CRCS shall not in any way or for any purpose become or be deemed to be agents, partners, joint venturers, or a joint enterprise. The District shall not be liable for the actions or liabilities of CRA and/or CRCS.
- I. Use of Funds:
1. General-purpose entitlement funding received by the charter school shall be used exclusively for public school purposes determined by the governing body of the charter school per Education Code section 47633(c). Categorical block grant funding shall be used exclusively for those purposes determined by the governing body of the charter school per Education Code section 47634.1(h). Public funds received by the charter school from the State of California shall be used in a manner consistent with the provisions of Article 16, section 6 of the California Constitution and the charitable purposes of the corporation.
- J. Compliance with Law:
1. CRA shall follow any and all other federal, state and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School.

2. CRA shall maintain accurate and current written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.
3. CRA shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities.
4. CRA shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment for purposes of ADA funding.
5. CRA shall comply with all applicable portions of the No Child Left Behind Act.
6. CRA shall comply with the Public Records Act.
7. CRA shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.